

RHODES UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**TEACHING STRUGGLING ADOLESCENT READERS IN NAMIBIA: A CASE
STUDY**

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF EDUCATION
(English Language Teaching)**

**By
Elizabeth Miyaze Simanga**

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ABSTRACT

Though research has been conducted on many issues since Namibia's independence in 1990, none of these studies has investigated how English Second Language (ESL) teachers teach and support struggling adolescent readers (SARs) to read.

Utilising qualitative research techniques such as classroom observations, semi-structured interviews and document analysis, this case study looked at strategies, methods, and resources used by five ESL secondary school teachers to teach SARs to read in two regions in Namibia, Caprivi and Otjozondjupa regions. Two of the five participants were male teachers.

The presence of SARs in the classes observed was established by using informal methods such as the ESL teachers' experience (Caprivi region), while a sample of questions from PIRLS 2001 (Mullis, Martin, Gonzalez, & Kennedy (2003) was compiled to form a test used in the Otjozondjupa region.

The findings show that despite undergoing initial teacher training and majoring in English, the five ESL secondary school teachers were not trained to teach SARs either how to read or how to support them. In addition, the study found that there was a shortage of reading materials in all five selected schools.

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DECLARATION

I, Elizabeth Miyaze Simanga, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own work, and that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

Signed:  Date: 12 February 2011

ACRONYMS USED IN THIS STUDY

DAL	Diploma in African Languages
DVD	(it formerly meant) Digital video disc; (it now means) Digital versatile disc
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESL	English Second Language
MBEC	Ministry of Basic Education and Culture
MBESC	Ministry for Basic Education Sport and culture
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MEd	Masters of Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
NEC	National Education Certificate
NERA	Namibian Educational Research Association
NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SARs	Struggling adolescent readers
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter situates the research. It describes the context in which the study took place, presents the research goal and research questions, and briefly explains the research methodology. An overview of the structure of the thesis is also provided.

1.2 RESEARCH CONTEXT

Research has shown that many countries, including Namibia, focus resources and research on literacy in the initial grades (Wise, 2005; Ivey, 2002; Deshler & Hock, 2006; Deshler, Palincsar, Biancarosa, & Nair, 2007, Voigts, 1998, Makuwa, 2005). One can understand why governments provide more assistance to the lower grades, one of the reasons being to provide a solid literacy and numeracy foundations. However, despite greater commitments in terms of budgetary allocations given to the foundation phase, learners still enter the doors of secondary schools with reading problems (Alvermann, 2006). It has also been shown that if learners struggle to read in the lower grades, their reading problems will continue into maturity (Bryant, 2003, p. 70; Moats, 2004; Schifini, 1999). On the other hand, research has shown that secondary school English Second Language (ESL) teachers are not equipped to teach such learners. High school English teachers believe that learners should have learnt to read in the lower grades (Bintz, 1997) and that teaching reading is not part of their job. This is illustrated in the quotation below:

My nightmare is that I am insecure because as an English teacher, somehow, I am expected to know about reading, but at the college level, I was only trained in English content (high school English teacher, 1996) in (Bintz, 1997, p. 12).

Guthrie and Davis (2003, p. 66) found that “their [secondary school teachers] widespread belief is that reading has been taught and learned in the elementary grades”. Furthermore, secondary school teachers believe that their job is to teach content (Guthrie & Davis, 2003). From the time I became a principal, the problem of how secondary school teachers teach struggling adolescent readers has been my area of interest. As a junior secondary school principal, I came across three siblings in grade 8 who could only read and write their names. Being a Grade 8 English teacher and the head of the school, it was a challenge to me, since, as with the teacher quoted by Bintz (1997) above, my initial teacher-training programme did not prepare me for such an encounter. I developed a notion

that Namibian secondary schools might have many struggling adolescent readers (SARs) and this stimulated my interest in this phenomenon.

An investigation that I carried out on ESL Grade 10 examination reports (2000-2004) suggests that Namibian learners do not comprehend what they read. These reports are distributed to every school that offers grade 10, to be studied by English Second Language (ESL) teachers with the purpose of minimizing secondary school learners' comprehension problems, but the same issues keep recurring year in and year out (Simanga, 2007). It is against this background that I deemed it necessary to investigate the strategies, methods and resources ESL teachers use to teach struggling adolescent readers (SARs).

1.3 RESEARCH GOAL AND QUESTIONS

The goal of the research described in this thesis was to investigate how Grade 9 ESL teachers teach SARs to read by:

- finding out what methods and strategies teachers use
- finding out what learning support resources they use and how they select them.

In order to do this, the research focused on the following questions:

- What strategies and methods do ESL teachers use to teach SARs to read?
- Why do they use these strategies and methods?
- What kind of texts do ESL teachers use to teach SARs to read? How do they select these texts?

In order to answer the above-mentioned questions, I used an interpretive case study approach.

1.4 THE APPROACH

The research took the form of an interpretive case study. According to Stake (2000), case study is not an approach, but what is to be investigated or "...the case" (p. 435). The research is qualitative since it seeks to understand the genuine actions and experiences of the five participating Grade 9 ESL teachers in their respective school contexts (Matveev, 2002; Stake, 2000). Case study methods allowed me to investigate my case, which is the ESL teachers' practice in relation to teaching and supporting the reading development of the SARs within a limited time span.

1.5 THE RESEARCH SITE

This research was undertaken in five secondary schools in two regions in Namibia: two schools are in the Caprivi region while three are in Otjozondjupa region. As Figure 1 below indicates, Caprivi and Otjozondjupa regions are 2 of the 13 regions in Namibia.



Figure 1: Map of Namibia's Administrative Regions. (Boet Nel Hunting Safaris, Namibia, 2008).

Caprivi region is found in the far north-eastern part of the country where it borders Angola, Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Its main town is Katima Mulilo.

The ethnic groups found in Caprivi region are the Masubia, Mayeyi, Mafwe, Mambukushu, Matotela, Mambalangwe and the San. The languages spoken in the Otjozondjupa region are: mainly Otjiherero, Khoekhoegowab and Afrikaans. Otjozondjupa region is in the northern part of Khomas. It is a vast region with few schools. At the time of this research, there were 97 schools and 975 teachers in Caprivi as can be seen from Table 1, while Otjozondjupa had 61 schools and 1 909 teachers as can be seen from Table 2:

Table 1: Total number of schools, the qualified and unqualified teachers in the Caprivi region:

TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS:				
TOTAL	PRIMARY	COMBINED	SECONDARY	OTHER
97	47	38	12	0
TEACHERS AND THEIR QUALIFICATIONS:				
QUALIFICATIONS	TOTAL: 975 teachers	WITHOUT TEACHER TRAINING	WITH TEACHER TRAINING	
Less than Grade 12	104	6	98	
Grade 12 or 1 or 2 years tertiary	203	21	182	
More than 2 years tertiary	668	2	666	

Source: (MoE, 2006, p. 11).

Table 2: Total number of schools, the qualified and unqualified teachers in the Otjozondjupa region

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS:				
Total	Primary	Combined	Secondary	Other
61	41	12	8	0
TEACHERS AND THEIR QUALIFICATIONS:				
Qualifications	Total: Teachers 1 909	Without teachers training	With teacher training	
<i>Less than Grade 12</i>	1 003	97	906	
<i>Grade 12 or 1 or 2 years tertiary</i>	196	60	136	
<i>More than 2 years tertiary</i>	710	8	702	

Source: (MoE, 2006, p. 17).

Note: 'Other' represents schools or classes for learners with special needs.

As can be seen from Table 1 above, there are neither schools nor classes for learners with special needs in either of the regions in which the research was carried out. The term learners with special needs refer to learners with handicaps, including the severely impaired. Learners with learning difficulties are usually mainstreamed within the classes. The absence of such schools in Tables 1 and 2 might also be an indication that there are no teachers qualified to teach learners with special needs in the Caprivi region. The lack of special education teachers is not exclusive to the Caprivi region; it is a common occurrence in many other government schools in Namibia.

Caprivi and Otjozondjupa education regions form part of the Namibia's basic education system. The basic education system in Namibia is divided into four phases: the lower primary phase comprising Grades 1-4; the upper primary phase comprising Grades 5-7; the junior secondary phase comprising Grades 8-10 and the senior secondary phase encompassing Grades 11 and 12.

Schools, on the other hand, are divided into primary, combined and secondary schools. According to the Ministry of Education (Namibia. MoE, 2006, p. 18), the term “combined” is used to describe a primary that was upgraded to either grade 10 or grade 12 to “provide secondary education in locations where a separate secondary school is not feasible due to small numbers of potential learners”. It should be pointed out that there are also junior secondary schools offering only grade 8 to 10 in other regions like Caprivi, but there are not a large number of these schools. In this research, I decided to refer to all the schools selected as secondary schools for the sake of anonymity.

Both Tables 1 and 2 indicate that there are still teachers with less than Grade 12 in the Namibian education system. Since this research is on SARs in Grade 9 ESL, Table 3 below depicts the qualifications of ESL teachers in Namibia.

Table 3: Total number of qualified and unqualified Namibian secondary school ESL teachers:

Phase	Total	Teachers with less than Grade 12	Teachers with Grade 12	Teachers with Grade 12 + 1 or 2 years	Grade 12 + 3 or more years
	3085	Total: 149	Total: 355	Total: 421	Total: 2160
Primary	1831	119	251	264	1197
Primary and Secondary	128	6	12	17	93
Secondary	1126	24	92	140	870

Source: Adapted from: MoE, 2006, p. 72)

The above Table shows that by the end of 2006, there were still unqualified and under-qualified ESL teachers in Namibia. When it comes to the ESL teacher qualifications, the consulted source does not show specific information related to the two regions. Knowing the poor reading abilities and the poor English language proficiency of Namibian teachers (Bradley, 2001), it is not surprising that one meets 3 siblings who cannot read in one class as I did.

1.6 THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis comprises five chapters. Chapter 1 provides background to the research, the context, research goals and questions, and a brief overview of the thesis.

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical and research literature that informs this research.

Chapter 3 presents the research design, ethics and validity measures employed.

Chapter 4 presents and describes the research findings of this research.

Chapter 5 discusses the core findings in relation to the research goals and questions. It also briefly discusses the lessons learnt from conducting this research, gives some tentative recommendations and the limitations of the research.

1.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has introduced the research. In it, I have provided the background context, described the research goals and outlined the structure of the thesis.

The next chapter presents the theoretical framework of this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the theoretical framework for the study. As stated in chapter 1, this case study aims to investigate how, in Namibia, Grade 9 ESL teachers teach SARs to read by looking at teaching methodologies, resource materials/texts and the strategies they use and why they use them.

The framework of the chapter is as follows:

- Background information to the SARs' reading problems
- SARs' profile and terminology relevant to the study
- SARs in inclusive education classrooms
- Impact of mother tongue reading on second language literacy at the secondary level
- Defining adolescent reading models and the type of texts
- Other reading models and the reading elements by which to organise instruction for SARs

2.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION TO SARs' READING PROBLEMS

In this section, I start by discussing SARs as a global concern before moving to the reading proficiency of Namibian learners and teachers. I will also explain why I rely heavily on literature from other countries.

2.2.1 SARs: a global concern

While one would assume that learners should be reading by the end of their primary schooling, research reveals that the problem of SARs is a concern for many countries, including many developed countries (Wren, 2002). For example, in a paper presented at a conference in Washington DC, Alvermann (2000, p. 1) pointed out that there "is a concern for the young adolescents who struggle with reading". The Alliance for Excellent Education (2003) cited in Biancarosa and Snow (2004:7) reported that "More than three thousand students drop out of high school every school day". One of the reasons for the high rate of learners dropping out of school in the USA is failure to cope with secondary school literacy demands (Kamil, 2003; Snow & Biancarosa, 2003). Further more, the NCES, (2003a) cited in Biancarosa and Snow (2004: 7) argue that "The number of students who lack literacy skills is not negligible: there are eight million

struggling readers in grades 4–12 in schools” across the USA Nation. Currently, there seems to be a substantial number of Namibian secondary school learners who are dropping out from the main stream and entering the colleges of open learning like the Namibian College of Open Learning.

In addition, Whithear (2009, p. 1) states that though literacy standards are high in Australia, “there are still too many adolescents who cannot read proficiently”. Denti (2004) cited in Whithear (2009, p. 2) is said to have compared the poor reading problems in secondary schools to the “elephant in the living room”. According to Whithear (2009), the reading problem among secondary learners is visible and widespread but no one seems to be willing to fix it.

Despite such great concern for SARs, research seems to concentrate on the Lower and Upper Primary Phases with the hope of minimising the reading problems at the Secondary Phase. However, the literature argues that a learner diagnosed with reading problems in the lower grades, enters secondary level with this problem (Taylor, Pearson, Clark & Walpole, 1999; Moje, Young, Readence & Moore, 2000; Alanis, Munter & Tinajero, 2003; Deshler & Hock, 2006). For example, 75% of learners indentified with reading problems at Grade 3 level were found still to be experiencing reading problems in Grade 9 (Francis, Shaywitz, Stuebing, Shaywitz, & Fletcher, 1996; Shaywitz, Holahan, & Shaywitz, 1992 cited in Peterson et al., 2000, p. 15).

SARs who reach the secondary phase with reading problems would expect to receive help from their classroom teachers, who in turn require some form of support from subject or reading specialists. Subject specialists need to be acquainted with what secondary reading is all about. However, as Lee (2004, p. 15-16) contends, there is a:

...pervasive lack of knowledge about reading in most high schools, particularly those that have significant numbers of struggling (adolescent) students ... We have little knowledge about reading as a process in our high schools.

A similar state of affairs prevails in Namibia.

2.2.2 Reading proficiency of Namibian learners

As stated in 2.2.1 above, adolescents’ poor reading is a worldwide problem, including Namibia. Though there is little in the way of statistics about the learning of reading at Secondary Phase in Namibia, enough evidence is emerging to suggest that reading problems are present in this phase.

By the time Namibian learners reach Grade 9, they have spent almost 8 years learning English as a subject, and 5 years using it as a medium of instruction. The first three years of the Lower Primary phase should be providing learners with basic literacy skills in their mother tongue, which should then be transferred to learning to read in a second language. Research has found that:

... the degree of children's native language proficiency is a strong predictor of their English language development... Literacy in a child's native language establishes a knowledge, concept and skills base that transfers from native language reading to reading in a second language (Antunez, 2002 cited in Murray, 2007, p. 69).

Furthermore, Harlech-Jones (2003) cited in Murray (2007, p. 74) argued that:

...children learn reading best when taught in familiar languages, that reading skills transfer from one language to another, and that well developed literacy in a learner's best-known language facilitates good literacy in English.

However, evidence has shown that by Grade 6, many Namibian learners still cannot read even though many of them are taught in their mother tongue for the first three years of schooling, a fact that can be attributed to lack of qualified mother tongue teachers (Murray, 2007).

Additionally, Jones (1996) cited in Wolfaardt (2005) contends that many learners fail to achieve the minimum English Language proficiency before they are introduced to English as a medium of instruction in grade 4. Jones (1996) cited in Wolfaardt (2005, p. 2359) further argues that:

It is often the case that they do not reach the minimum level of English language proficiency required when they enter the Junior Secondary phase of school... As a result of problems beginning at primary school, learners continue to lag behind their required level of language proficiency and the majority never really reaches the language proficiency in English which their age and school level demand.

Furthermore, the emerging research at the Upper Primary phase has revealed that most Namibian learners cannot read. For example, a survey on the reading skills of Grade 6 learners in Africa by UNICEF (2003) cited in Töttemeyer (in press, p. 16) found that "only 7.6% of all Namibian Grade 6 learners could read well, while another 25.9% possessed minimum reading competency",. This suggests that "two-thirds of Namibian Grade 6 learners could hardly read or not read at all". The SACMEQ I and II Reports (Voigts, 1998; Makuwa, 2005 respectively), indicated that Namibian Grade 6 learners' reading proficiency lags far behind other African countries. For example, out of fourteen African countries, the best learners (Seychelles) got a mean of 582, whereas Namibian

learners' were ranked twelfth with a mean of 449 (SACMEQ 2004 database, cited in Passos, 2009, p. 210).

The UNICEF (2003) findings cited in Töttemeyer (in press, p. 16) further state that only "16.9% of Namibian Grade 6 learners reached the minimum level and 6.7% the desirable level in 2000". These results indicated that in 2000 only 23.6% of Namibian Grade 6 learners could read at an acceptable level, the majority could only read minimally well while the reading proficiency of 76.4% of the learners was inadequate, possibly to the point that some could not read at all. In addition, Imene and van Graan (n.d.) referred to the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (MBEC)'s concern about learners sent to special schools, when their problems seemed to be reading problems.

Furthermore, Wolfaardt (2005) refers to an investigation conducted at one of the schools in Windhoek where 204 Grade learners' literacy and numeracy skills were tested. The investigation found that "22.4% of those learners were not functionally literate in English and only marginally skilled to a Grade 6 level" (Wolfaardt, 2005, p. 2359).

It can thus be assumed that the struggling readers referred to in SACMEQ I and II reports and other studies would reach Grade 9 with reading problems.

One of the factors for this situation could be attributed to poor English proficiency of Namibian teachers (Bradley, 2001; Wolfaardt, 2005; Voigts, 1998; Makuwa, 2005). Alexander (2000) cited in Wolfaardt (2005, p. 2360) argues that in order for an English medium instruction education system to succeed, "a teaching corps of native English speaking or proficient second-language speakers of the global language is needed" and that "learners who are not taught by teachers proficient in English will not have the necessary foundation on which to build their English language skills". Alexander is of the opinion that "if learners from their first school year are taught in English by teachers not proficient in English, they will have problems in reading... [and would] emerge as semilinguals".

It is argued here that the reading problems of learners would even be worsened by the lack of qualified mother tongue teachers, one of the factors hampering proper implementation of the language policy in Namibia (Murray, 2007). In fact, a language policy report by Chamberlain (1993) cited in Murray (2007) mentioned that some primary teachers lacked confidence in using or teaching English.

2.2.3 Reading proficiency of Namibian Teachers

In this section, I discuss the Namibian Teachers' reading proficiency. It suffices here to say that teachers' poor English language proficiency would exacerbate learners' literacy learning (Wolfaardt, 2005).

When it comes to diagnosing why Namibian teachers tend to have poor reading skills as well as poor English language proficiency (SACMEQ I & II; Bradley, 2005; Imene & van Graan, n.d.), the blame seems to lie squarely with the Bantu Education system that prevailed in the country before independence (Amukugo, 1993; Namibia, Ministry of Education and Culture, MEC, 1993). According to Amukugo (1993) and MEC (1993), the colonial government provided minimal education to black Namibians that would enable them only to serve the minority elite white population. This led to a poorly trained and unqualified or semi-qualified teaching work force, which inevitably led to the cyclic production of poorly instructed learners.

A study by Bradley (2001) and SACMEQ found that some Namibian teachers have reading problems. For example, Namibian teachers did not perform well on the test given to the Grade 6 learners; Namibian teachers came sixth (Töttemeyer (in press, p. 16) by obtaining a mean of 728 points, 6 points below the SACMEQ mean of 734 (SACMEQ, 2004 database, cited in Passos, 2009, p. 205). Though Namibian teachers generally have poor English language proficiency, they are weakest in reading and grammar (Wolfaardt, 2005). Teachers' vocabulary, pronunciation and the giving of instructions seem not to be problematic. It is argued here that in order to teach any subject, one needs subject /disciplinary content knowledge as well as pedagogical content knowledge to teach that language. So if Namibian teachers are weakest in reading, it could be assumed they would not be able to teach reading and hence the poor reading performance of their learners. At the Secondary Phase, the situation may be compounded by the fact that such teachers might not have been trained to teach reading, a fact revealed by some studies in other countries.

2.2.4 Training of Reading Teachers and Professional Development

The international literature talks of English teachers being supported by reading teachers to teach reading. In some developed/developing countries, it is assumed that all language teachers in general and English teachers in particular are teachers of reading irrespective of the phase in which they are teaching. However, it has been found that secondary school teachers are trained to teach language as a subject, just like any other content subject. They are not trained to teach reading or are poorly trained; they do not know how to provide support /to struggling learners (Bintz, 1997; Moats, 2004; Wren, 2002; Kamil, 2003; Corrier, 2005). According to Lee (2004, p. 15) "High

school content area [including ESL] teachers are trained in pedagogies associated directly with their disciplines”.

Another worrying factor is that as far as the Secondary Phase is concerned, there is limited knowledge regarding how second language learners acquire literacy (August & Shanahan, 2006; Geva & Verhoeven, 2000). While this is the case, the number of learners entering secondary schools with a variety of reading problems is on the increase; however, research on the matter in many countries is minimal (Kamil, 2003, p. 1; Grigg & Donahue (2005) cited in Boardman, Roberts, Vaughn, Wexler, Murray & Kosanovich, 2008).

As far as professional development is concerned, Wren (2002) advocates having a permanent literacy or reading teacher to train all staff members because professional development of all staff is a full-time venture. According to researchers cited in Wren (2002, p. 7) such professional training should

...focus on effective grouping strategies for accelerated literacy development ...reader-based discussion strategies ... concept-driven instruction and questioning techniques and other content area strategies.

Such a professional reading specialist would provide “guidance and support” to teachers to learn new ways of teaching and supporting SARs.

2.2.5 The reasons for use of research literature from the USA and elsewhere in this study

Due to limited research on SARs in many countries, and Namibia in particular, the literature that forms the framework for this study is mainly from the USA. Another reason is that, though SARs’ environmental contexts and causal factors differ from country to country, the literature indicates that the aspects of reading with which a secondary learner in the USA or elsewhere may struggle, are similar to those experienced by Namibian learners. These include reading problems such as having a shallow comprehension of what they read (Alvermann, 2001), lack of motivation and having to be taught by teachers not trained to teach reading (Bintz, 1997).

Additionally, instructional methods and strategies that should be used to teach SARs in different countries may be the same, irrespective of their profiles. The difference could only be how strategies, methods and texts are used by respective teachers.

2.3 DEFINITION OF THE TERM SAR AND CLARITY ON HOW SOME TERMS ARE USED IN THIS RESEARCH

For purposes of clarity, this section gives a brief definition of the term SARs and explains how terms like 'reading' versus 'literacy' on the one hand and 'approaches', 'strategy' and 'instruction', on the other hand, are used in this study.

2.3.1 The Term: Struggling Adolescent Readers (SARs)

This section will first explain the use of terms related to SARs before discussing who they are, the causes of their problems and their profiles.

- **The terminology used to describe SARs in research**

Researchers (Johannessen, 2004, p. 638; Paterson & Elliot, 2006, p. 378; Lenters, 2008, p. 137; and Alvermann, 2001, p. 679) cited in Manuel (2003, p. 7) talk of struggling readers using the following terms: 'struggling', 'reluctant', 'at risk', 'disadvantaged', 'alienated', 'marginalized', 'resistant', 'educationally deprived', 'educationally unprepared', 'remedial' 'disaffected', 'disenchanted' readers. Some of these researchers use these terms interchangeably while others differentiate between them. Underwood and Pearson (2004) talk of "...“Basic” and “Advanced” reading performance..." when referring to the distinction between what Pang (2008) refers to as "poor" and "good" readers.

Depending on the context, such labelling sometimes refers to children of: minority ethnic groups (Meltzer & Hamann, 2005), migrating parents or economically poor families. In many of such families, children may not be exposed to print materials. Learners from poor families may thus end up being labelled as struggling readers for not having acquired good reading skills.

In Namibia, the majority of learners may struggle not only because they are from minority marginalised groups. The majority of Namibian people are found in rural parts of the country, which were neglected during the colonial era.

Though labelling learners seems to increase SARs' problems, sometimes it may be necessary to categorise problems they experience. Because struggling readers experience certain reading problems, there is a need to define, categorise and conceptualise them as a group, depending on similar features they manifest. Research however, states that defining SARs is a difficult task as can be testified by the different names or labels they go by.

One such classification defines SARs as learners found in middle, secondary and high schools with reading problems, based on their failure to achieve the key basic components in the target language (Wren, 2002). This labelling includes learners with different levels of cognitive reading disabilities. It also includes learners who are emotionally and psychologically disturbed due to the manner in which they were handled throughout their primary career. The term SAR also refers to learners with reading comprehension problems in the sense that they either cannot decode words due to “severe disabilities” (Tankersley, no date, p. 1) and those without any disability, that can decode and read words but do not understand what they read. In fact, Tankersley (no date) differentiates between three core types of such learners, depending on the type of special needs they have and their features. I present only two types relevant to this study:

Type 1: The struggling reader, is defined as a reader who ...can read but chooses not to read. ...can function moderately within [the] regular classroom ...his reading is laborious and slow. ...easily frustrated...may simply give up on tasks. ...has little comprehension about text ...falls further behind his peers ...reading is a painful task, he avoids it whenever he can ... [thus creating] a further downward spiral in reading and exacerbates the struggle (Tankersley, n.d., p. 1).

A second type of struggling reader is identified as:

Type 2: A reader with severe disabilities is described as ...an older student who is unable to read any text written above the primary level ...has deficiency decoding text ...oral reading may be tortured and halting ...vocabulary and background knowledge is limited ...have some type of learning disability or learning disadvantage (Tankersley, n.d., p. 1-2).

This research deals with these two types – the normal adolescent learners struggling with reading problems, termed by the Namibian Junior Secondary Certificate (JSC) examinations reports as learners who are ‘not reading with understanding’ (Simanga, 2007) and with how the Grade 9 ESL teachers teach and support them in mainstream classrooms. This is because in Namibia, learners with severe disabilities (like those with hearing and visual disabilities), are either found in special schools, special classes (if they are fortunate) or are not in school at all (writer’s experience with two quadriplegic relatives), while there may be many type 2 learners in mainstream schools.

However, for purposes of clarity, the term SARs will be used in this case study. It should be understood that the term is not used with the intention of degrading such learners but to compare characteristics they exhibit with those exhibited by proficient readers in order to understand their problems and seek solutions in turn.

Additionally, this research recognizes the fact that terms like SARs, poor or proficient readers are relative and that one's literacy learning depends on many factors such as context, genre and one's interest (Alvermann, 2001). In addition, Pang (2008, p.2) states that a poor or good reader's performance is "...only evoked depending on various factors such as time of reading and complexity and topic of a text".

In the literature, there are many ways of describing, comparing and defining SARs. For example, Garbe, Holle and Weinhold (2009, p. 11) describe SARs as learners who:

... are already readers, they are not illiterate. Nonetheless, they did not develop the reading skills which enable them to react adequately on demands of their rapidly changing professional and private lives. Most of them did not develop a stable self-concept of being a reader. Their reading is hindered (sic) by obstacles they can not (sic) yet overcome by themselves. *These obstacles are mainly in the areas of decoding, reading fluency, reading comprehension, meta-cognitive skills, use of reading strategies, and reading motivation.* To overcome these obstacles, they need the help of competent others, especially the help of professional teachers (emphasis mine).

2.3.2 Use of the terms: approaches, strategies and instruction

Some literature uses approaches, strategies and instruction as interchangeable terms (Davis & McPartland, no date; Boardman et al., 2008). These terms will thus be used interchangeably in this research.

2.3.3 Usage of the term literacy

Literacy is often understood to encompass skills like reading, writing and numeracy. This study uses literacy more specifically as synonymous with reading (Torgesen, et al., 2007).

2.4 SARS' PROFILES: COMPARISONS OF FLUENT READERS VERSUS STRUGGLING READERS' PROFILES

Fluent readers have certain features that differentiate them from struggling readers. This section looks at features of proficient and struggling readers and these are discussed and presented in a tabular form. The subsequent tables, Tables 4 and 5 look at the different features of first and second language proficient and struggling readers according to Block (1986) and Pang (2008).

Table 4: Features of First and Second Language Proficient Readers.

PROFICIENT/GOOD READERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ...are more able to monitor their comprehension than poor readers• ... are more aware of strategies they use than poor readers• ...use strategies more flexibly• ...adjust their strategies to type of text they are reading and to purpose• ...distinguish between important information and details as they read• ...are able to use clues in text to anticipate information and/or relate new information with information already stated• ...are able to notice inconsistencies in a text and employ strategies to make these inconsistencies understandable

Source: As adapted from Block, 1986, pp. 465-466

A review by Pang (2008) came up with the following characteristics of proficient second language readers.

Table 5: What 2nd language proficient readers do as they read: Pang (2008: 6).

When proficient SL readers read they:
• keep meaning of text in mind
• read in broad phrases
• skip inessential words
• guess from context the meaning of unknown words
• have a good self-concept as a reader
• read the title and make inferences from it
• continue if unsuccessful at decoding a word or phrase
• integrate new knowledge with the old
• recognise text structure
• make use of general knowledge, personal experience, and associations
• respond in extensive (focusing on the writer's ideas as they are stated in the text) and reflexive modes (relating text information to themselves in an affective and personal way)

In addition, Block (1986) established characteristics that distinguish good SL readers from SL poor readers. According to Block (1986, p. 482), good readers do the following:

- integrate information from different sections of a text to enhance understanding
- recognise aspects of text structure
- use general knowledge, personal experiences and associations: good readers relate their experiences to the text content instead of the other way round
- respond in extensive versus reflexive modes: good readers focus on the author's ideas in the text

When it comes to reading, poor readers seem to behave differently from proficient readers as can be seen from Table 6 below.

Table 6: Profiles of poor 2nd language readers

POOR/STRUGGLING READERS	RESEARCH QUOTED BY PANG (2008)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• are slower in word recognition and generally weak at rapid and automatic syntactic processing because they develop an overt knowledge of L2 grammatical structures before they become fluent L2 readers	Grabe & Stoller, 2002 [Probably what Grabe & Stoller (2002) mean is that L2 learners are usually taught grammatical structures; though L2 learners acquire knowledge of grammar from this teaching, they still may not become fluent readers; to be fluent readers, L2 learners need to be taught a lot of vocabulary since they cannot guess using context]
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• are particularly weak in processing more complex ambiguous sentences	Chen, 1998
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• guess more with respect to vocabulary	Parry, 1991

Source: Adapted from Pang, 2008, p. 4

Metacognitive skills (the skills used by proficient readers above) are also known as the executive processes in Deshler and Hock's (2007) Adolescent Reading Theory Model.

SARs need to acquire the metacognitive skills used by proficient readers (indicated above), if they are to survive academically. However, I argue here that where there is a lack of diagnostic skills needed to identify causes of reading problems, coupled with lack of knowledge about reading strategies proficient readers use, lack of a good command of English, knowledge and understanding of who SARs are, teachers could not successfully teach nor support SARs.

2.5 CAUSES FOR READING PROBLEMS

2.5.1 Causes of Namibian learners' reading problems

The origin and causes of learners' reading problems are many. Among these are having poor reading teachers many of whom have been poorly trained (Amukugo, 1993, Namibia. MEC, 1993), absenteeism of both learners and teachers, learners not being able to read in their mother tongue – a problem experienced especially at the Lower Primary Phase (Bradley, 2005; Voigts, 1998; Makuwa, 2005), and teachers' poor English language proficiency (Bradley, 2005; Murray, 2007; Wolfaardt, 2005).

Additionally, the literature cites policy makers' neglect of the problem of reading at the secondary phase - lack of government-funded research at this level. Policy makers' interest is, in many instances including Namibia, concentrated on the primary phase. For example, two SACMEQ

studies of Grade 6 readers have been conducted whilst there has been no research on reading problems experienced by secondary school learners in Namibia.

2.5.2 Causes of reading problems as revealed by research from other countries

Causes of poor reading problems are many. Collins (1996, pp. 3-4) suggests that teachers unknowingly contribute to learners' reading problems because they de-motivate learners by assigning purposeless reading tasks, selecting texts or topics on which learners have no background knowledge and by not minimising "egocentricity" through the proper usage of group work. Table 7 looks at the facts about SARs, causes for their reading problems and some suggested solutions as adapted from Peterson, et al. (2000).

Table 7: Key points about SARs:

CAUSES OF READING PROBLEMS:

SARs

- may lack motivation
- may struggle with decoding
 - o challenged by multisyllabic words
- may have limited language comprehension
- may not transact with text
- [may have] limited language knowledge
- [may have] difficulty making inferences
- [may have] difficulty in self-regulated comprehension
- may not transact with text

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS:

SARs

- may need social interactions to develop oral fluency in English [e.g. through pairs and groups]
- need support in orchestrating strategies and in transferring reading skills beyond the remedial reading context, such as into classrooms and non-school settings
- need meaningful materials and tasks [Such materials or texts should be at their reading levels]
- need to acquire and apply morphological knowledge
- need practice to develop fluency
- need language differences to be recognized and honoured in the classroom
- need multiple opportunities and sources for active learning of words
- need to connect experiences beyond the classroom with school reading
- need scaffolded reading of complex texts
- need explicit strategy instruction
- need to use metacognitive assets from second language learning (such as cognates – words that may be similar in both languages)
- need models for making responses to texts (like the thinking aloud skills)
- need support following principles of effectiveness that have emerged from years of research in
 - o reading instruction and
 - o teacher professional development

Source: Adapted from Peterson, Caverly, Nicholson, O'Neal and Cusenbary, 2000, p. 21

As far as these solutions are concerned, some mainstream Namibian teachers fail to implement them as they lack any professional support. For example, Namibian primary school teachers have been found to lack the understanding of concepts like learner centeredness – an approach where strategies like pair or group work is used (O’Sullivan, 2001; O’Sullivan, 2004). In addition, metacognitive assets from second language learning like cognates may not always work with African languages as compared to languages of European origin, the reason being that many African languages have very little in common with the English Language (Veii, 2005). However, the increasing presence of words in the Namibian languages borrowed from English does point to new possibilities.

2.6 SARs IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

In this section, I look at three issues: diagnosis of SARs by classroom teachers, remediation of SARs and inclusive education in Namibia. Due to limited research on the diagnosis of SARs and remediation from the Namibian contexts, the discussion of this section will rely more heavily on literature from other countries.

2.6.1 Diagnosis of SARs by classroom teachers

For the identification and diagnosis of specific problem a learner has in reading, specialists usually use specialised tests because as Wren (2002, p. 4) argues, “standards-based assessment or state accountability assessment...[are] somewhat useful for determining which of your students are reading "on level" but it does not begin to tell you anything informative about those students who are struggling” and will not specify why learners are struggling. Wren (2002, p. 4) further argues that once standards-based or summative assessment has revealed learners’ general reading problems, “a diagnostic reading assessment battery” such as the “Diagnostic Assessment of Reading by Roswell and Chall” should in turn follow it. Observation can also be used as a diagnostic tool. Peterson, et al. (2000, p. 7) state, “Teachers usually can distinguish students who struggle with reading from those who are proficient by observing and noting reading behaviours”. Peterson, et al. (2000, pp. 7-8) state further that the character of a learner’s reading difficulty is determined by such learner’s reading behaviour, “content and context of the reading task”. Peterson, et al. (2000) seem to support the use of a combination of formal methods like the standardised achievement tests, on the one hand, and the informal methods such as the teacher observations and reading aloud, on the other hand.

Johnson (1985) cited in Peterson, et al. (2000) states that the manner in which learners read could indicate the type of reading problem they might have. For example, if a learner deciphers the letters of a word and then “guesses” the rest, such a learner is said to see reading as a fill-in task where one has to use “background knowledge” (Peterson, et al., 2000, p. 8). In addition, Peterson, et al. (2000) point out types of learners according to their reading behaviour:

- heavy reliance on context may be due to “poor decoding skills”
- those who may read fast but incorrectly
- those who may read sluggishly and hesitantly
- those that may read well and correctly but without understanding

In order to pinpoint the type of reading problem, Peterson, et al. (2000) contend that teachers could request learners to explain how they came to either decipher a word or understand a text by using a “think aloud,” a strategy which invites readers to articulate their thoughts out loud when reading. Unfortunately, the literature states that learners can only use this strategy after having observed and practised it.

Irvin (2006, p. 81) also emphasizes the importance of informal assessment and states that:

While individual student data may be obtained from large formal assessments, informal assessments often provide valuable insight into the instructional programs.

Irvin (2006, p. 81) further explains the meaning of informal assessment as “the criterion referenced, comparing student performance to a set of established standards and expectations”. The correct diagnosis for reading difficulties is crucial since it supplies more detailed information about potential sources of individual learner’s reading difficulties (Irvin, 2006). Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer and Rivera (2006, p. 5) argue that there should be a match between the “instructional needs and the instructional environment ...” including the type of intervention.

Additionally, Irvin (2006, p. 5) asserts that since no individual programme can suit the needs of all learners, it is imperative to conduct assessment and diagnostic tests. Such tests would direct the type of programme individuals should follow. Learners who cannot decode words would follow a different programme than somebody whose reading problem is comprehension.

2.6.2 Remediation of SARs

Research on learners with reading problems suggests that they do improve when the problem has been identified and remedial efforts are taken to fix it (Hosenfeld, 1984). Additionally, Tankersley (n.d., p. 1) argues that SARs can be assisted "...by highly skilled classroom content teachers who understand how to help students connect with content reading materials". Further, Block (1986) suggests that in order to have an impact on reading abilities of struggling readers, teachers need to have not only knowledge of strategies, but also the type of strategies to use and how to use them. In addition, Pang (2008) and Garbe, et al. (2009) indicate that SARs may not acquire knowledge of how to use reading strategies unless taught by reading specialists. Reading specialists are teachers trained to diagnose and identify learners' problems and then use research-proven methods and strategies to try to solve such problems. Unfortunately, such highly skilled and specialised content subject teachers are scarce or non-existent even in developed countries (Tankersley, n.d; Bintz, 1999; Garbe, et al., 2009, Boardman et al., 2008).

In Namibia, the lack of support for SARs is aggravated by the misinterpretation of policies like the ESL syllabus, inclusive education and automatic promotion (Imene & van Graan, n.d.). Apart from not knowing how to teach reading, some primary school teachers were found to lack remedial skills. For example, during their research, Imene and van Graan (n.d., p. 13) found that "During observed lessons little evidence was found of teachers using approaches or strategies to deal with learners who struggle with decoding". They further state that only two strategies were commonly used: "verbalising the correct answer and asking the learner to repeat or to ask another learner to give the correct answer".

However, SARs need remediation in many other elements of reading like comprehension, fluency, motivation and not just decoding (Boardman, et al., 2008). The need for such support depends on the specific elements learners struggle with and that is why correct diagnosis is necessary (Tankersley, n.d.).

In addition to a lack of support from Namibian teachers, Namibian learners' reading proficiency may be hampered by the Lower Primary's ESL syllabus that seems to have low expectations for second language learners. This can be seen from the comparisons on the required number of vocabulary expected to be known by first language and second language learners in tables 2.5 and 2.6. It should be pointed out that vocabulary was isolated for purposes of comparison only. As far as low expectations is concerned, a study conducted by Robert (2001, p. 3) found that "encouragement and high expectations from both family and teachers along with early reading

success and motivation” improve the reading achievements of even learners from the low-income category.

Table 8: Reading competencies in Grades 1-4 First Language/Mother tongue (MoE, 2005, p. 13)

BASIC COMPETENCIES

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4
Reading	•Demonstrate normal eye control within a vocabulary range of about 500 words:	• Use a reading vocabulary of about 1 000 words	Within an active vocabulary range of about 1 500 words:	Within an active vocabulary range of about 2 000 words:

Table 9: Reading competencies in Grades 5-7 in English Second Language

OBJECTIVE 1	COMPETENCIES		
<i>Learners will:</i>	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
	<i>By the end of Gr. 5 learners should be able to:</i>	<i>By the end of Gr. 6 learners should be able to:</i>	<i>By the end of Gr. 7 learners should be able to:</i>
1. read aloud authentic texts at an appropriate level for a specific purpose and to extend vocabulary	•demonstrate a reading vocabulary of about 1000 words •show increased fluency, appropriate use of stress and intonation identify different types of texts	•read texts to extract specific information and extend vocabulary up to 1500 words	•read texts to extract specific information and extend vocabulary up to 2000 words

Source: (MoE, 2007, p. 9)

Internationally it is widely accepted as good practice that children learn to read and write initially in their home language/mother tongue, and that literacy in an additional language builds on this strong foundation. When children make the transition to reading in their second language, it would be reasonable to expect a vocabulary lag. Perhaps the point worth mentioning is that in a country like Namibia, where children are learning through the medium of English as a second language, one would not expect them to reach the same levels of literacy achievement as that of children who have been reading in English as their mother tongue from the outset. However, one should keep in mind that Namibian learners do not even achieve the same levels of attainment as learners in some other African countries (Makuwa, 2005; Passos, 2009).

It would seem from the tables above that while a Grade 4 (English) first language learner (Table 8) is expected to have an active vocabulary of 2000 words; it is only by Grade 7 that an ESL learner should extend his or her vocabulary to that same level (Table 9). This difference in the amount of vocabulary required between the two groups may explain why second language learners in Namibia fail to read at Grade 6 level. One can assume that by Grade 7, second language learners have very limited sight words due to a limited demand on their efforts and capabilities, a situation exacerbated

by ESL syllabuses not being specific on what teachers should do during remediation (Namibia. MoE, 2007).

2.6.3 Inclusive Education in Namibia

Remediation of reading problems may take place in many ways. However, it would seem that the trend, worldwide, leans toward embracing the inclusion of learners into the mainstream classroom. According to the MoE (2008, p. 47):

Inclusive education at the school level means *ensuring that the physical and social environments are conducive to all learners and that all the necessary teaching and learning aids are in place*. All teachers [**should**] have a foundation in inclusive education and a course in learning support/compensatory teaching (emphasis, mine).

Though physical and social environments may be conducive to all learners, the most important of all is the provision of quality teachers (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2005). Research conducted elsewhere (e.g. Sanders & Horn, 1998; Bailleul, et al., 2008 cited in European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (EADSNE), 2010, p. 7) concluded that "...the quality of the teacher contributes more to learner achievement than any other factor, including class size, class composition, or background". SACMEQ has reported the provision of both physical and social facilities as not being conducive to inclusive education in many schools in Namibia. Additionally, Namibian teachers are yet to be trained in inclusive education.

Some researchers argue that inclusive education is however more than the provision of physical structures; it also refers to the provision of the political and socio-economic environment that is encouraging. Teachers should know, understand and be able to handle learner diversity originating from "age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious background, socio-economic status, disability or special educational needs" (EADSNE, 2010, p. 7). As Harcombe (2005, p. 2) argues:

... if effective inclusionary curricula implementation is expected, educators need to know about the *interactive effects that political and socio-economic structures can have on the development of individuals in all societies, but especially in repressed and / or underdeveloped countries*. This understanding is needed so that *gaps in knowledge and skills can be understood in terms of the environmental interactions that caused them*, thereby enabling practitioners to design and accommodate effectively by firstly, trying to right environmental influences and secondly, by designing accurate support interventions.

According to (EADSNE, 2010, p. 7), the process of inclusion assumes “that the general classroom teacher has certain knowledge and understanding about the needs of different learners, teaching techniques and curriculum strategies”. I argue here that since many Namibian teachers are not yet trained in inclusive education, they would not know how to teach and support SARs. In situations where teachers are trained, the available research suggests some advantages for the implementation of inclusive education. Inclusive classrooms are usually composed of learners with different abilities. Because of this array of learning abilities, some developed countries employ special education teachers and reading specialists to work alongside the content teachers (Mastropieri, Scruggs & Graetz, 2001; Bryant, Linan-Thomson, Ugel, Hamff & Hougen, 2001).

Mastropieri, et al. (2001, p. 272) and Bryant, et al. (2001) are of the opinion that there are however some challenges that might be encountered in secondary inclusive education. Such challenges include teachers’ unenthusiastic stance - as they regard teaching challenged learners as a burden. Research indicates that secondary teachers are more concerned with the completion of their respective syllabuses within a specified time, resulting in a negative attitude towards secondary inclusive education. The other challenge is providing one-to-one tutoring, especially where teachers teach large classes where learners have mixed reading abilities (Makuwa, 2005). In order for teachers to effectively support struggling readers in inclusive classrooms they require adequate time and an intensive training to obtain the necessary skills (Bryant, et al., 2001; Mastropieri, et al., 2001). Furthermore, Mastropieri, et al. (2001) state that the few studies on secondary inclusive ESL classrooms yielded inconsistent results due to a variety of variables. Some ESL research on secondary inclusive education came up with positive results while others were negative.

In order for inclusive education to be effective, there are distinctive variables that should be taken into consideration; Mastropieri & Scruggs (1994) cited in Mastropieri, et al. (2001, p. 266) identified seven:

- **Administrative support.** Inclusive classrooms have administrative support of all stake holders in relation to resources and positive attitude.
- **Support from special education personnel.** Every inclusive classroom is supported by a special education teacher and a general education teacher.
- **Accepting a positive classroom atmosphere.** Individual differences are positively accepted.
- **Appropriate curriculum.** Implementation of curriculum is characterised by meaningful and concrete content as well as relevant and practical activities.
- **Effective general strategy.** Successful teachers in these classrooms have been seen using the SCREAM: S – structure, C – clarity, R – redundancy, E – enthusiasm, A – appropriate pace and M – maximized engagement.
- **Peer assistance.** Successful classrooms use peers to support learners with disability.

- **Disability-specific teaching skills.** Special education teachers provide consultative support to general teachers on effective strategies to use.

However, in Namibia, a shortage of resources like reading materials (including textbooks), special education personnel and special educators who provide consultative support is still a problem. For example, a discussion on remedial education conducted by this researcher with some members of the curriculum panel for Special Education at National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) indicated in February 2009 that very few teachers have been trained to teach inclusively. The committee was still developing a manual to be used to train teachers in this regard.

Mastropieri, et al. (2001, p. 272) conclude that "...findings suggest that overall there is still much to be learned about enhancing the effectiveness of inclusive classrooms", even though variables have been recognised.

Lehr and Harris, (1988, p. 56-62) report on a survey conducted with 156 out of 220 successful teachers of low achievers. The successful teachers were identified by their supervisors. This survey highlighted a long list of skills or competencies crucial to teachers of low achievers, from which only a few of the most significant will be mentioned. According to this research, successful teachers are "accepting, caring, energetic, humorous, patient, creative, and flexible". It also found that such teachers communicate with parents, acknowledge defeat, which makes them seek help, adapt and use a variety of materials. The survey found that such teachers:

- possess organizational skills (for planning, time management and record keeping)
- set realistic goals and objectives for students (should have and be able to show high expectations for all learners, irrespective of their abilities)
- diagnose and evaluate students (assess learners' needs through formal, informal and spur-of-the-moment methods)
- make learning relevant (involve learners: relate new information to their real-life situations and explain reasons for why they have to do things)
- individualize instruction (teach individual learners at their level, using their personal knowledge of the learner)
- utilize small group instruction (know how to form groups)
- utilize a VARIETY of techniques and methods (change methods and sequence materials realistically)
- reteach and give students time to practise the skill or concept; meaningful repetition is essential (have the ability to reteach the same lesson without boring learners)
- know how to teach reading and language arts and skills (have knowledge to develop and use language activities and teach vocabulary using different strategies: defining words, context clues, details, fact/opinion, drawing conclusions, character analysis, affixes)
- have a thorough knowledge of all content areas
- have training in special education (emphasis, the authors)

When it comes to the learning environment, such teachers:

- Are cheerleaders (praise, reward and motivate to increase self-esteem of learners)
- Create a warm, inviting learning environment (have a clean and eye-catching classroom)
- Are firm, consistent, and fair in classroom management (define the rules and the consequence of breaking them; initiate confrontations with a positive remark)
- Consider the TOTAL CHILD – mental, physical and emotional (a concern for the total student; knowledge of subject: what and how student learns; knowledge of different lifestyles by knowing where the learners live) (emphasis, the authors).

When it comes to the importance of the environment Lehr and Harris (1988, p. 11) argue that:

Effective teachers use a variety of materials and strategies to keep their interest. Since many low-achievers also have a negative self-image, a supportive learning environment can help build more positive self-esteem.

Furthermore, Lehr and Harris (1998, p. 11) state, “Low achievers have academic difficulties, but with altered teaching methods, many of them are able to learn”. An inviting and welcoming environment would seem to be more interesting to all learners, including SARs and thus conducive to learning.

2.7 IMPACT OF MOTHER TONGUE READING ON SECOND LANGUAGE LITERACY AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL

2.7.1 The importance of mother tongue reading

Though one’s mother tongue is very important for facilitating early literacy (Cummins, 2001), it is sometimes neglected due to many reasons. For example, mobility of people or decisions taken by a political regime may lead to children not learning their mother tongue – learners may shy away from speaking the language since they do not see its importance; the relationship between children and parents may then be negatively affected (Cummins, 2001). When one’s mother tongue is not taught, it leads to one being taught early literacy in either one’s second language or the predominate lingua franca in one’s environment, a situation that may have a negative impact on one’s literacy development. The ideal situation is for every learner to learn the literacy basics in his or her mother tongue, thus building a firm foundation for second language literacy learning. Research has found that learning to read in one’s first language has many advantages (Cummins, 2001; Krashen, n.d.). For example, Krashen (n.d., p. 1) contends that:

When schools provide children quality education in their primary language, they give them two things: knowledge and literacy. The knowledge that children get through their

first language helps make the English they hear and read more comprehensible. Literacy developed in the primary language transfers to the second language.

In addition, Cummins (2001) argues that learners acquire a firm first language vocabulary and concepts from family members through storytelling and discussions, which positively affects second language reading. Cummins (2001, p. 17) further argues, “The level of development of children’s mother tongue is a strong predictor of their second language development”. Thus if learners can read in their first language, they will transfer the knowledge, concepts and skills into their second language literacy learning. Learning to read in some Namibian indigenous languages has been found to be achieved at a faster rate than learning literacy in English (Veii, 2005; Veii, 2006). In research that assessed predictors resulting from the central processing and script dependent hypothesis in which the reading abilities of 116 Grades 2 – 5 Herero – English bilingual children in Namibia were measured, it was found that learners could learn to read faster in Herero, a more transparent language than English, hence supporting the prediction of script dependency hypothesis. The script dependency hypothesis means that the name of the vowel letter, for example, the letter *a* is equal to its phonological sound /a/, as is the case in many African languages makes learning such a language much easier than learning a language like English. Veii (2005) also found that there were similar fundamental cognitive language skills across the two languages (Herero/English), thus supporting the prediction for the central processing hypothesis. What this suggests is that, since similar cognitive skills form the foundation for literacy learning, learners will be able to transfer common cognitive and meta-cognitive skills into the learning of second language reading.

However, Namibian SARs may not develop a firm vocabulary and concept foundation in their mother tongue due to negligence by those in power. A case in point is that of the Caprivi Region where Silozi, a foreign language from Zambia serves as a language franca and is taught in place of mother tongue after 20 years of independence (Simanga, 2000). One other reason for not developing the mother tongue fully is the absence of qualified mother tongue teachers and the lack of resources written in the mother tongue (Töttemeyer, in press; Krashen, n.d.).

Krashen (n.d.) suggests that the subject matter and literacy taught in first language indirectly supports learners’ English language proficiency. However, if teachers’ education in their own mother tongue is limited, they will not be able to develop their learners’ mother tongue literacy skills to the extent where they transfer such skills to their second language learning.

2.7.2 Is reading in second language a reading ability or language proficiency issue?

ESL teachers – those that teach English as a content subject - are expected to be the custodian of knowledge on how to teach reading, especially where English is the language of instruction. This misconception may lead to the negligence of mother tongue literacy teaching by mother tongue teachers; negligence of literacy teaching by teachers of other subjects and hence the poor development of learners' second language proficiencies and reading abilities.

There is disagreement on the extent to which second language reading (SLR) proficiency is a function of reading ability or language proficiency (Carrell, 1991, p. 159). Carrell (1991) refers to three viewpoints, summarized here:

- Some researchers argue that second language reading depends on first language reading ability (Jolly, 1978 cited in Alderson, 1984; Coady, 1979 cited in Carrell, 1991, p. 159).

According to this view, ineffective reading in mother tongue or the inability to transfer such skills may lead to readers struggling to read in a second language (Coady, 1979; Hudson, 1982 cited in Carrel, 1991). However, Carrell (1991) did not point to the causes for learners' unsuccessful reading in mother tongue nor the failure to transfer such skills to second language learning.

- Bilingual educators see second language reading as the transfer of the first language reading process and that learning to read is an activity that takes place once in the first language and it is then transferred to the second language (Rigg, 1977, Gamez 1979, Goodman, Goodman, & Flores, 1979 cited in Carrell, 1991).

Again, the question of how the first language proficiency compensates for the poor second language ability is not mentioned.

- The last view, however, argues that second language reading is a result of second language proficiency that takes place before any transfer of first language reading skills and processes (Cummins, 1979, Cziko, 1980, Devine, 1987 cited in Carrell, 1991).

The last view seem to suggest that one's second language proficiency should reach a certain level, known as the threshold level before second language reading can effectively take place, a situation that requires quality teachers to be proficient in their second language as well as in reading and inclusive teaching.

The implications from Carrell's (1991) study, is that second language reading instruction should equally address learners' first language reading abilities and their second language proficiency with the purpose of improving their second language reading.

My study however, argues that Namibian learners' poor reading might be the result of teachers' inefficiency in mother tongue teaching, poor reading and poor English language proficiency (Imene & Van Graan, n.d.; Bradley, 2001). Additionally, teachers' ineffectiveness may be compounded by a shortage of resources such as reading texts, in both first language and second language (SACMEQ) as well as lack of communication among educational stakeholders (Siririka, 2007).

2.7.3 ESL teachers' knowledge about SARs

In this section, I discuss the ESL teachers' knowledge of SARs. By knowledge of SARs, I mean whether Grade 9 ESL teachers know the second language and reading abilities of learners they teach and whether they know and can assess their learners' language and reading problems and be in a position to provide the necessary support to SARs.

Research in Austin, Texas found that Grade 6 teachers had relatively sufficient knowledge about struggling readers (Bryant, et al., 2001, p. 261). The research found that teachers know what such learners are faced with; they know which family background they come from and the effect repeated failure has on their reading abilities and vocabulary; they are able to describe problems learners experience "with basic reading skills" such as "decoding, vocabulary and comprehension". Bryant, et al. (2001, p. 261) also found that teachers in their study were committed and enthusiastic about finding solutions to their learners' reading problems but lacked relevant and sufficient professional development support with research-based reading strategies – reading strategies that has been proved to effectively improve the reading proficiencies of SARs.

However, it was evident from Bryant, et al.,'s (2001) research that bridging the reading gap between the successful and the struggling readers in inclusive classrooms was a challenge. It required successful collaboration between general teachers and the reading specialists (those specially trained to teach reading as a subject) on the one hand and professional staff development and support given by a variety of specialists. However, apart from a few school counsellors, there do not seem to be any support specialists in Namibia, especially on how to teach reading. In a discussion I held with a Special Education lecturer from the University of Namibia (UNAM), invited to come and co-train at an ESL Remedial teaching workshop for Grades 5-10 facilitating teachers at NIED from 26 to 28 May 2009, I learnt that there were a few teachers trained as Reading Teachers in the early 90's. He further stated that there was once a 2-year diploma course

offered by UNAM to train Special Education teachers. Unfortunately, the course has been phased out and many Reading Teachers are currently working in different private schools, which have a relatively small intake of learners compared to government schools. An undisclosed number of Special Education teachers trained by UNAM are deployed all over the country. Unfortunately, no known research has been conducted to ascertain the effectiveness of the UNAM Special Education Diploma and this researcher could not obtain the reason that led to its phasing out while still in its embryonic stage.

Some of the teachers who attended the Remedial Teaching workshop referred to above had expressed a great need for a workshop that could assist them on how to handle SARs. The need for professional developmental on reading strategies by general teachers does not seem to be a Namibian problem only. It seems to be experienced in other countries as well. Fischer (1999, p. 326) argues that:

Most high school teachers, including English teachers, are not trained to teach reading. Even those content area teachers who have taken preservice or inservice reading courses generally avoid incorporating literacy practices into their lessons.

Furthermore, Bryant, et al. (2001, p. 257) argue that:

... teachers indicated that they were “at a loss” as to how to teach effectively so many [ability] levels in the class, that they had not been prepared in how to teach struggling readers in content area classroom and that they wanted to learn new techniques

Diamond (2006, p. 1) contends that:

To improve achievement for struggling readers in particular, secondary schools must design programs and curricula to address students’ lack of background knowledge, delayed English language development and limited success in reading. The best approach is a systems approach, which sets high expectations for all students and includes specialized, intensive interventions for under-prepared students.

This study argues that in order for secondary schools to design comprehensive programmes and lessons that would improve the achievement of struggling readers, ESL teachers should have the expertise and skills to teach second language reading during pre-service or in-service training. Unfortunately, such training seems to be lacking in Namibia (Voigts, 1998; Makuwa, 2005; Töttemeyer, in press). Similarly, research seems to agree that secondary teachers lack such skills and knowledge about reading strategies, a situation exacerbated by secondary school teachers’ perception of themselves as not teachers of reading; and their expectation of encountering fluent,

successful and efficient secondary school readers; and lack of confidence to teach SARs how to read (Bryant, et al., 2001; Bintz, 1997). Teachers also stressed that they were not trained to teach SARs as the quotations by Bryant, et al. (2001) and Fischer (1999) above point out. Additionally, Laverick (2002, p. 144) argues that:

Many teachers at this level are, understandably, content driven; they see themselves as teachers of their specific subject area, not teachers of reading. It is often assumed that high school students are able to read, comprehend, and remember a chapter or article assigned for homework, and that reading instruction is only addressed at the elementary level.

The same sentiments are echoed by Bintz (1997); Kamil (2003); Moats (2001); August & Shanahan (2006); Boardman, et al. (2008). Because secondary school teachers are concerned with the subject content, they may not see the need to learn how to teach reading. However, research suggests that teachers need not only to know about reading strategies, but also which specific strategies fit individual learners' reading ability needs because only when the instruction is flexible and based on individual learner's needs will it be beneficial to the learner (Schifinis, 1999; Torgesen & Miller, 2009). Gersten, Vaughn, Deshler and Schiller (1997) cited in Bryant, et al. (2001, p. 253) argue that reading strategies should not only be suited to learners' needs "... but also responsive to the immediate needs of teachers". Alexander and Murphy (1998, p. 33) cited in McEwan (2007, p. 1) contend, "*To assume that one can simply have students memorize and routinely execute a set of strategies is to misconceive the nature of strategic processing or executive control*" (emphasis, the authors).

Research has revealed some effective strategies and reading models that teachers could use to teach and support SARs if only they knew how. Laverick (2002) recommends the B-D-A strategy, a strategy modelled on the K-W-L (what I know, what I want to know and what I will learn) strategy. In the B-D-A strategy, learners are trained to do different activities in each reading phase: B – stands for brainstorm, which teachers conduct before learners start reading (the stage known by some as the pre-reading stage). For example, they could either individually, in pairs, in small groups or in plenary session - note down their ideas about the topic. The D – stands for during reading activities. During this stage, they write down new information on the topic. It is also known as the while-reading stage by other writers. The last stage is the A – stage, which refers to post activities (post-reading stage). These could include summarization of what they have just learnt on the new content (Laverick, 2002, p. 145).

It should, however, be noted that the B-D-A strategy can be used to teach learners of any reading abilities. Because not all SARs have similar reading problems, teachers need to identify the reading element or component with which they struggle. Reviews of research on SARs identified a variety of instructional practices to teach and support SARs in each reading element/component such as decoding, fluency, reading comprehension (Boardman et al., 2008; Biancarosa & Snow, 2004). In addition, McEwan (2007, p. 1) identified “7 strategies of highly effective readers” that teachers need to include in their daily teaching to improve the reading comprehension of their learners and these are “activating, inferring, monitoring-clarifying, questioning, searching-selecting, summarizing, and visualizing-organizing”. In the next section, I discuss the theoretical framework for teaching SARs by looking at a variety of reading models.

For instructional strategies in each reading component, the readers are hereby referred to the tables adapted from Boardman et al. (2008) attached as Appendix 5.

2.8 DEFINING ADOLESCENT READING MODELS

2.8.1 The Simple View of Reading and the expanded reading model for adolescents

Gough and Tunmer (1984) cited in Whithear (2009) have developed a reading model known as the Simple View of Reading. According to the Simple View of Reading, reading has two major components which are equally important: decoding and language comprehension (Hoover & Gough, 1990; Deshler & Hock, 2007; Whithear, 2009). This view posits that reading will take place as long as either component is not zero, a prediction confirmed by Hoover and Gough (1990). Accordingly, successful instruction must address both components.

However, Hoover and Gough’s (1990) study involved younger children. Adolescents’ reading needs, especially those in secondary schools, are more complex (Whithear, 2009). Adolescents are expected to read accurately and fluently, get meaning by processing textual information and then apply their acquired skills in new academic and lifelong related situations (Whithear, 2009). According to Deshler, Hock and Catts (2006, p. 2) research indicates that efficient readers are “good at sight-word recognition and decoding new words”. They further argue, “Beyond word reading, skilled readers rely on language and metacognitive skills to derive meaning from text” and that “...skilled readers use their knowledge of word meaning, grammar, and text structures to build an initial understanding of text” which may be incomplete but useful as a starting point. Walter Kintsch’s model (1994) cited in Deshler and Hock (2007, p. 3) (see also Deshler, Hock & Catts, (2006) for more discussion) expanded the language comprehension component (see Figure 2.1

below) to include “prior or background knowledge”, a component that must be integrated with the text for a deeper understanding. Additionally, Deshler and Hock (2007) posit that the interaction of word recognition and linguistic or language comprehension leads to reading comprehension. Differentiating between reading for understanding where one will be able to answer the end of text questions and learn from texts, Kintsch (1994) cited in Deshler and Hock (2007, p. 2) advocated that “cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies (executive process) can and must be taught to struggling readers...to help them compensate for lack of prior knowledge”.

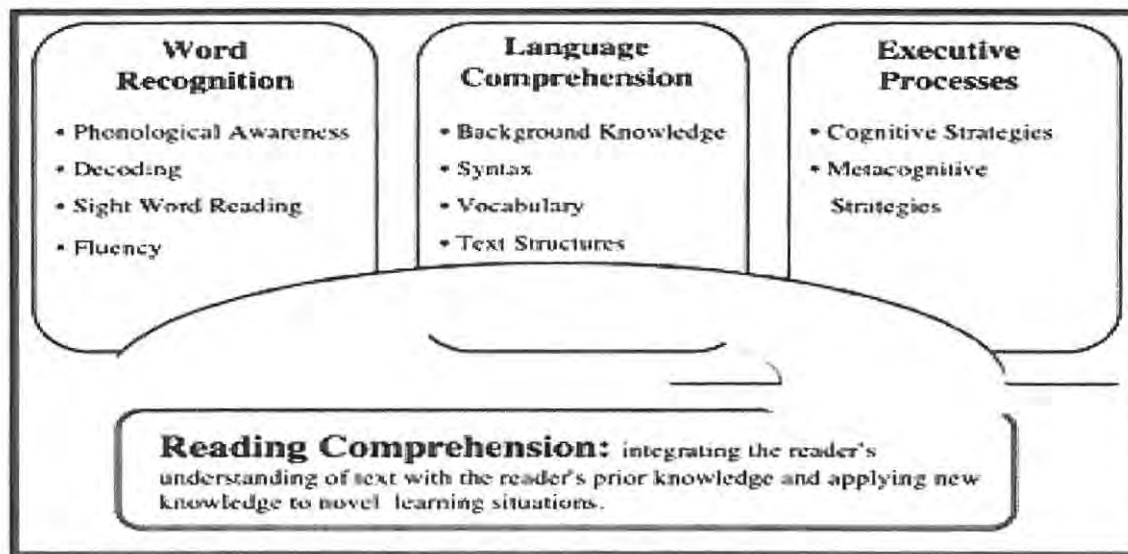


Figure 2: Adolescent Reading Theoretical Model Adapted from Deshler and Hock, 2007, p. 3

The Adolescent Reading Theoretical Model is helpful in thinking about whether an ESL reader’s problem is a reading problem or a language problem or both. For example, if a learner could read well in their home language but their English was not good, they would have good word recognition and good executive processes in Mother Tongue, but poor language comprehension in English and thus poor reading comprehension in English. The teacher’s task would be to improve the learner’s English language then the learner would be able to transfer the good word recognition and executive processing skills resulting in good reading comprehension.

According to Deshler and Hock (2007), the framework in Figure 2.1 above should guide instructional programmes and interventions for SARs. According to the framework, SARs need instruction in word recognition, language comprehension and executive process for effective reading comprehension. Underlying this framework is the assumption that though some adolescents still need instruction in decoding skills, many of them have acquired this skill by secondary school phase (Deshler & Hock, 2007). However, research has found that reading failure

embodied by dyslexia is sometimes due to failure in decoding (Doehring, Trites, Patel & Fiedorowics, 1981, Seymore & Porpodas, 1980, Snowling, 1980, Vellino 1979 cited in Hoover & Gough, 2007, p. 154). For learners who cannot decode, they need to be taught how to use decoding strategies (Boardman et al., 2008). Research has also found that proficient readers use executive or cognitive processes depicted in the right hand of Figure 2.1 above (Kamhi, 2005, Kintsch, 2004, Pressley, 2000, Pressley & Hilden, 2004 cited in Deshler & Hock, 2007, p. 2; Boardman et al., 2008; Pang, 2008).

Greater understanding of texts takes place when readers use cognitive strategies. However, if teachers were not trained to teach reading and they are not aware of reading strategies, they will not be able to train SARs to use cognitive strategies. It should be pointed out here that Deshler and Hock (2007)'s model seems to have omitted a very important aspect of an adolescent stage, i.e. adolescents being occupied with the self and how they need motivation (Boardman et al., 2008). In addition, I argue that without considering ways of motivating adolescents, instruction might not be effective.

2.8.2 The Strategic Instructional Model (SIM)

The literature indicates that the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) – a model based and built on research conducted with younger children (Lyon, et al., 1997, McCardle & Chhabara, 2000 cited in Deshler, Hoch & Catts, 2006, p. 2) is related to the Simple View of Reading Model and is an improvement of the Adolescent Reading Model (Figure 2.1). This is because it includes motivation, an important aspect regarding adolescents. Motivation is related to and tied in with one's self-concept; if one is motivated, one would be willing to exert effort to improve one's competency which may in turn improve one's self-efficacy (Alvermann, 2001; Garbe, Holle & Weinhold, 2009). SIM has a reading core component that is sub-divided into two parts: the reading core and the peripheral area comprised motivation, positive behavior and the executive processes. According to the SIM, instruction in each sub-component of word recognition will give the reader "access to accurate word recognition and increased reading accuracy, rate, and prosody" while instruction in language comprehension includes instruction in vocabulary and "instruction in the strategic processes involved in comprehending a variety of written text structures" (Deshler & Hock, 2006, p. 9). Language comprehension will provide the reader with the "skills, strategies, and executive processes necessary to integrate text information with prior knowledge, monitor understanding, and bring meaning to what is being read" (Deshler &

Hock, 2006, p. 9). According to the SIM programme, reading instruction is surrounded by an environment that encourages motivation as can be seen in Figure 3 below.

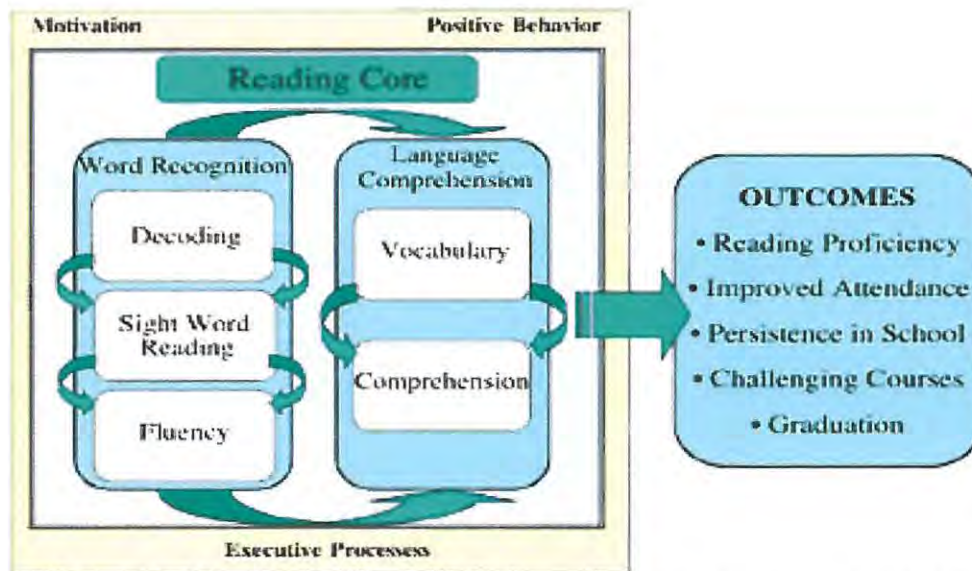


Figure 3: *SIM Reading Programme*: Adapted from Deshler and Hock, 2007, p. 4 (NB: also see Deshler and Hoch: 2006, p. 9 for Figures 2 and 3).

Deshler and Hock (2006, p. 9) states that factors like “personal reflection”, “goal setting”, “highly engaging literature”, “classroom activities” structured around “the principles of positive classroom management techniques and cooperative learning experiences” can be used to increase motivation and end in improved reading competence. However, Both Figures 2 and 3 above do not provide strategies and texts teachers can use to teach SARs to read. I further argue that ESL secondary school teachers need to be trained: how to identify, teach and train SARs to achieve each of the reading core areas; to know how to motivate learners with reading problems; to know how and when to take and use correct executive process and to know how to inculcate positive behaviour in order to improve the SARs’ reading competence. Research, for example, Bintz (1997) has proved that ESL secondary school teachers are not trained to teach and support SARs. In Namibia, ESL secondary teachers’ situation may not only be aggravated by the strategies and texts to use to teach SARs, but also by the lack of resources in general (Voigts, 1998; Makuwa, 2005; Töttemeyer: in press) and “highly engaging literature” in particular Deshler and Hock’s (2006, p. 9).

2.9 READING MODELS WITH WHICH TO ORGANISE THE INSTRUCTION FOR SARs

In this section, I discuss some reading models that show other aspects absent from *the Simple View of Reading*, the *Adolescent Reading Theoretical Model* and the *SIM Reading Programme*. I also discuss texts that teachers of SARs may use in conjunction with recommended strategies.

2.9.1 Other Reading Models

In this section, I discuss a few other reading models from different researchers, starting with Boardman et al.'s (2008) model. According to the National Reading Panel report: 2000, cited in Boardman et al. (2008, p. 2), there are five crucial areas for early reading and each "contributes to the reading process". These are *phonemic* awareness (a process that involves differentiating sounds that comprise a word); *phonics* (a process of identifying sounds linked to letters); *fluency* (reading without effort); *vocabulary* (comprehending and using words in all four skills of language), and *comprehension* (the goal for reading). In addition, (Boardman et al. 2008, p. 3) posit that instruction for older readers is organized into the following five areas: word study, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and motivation, excluding phonemic awareness and phonics. These areas are termed the reading elements or reading components by Peterson, Caverly, Nicholson, O'Neal and Cusenbary (2000).

Boardman et al. (2008) present reading or instructional strategies per reading component which I present in two tables in Appendix 5 in summary form due to their relevance to this study. In addition to strategies per reading component, Boardman et al. (2008, pp. 21-26, 27-31) found that to support struggling adolescent readers, teachers should:

- Activate Prior Knowledge by previewing text before reading
- Use Graphic Organizers
- Teach Comprehension Monitoring Strategies
- Teach Summarization Skills
- Teach Students to Ask and Answer Questions
- Use Multi-Component Comprehension Strategy Instruction
- Provide Content Goals for Reading
- Support Student Autonomy
- Use Interesting Texts
- Increase Opportunities for Students to Collaborate during Reading

When it comes to reading instruction for adolescents, Armbruster, Lehr and Osborn (2003, p. 55) state "...reading to learn subject matter does not occur automatically once students have "learned to read". Furthermore, Biancarosa and Snow (2004, p. 8) state that:

Most older struggling readers can *read* words accurately, but they do not *comprehend* what they read, for a variety of reasons. For some, the problem is that they do not yet read words with enough fluency to facilitate comprehension. Others can read accurately and quickly enough for comprehension to take place, but they lack the strategies to help them comprehend what they read (emphasis, the authors).

However, where English is a second language for both learners and teachers, many learners may struggle with phonemic awareness and fluency problems and they therefore need to be taught reading strategies for each of these elements.

Another model from Bryant et al. (2001, p. 254) refers to the following reading strategies that inclusive content area teachers could implement in their classes:

- Collaborative strategic reading
- Partner reading
- Word identification
- Lecture
- Modelling
- Guided activities

However, Bryant does not define or give examples of such strategies. The first two will be explained below because they seem to be similar and thus may be confusing. During Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), a teacher sets some tasks that may lead learners during the three stages of reading and is explained by Klingner & Vaughn (1998) as shown in the table below:

Table 10: CSR's Plan for Strategic Reading

<p>Before Reading</p> <p>1. Preview</p> <p>a. Brainstorm: What do we already know about the topic?</p> <p>b. Predict: What do we think we will learn about the topic when we read the passage?</p> <p>READ (the first paragraph or section)</p> <p>During Reading</p> <p>2. Click and Clunk</p> <p>a. Were there any parts that were hard to understand (clunks)?</p> <p>b. How can we fix the clunks? Use fix-up strategies [such as to]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- reread the sentence and look for key ideas to help you understand the word.- reread the sentence with the clunk and the sentences before or after the clunk looking for clues.- look for a prefix or suffix in the word.

- break the word apart and look for smaller words.

3. Get the Gist

a. What is the most important person, place, or thing [in the text]?

b. What is the most important idea about the person, place, or thing [in the text]?

R E A D (Do Steps 2 and 3 again, with all the paragraphs or sections in the passage.)

After Reading

4. Wrap Up

a. Ask questions: What questions would show we understand the most important information? What are the answers to those questions?

Haag (2003-2009, p. 1) describes how partner reading is done:

Whisper Reading - Each student in the group whispers the passages independently as the teacher moves to listen to and monitor each learner.

Choral Reading - Read together, side by side, the book placed between the partners.

Echo Reading - One partner reads a line. The other partner repeats the line.

Expressive Reading - One partner reads a chunk. The other reads the chunk with expression.

Part Reading - One partner reads the characters' parts in voices. The other partner reads the narrator's parts.

Taking Turns - One partner reads a sentence, paragraph or page. The other reads the next sentence, paragraph or page.

Rehearsal Reading - The teacher assigns an individual page or part to each child. Each learner in the group (of 4-6) takes time to practice that reading independently - suggested 3 times - while teacher works with other learners. The student must try using known strategies first and then ask the teacher. The idea is to come back to group and read the part fluently - even names. When each person reads his/her part, the whole story or article is read aloud expressively and each reader feels successful.

Silent Reading - Partners read silently, sitting near one another so that they can ask each other for help when they need it [emphasis, authors'].

While some of the stages in partner reading are intended for younger learners, a discussion with three white teachers who were trained in Remedial teaching on 2 May 2009 at NIED indicated that these strategies could also be used for SARs. However, their effectiveness still needs to be researched / determined.

It should be pointed out the reading strategies discussed above have been identified by many researchers who claim their success in improving the reading achievement of readers in general and SARs in particular (Alvermann, 2000; Armbruster & Osborn, 2003; Francis, et al., 2006; Frey & Fisher, no date; Kamil, 2003; McEwen, 2007; National Institute for Literacy, 2007; Kamil, Dole, Kral, Salinger & Torgesen, 2008).

During the review and analysis of existing research about literacy instruction by Kamil (2003, p. 13-14) strategies reported above were grouped into eight research-based strategies:

- comprehension monitoring (Bereiter & Bird, 1985) – a strategy in which learners can be taught to use ‘fix-up’ strategies such as “restating, looking back and even looking ahead for clues” that may assist them;
- Cooperative learning (Klingner, Vaughn, & Schumm, 1998) – in which small groups are used;
- Graphic organizers (Bean & Steenwyk, 1984) – can be used in pre-, while- and post-reading stages;
- Story structure (Singer & Donlan, 1982) – by which learners will learn about “setting, initiation events, internal reactions, goals, attempts and outcomes”;
- Question answering (Raphael & Pearson, 1985) – a comprehension strategy that teaches learners how to use text and background information to answer questions;
- Question generating (Rosenshine, Meister & Chapman, 1996) – a strategy that can be used in combination with ‘Reciprocal teaching’ (Palinscar & Brown, 1984) – which teaches learners to generate questions which they will then answer;
- Summarization (Brown & Day, 1983; Brown, Day & Jones, 1983) – a strategy by which learners are taught to read and extract essential information
- Multiple strategies (Palinscar & Brown, 1984) – a strategy that is said to be similar to “Reciprocal teaching”, teaches learners to employ multiple strategies simultaneously.

Kamil (2003, p. 27) further stresses the utilization of the eight instruction strategies in combination with the solution of what is termed the ‘infrastructure problem’, defined as the provision of “high-quality, ongoing professional development in literacy” to secondary school teachers through coaching by reading specialists. Another model developed by Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw & Ryclik (1999) refers to the importance of support given to SARs by teachers, parents, communities and government in the form of ‘time, reading material, choice to select materials “they can and want to read”’ (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw & Ryclik, 1999, p. 4). In order for comprehension strategies to be effective, Kamil, Dole, Kral, Salinger & Torgesen (2008, p. 17) argue that learners need to be actively involved. In addition, Frey and Fisher’s (no date, p. 11) reading model identified other factors affecting the reading abilities of SARs depending on availability. These are ‘access to reading materials’, ‘a comfortable environment in which to read’, ‘encouragement through discussion about reading’, ‘staff training on principles of SSR’ [sustained silent reading], ‘non-accountability of students’ (i.e., no book reports or other formal assessments), ‘follow-up activities through shared experiences’ and ‘distributed time to read each day, not just once a week’. In this study, I argue that getting learners to be actively involved needs creativity and imagination on the part of teachers, which often requires pre-service and in-service training (Wren, 2002). However, such training and teacher support from stakeholders is minimal if not lacking altogether in Namibia. Secondary school teachers’ professional training regarding the teaching of reading seems to be neglected since it is usually believed learners should be reading by the time they reach secondary school, a fact testified by lack of research at this phase. Research by Siririka (2007)

found that some Namibian parents are not involved in their children’s education. According to USAID Namibia (2006), parents lack the necessary skills and confidence to engage teachers on the education of their children.

2.9.2 The Reading Instruction Cycle

In this section I describe The Reading Instruction Cycle as reported in the ADORE Report Garbe, Holle & Weinhold (2009). The Reading Instruction Cycle is a reading model developed in opposition to the traditional organisational models. Garbe, Holle, & Weinhold (2009, p. 91) compared the teaching and support of SARs from the 11 European countries: Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Romania, and Austria and presented their findings in the Adore Report. The Adore team concluded that “the main principle of good practice” for SARs is “best reflected by a cyclical sequence”. At the core of these models is the support that improves a learner’s self-concept and self-esteem (see Figures 4 below). A person’s self-concept is defined as one’s beliefs, attitude and opinions about oneself while self-esteem refers to one’s worthiness. The literature states that motivation and self-concept affect one’s achievement while self-efficacy is in turn affected by one’s achievement.

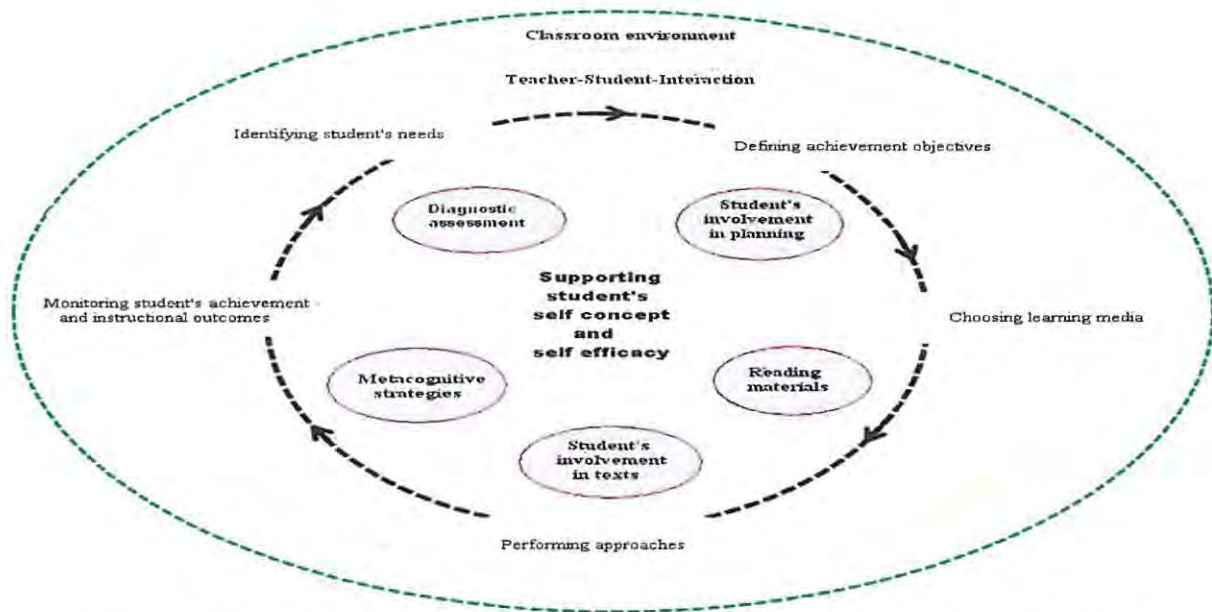


Figure 4: ADORE’s Reading Instruction Cycle: Adopted from Garbe, Holle and Weinhold (2009, p. 16).

This model is different from the other models reported so far because it considers factors like diagnostic assessment, identification of learners’ needs and defining of objectives in addition to factors indicated by the Simple View of Reading and the Adolescent Theoretical Reading Model.

Apart from the principles of good practice in Figure 2.3 above, Garbe, Holle and Weinhold (2009, p. 87) also identified intertwined and interlinked fundamental conditions for good practice necessary to support SARs and these are 'teacher's participation', 'national reading research', 'legal and financial resources', 'multi-professional support', 'teacher training and professional development' and lastly, 'community support and involvement'. At the core of these principles is the support for the learner's 'self-concept and self-efficacy' surrounded by 'classroom practice'.

However, I argue that where teachers' English language proficiency and reading abilities are poor as the case in Namibia (Voigts, 1998; Makuwa, 2005; Bradley, 2001; Imene and van Graan, n.d.; Töttemeyer, in press), designing diagnostic assessments, setting and making sure the objectives set are achieved in a lesson may prove to be difficult.

To sum up this section on reading models and strategies, I argue that the teaching of reading strategies, particularly comprehension strategies used by proficient readers, improves the reading abilities of struggling readers in general and SARs in particular. However, it is the teaching, modelling and demonstration of such strategies, coupled with the use of texts relevant in terms of age and interest and the extra support from all stakeholders in addition to the improvement of one's second language proficiency that makes a difference (Wise, 2005; Deshler & Hock, 2007; Garbe, Holle & Weinhold, 2009). Presently, such support and resources seem to be lacking in Namibia.

2.10 CHARACTERISTICS OF TEXTS AND READING MATERIALS TO BE USED

Though proficiency in word recognition, second language comprehension and efficient use of executive strategies may be present in a motivating environment, without suitable materials or texts, SARs may still fail to improve their reading abilities. Thomas (2007, p. 1) asserts, "Teachers of older struggling readers must take care to select materials that are age appropriate and that students can read fluently enough to comprehend".

Garbe, Holle and Weinhold (2009, p. 153) further contend, "Finding the balance between interests, abilities and offers of reading material is, however, vital for adolescents who are poor readers."

Age appropriate materials' (Thomas, 2007) would go a long way in supporting SARs' reading abilities. Being in a developmental phase, SARs become interested in what is taking place around them and how they relate to it (Alvermann, 2001; Frey & Fisher, n.d). According to research, they

are in the phase where they question and challenge almost everything around them, making it more difficult for secondary teachers to teach and support them. SARs thus need resources that provide them with answers to questions about such changes (Frey & Fisher, n.d., p. 5).

In addition to age appropriateness, Lenters (2006) indicates interest as one of the important criteria teachers should keep in mind when selecting materials and texts for SARs. Lenters (2006, p. 137) states that in addition to lack of purpose for reading assignments, “lack of interest in the reading materials they are provided with was universally mentioned as a component of their resistance”. Garbe, Holle and Weinhold (2009, p. 123) argue that “diversity of reading materials” and how often learners read them play “a crucial role in reading engagement”, together with “authenticity” and “own choice”. Materials may be engaging to one reader and not to the other. For that reason, learners, especially SARs, need freedom to choose their own texts. Authentic materials not only refer to personalised engaging materials, they also refer to real-life materials not initially meant for teaching like magazines, comics or newspapers. The multimodalities of such materials will act as a pull-factor for many SARs. The reason is that they are colourful and contain many “diagrams and graphs” (Garbe, Holle & Weinhold, 2009, p. 125).

When selecting reading texts, teachers should also keep in mind that individual learners are interested in different genres. Research by Smith and Wilhelm (2002) cited in Frey and Fisher (n.d., p. 12) reported having found that boys, for example, are more interested in “reading texts that are less commonly sanctioned by the school, such as comics and graphic novels, as well as books containing humor” and “science fiction and fantasy, as well as informational texts”. Unfortunately, teachers prescribe texts that make learners find reading “boring, no fun” (Frey & Fisher, n.d., p. 12). In addition, “material that will appeal to linguistically and culturally diverse students” and those on which individual learners (including SARs) have “background knowledge” have been found to improve the reading comprehension of learners (Snow & Biancarosa, 2003, p. 16). However, in the Namibian context, there is a need for research to find out which reading component Namibian SARs struggle with. There is also a need for a research to be carried out on characteristics of texts and reading materials that appeal to SARs in Namibia.

2.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the literature that supports my study. In it, I described the background information related to the Namibian education system, provided examples of proficient and struggling readers’ profiles and concluded with strategies including reading models and other important factors that will improve the reading comprehension of SARs.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents my research design or what Philliber, Schwab and Samloss (1980) cited in Yin (1984) term a blueprint. It reminds the reader about my research goals and research questions, describes and justifies the choices made in relation to the approach, instruments and the “procedures employed to obtain the subjective data that form the basis for analysis and further understanding” (Bloland, 1992, p. 2). Its framework comprises the research goals and questions, the research design, sampling, data collection, ethical issues, validity, data analysis, limitations and conclusion.

3.2 THE RESEARCH GOALS AND QUESTIONS

This study has been guided by its goals. Hammersley (1992, p. 28) cited in Maxwell (2005, p. 15-16) observed that:

...your goals inevitably shape the descriptions, interpretations, and theories you create in your research. They therefore constitute not only important *resources* that you can draw on in planning, conducting, and justifying the research, but also potential *validity threats*, or sources of bias for the research results, that you will need to deal with (*italics – author’s emphasis*).

The goals of my research were to investigate how English Second Language (ESL) teachers teach and support SARs to read in Grade 9:

- To find out what methods and strategies teachers use
- To find out what resources they use and how they select them

The purpose of this research was therefore to find answers to the following research questions:

- What strategies and methods do ESL teachers use to teach SARs to read?
- Why do they use these strategies and methods?
- What kind of texts/resources do ESL teachers use to teach SARs to read? How do they select these texts?

I now describe how I designed my research in order to answer my questions and achieve my goals.

3.3 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is the logic that links data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial questions of a study. (Yin, 1984, p.27)

A research design maps the pathway that one has to follow when conducting a research project. Philliber, Schwab and Samsloss (1980) cited in Yin (1984, p. 29) refer to it as a “blueprint of research, dealing with at least four problems: what questions to study, what data are relevant, what to collect, and how to analyse the results”. Considering the purpose and context of my research, I adopted a heuristic qualitative research design within the interpretive paradigm. Qualitative research is heuristic when themes and patterns are generated from the collected data (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). Furthermore Seliger and Shohamy (1989) state that research is heuristic if there is very little or no manipulation of the context by the investigator. I decided to locate my research within this paradigm because of the opportunities it offered me to understand participants’ actions and decisions taken in their context (Key, 1997). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000, p. 22) argue that the

...interpretive paradigm ... is characterized by a concern for the individual. ...the central endeavour in the context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of experience. To retain the integrity of the phenomena being investigated, efforts are made to get inside the person and to understand from within.

A qualitative research paradigm has distinctive characteristics. Table 11 presents Key’s (1997) characteristics and their functions.

Table 11: Characteristics of qualitative research, adapted from Key (1997: 1):

CHARACTERISTICS:	PURPOSE:
• Purpose	Understanding - seeks to understand people’s interpretations
• Reality	Dynamic - reality changes with changes in people’s perceptions
• Viewpoint	Insider - reality is what people perceive it to be
• Values	Value bound - values will have an impact and should be understood and taken into account when conducting and reporting research
• Focus	Holistic - a total or complete picture is sought
• Orientation	Discovery - theories and hypotheses evolve from data as collected
• Data	Subjective - data are perceptions of the people in the environment
• Instrumentation	Human – the human person is the primary collection instrument
• Conditions	Naturalistic - investigations are conducted under natural conditions
• Results	Valid – the focus is on design and procedures to gain "real," "rich," and "deep" data

Lincoln and Denzin (1994), cited in Anderson and Arsenault (1998, p. 120) sum up these characteristics through their definition of qualitative research:

...[It] is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interviews, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives.

Using a qualitative methodology, I was able to employ a variety of methods to investigate the strategies, methods and texts or resources used by five Grade 9 ESL teachers to teach SARs in their respective classrooms, with very little interference or manipulation by me, the researcher.

However, it should be pointed out here that my presence and that of the video recorder diminished the authenticity of the research context somewhat. Nonetheless, the adopted approach was appropriate for investigating the five ESL secondary school teachers' expressions and deeds, analysing the collected data using a variety of methods and reporting it in a narrative and descriptive manner (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 2). Patton (1990, p. 10) refers to these expressions and deeds as participants' "experiences and perceptions".

This approach offered the utility of a case study. Anderson and Arsenault (1998: 152) define a case study as "a holistic research method that uses multiple sources of evidence to analyze or evaluate a specific phenomenon or instance".

In addition, Patton (1990, p. 54) argues that:

A case can be a person, an event, a program, an organization, a time period, a critical incident, or a community. Regardless of the unit of analysis a qualitative case study seeks to describe that unit in depth and detail, in context, and holistically.

This research is a case study of five Grade 9 ESL secondary school teachers and the methods they use to teach SARs to read. The major element of this research was to gain an in-depth understanding of their viewpoints and decisions that they take regarding strategies, methods and resources, and why they use such methods. Being a case study, the findings are not generalizable.

3.4 SAMPLING

The research literature talks of two types of sampling: probability or random sampling and the non-probability, also referred to as purposive sampling. This research utilizes non-probability sampling since it was based on convenience and purpose. Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delpont (2005, p. 329) argue that:

in purposive sampling a particular case is chosen because it illustrates some features or process that is of interest for a particular study ... [in which] the researcher must first think critically about the parameters of the population and then choose the sample case accordingly

In addition, Patton (1990) states that the reason for purposeful sampling is to choose a case that is wealthy in information to provide an in-depth understanding of the case. This study used purposive and convenience sampling. The convenience element was to select some schools in the Caprivi region where I used to work and where my family lives and some schools in the Otjozondjupa region where I currently work. The total number of schools were five: two from the Caprivi region, Luvuma and Jaba Secondary Schools (pseudonyms of schools and teachers are used); and three from the Otjozondjupa region: Nanvwi, Matako and Nandanvu Secondary Schools.

The criteria for selecting the schools were as follows: they

- had to be secondary schools.
- should have SARs in Grade 9. These would be identified either by their teachers or by means of testing using one of the PIRLS 2001 sub-tests (Mullis, Martin, Gonzalez & Kennedy, 2003). The teachers' knowledge of their learners, the fact that they are repeaters or that they have been transferred [a policy of automatic promotion after failing a grade for the second time] from Grade 8 to Grade 9 were also used as indicators. There was a possibility that Grade 8 SARs would still be found in Grade 9. Grade 10 was not chosen because there was a possibility that by this time SARs may have dropped out of school.
- should be rural or semi rural schools. The reason for this is because the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring of Educational Quality (SACMEQ) II report found that grade 6 learners in rural and semi-rural schools performed poorly in a reading test compared to their urban counterparts. Since research has proved that learners who struggle to read in Grade 3 would still do so even in upper grades, there was a probability of learners who struggled to read in Grade 6 still being found in Grade 9, especially in rural and semi-rural secondary schools.

- should be offering English Second Language.
- should be government schools. Ministry of Education and Culture (Namibia. MEC, 1993) states that the government schools were poorly resourced during the colonial era. At the same time, the SACMEQ II report (Namibia. MESC, 2004, p. 10) found that by 2004, “very little amount of money ... is actually spent on learner classroom resources such as textbooks”.

The numbers of participating teachers were only five because of the time limitations and limited scope of a MEd half thesis. The five teachers were the following:

Table 12: Pseudonyms of teachers and their respective schools

TEACHERS	SCHOOLS	REGION
Mr Rhino	Jaba Secondary School	Caprivi Region
Ms Mwinte	Luvuma Secondary School	Caprivi Region
Mr Muusa	Nanvwi Secondary School	Otjozondjupa Region
Ms Zima	Matako Secondary School	Otjozondjupa Region
Ms Mbuli	Nandavu secondary School	Otjozondjupa Region

The five teachers were selected on the following bases:

- They should be teaching Grade 9 ESL in government schools.
- They should have been teaching ESL in Grade 9 for at least five or more years. I felt that a teacher with five years or more experience would have encountered SARs and thus have the experience of teaching SARs and I would thus learn more from them. As will be seen in Chapters 4 and 5, however, this was not to be.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

The purpose of my research directed me to the type of research design to be conducted. I decided to collect data using observation, interviewing, document analysis or a combination of all three where possible.

3.5.1 Observations

The literature talks of structured observation at one extreme, which uses some form of schedule while on the other extreme is unstructured observation, which does not use any form of schedule. In my study, I went in with a minimal structure that contained the following headings based on my research goals and questions:

- Strategies used to teach SARs to read

- Resources used
- Classroom organisation.

Four lessons taught by Ms Mwinte covering the four main language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing were observed, while five lessons taught by Mr Rhino were also observed. These were three lessons on reading skills and one lesson each on speaking, listening and writing. Mr Muusa offered two lessons: reading and writing. Ms Zima and Ms Mbuli each offered one reading lesson only. They both decided to teach reading on learning the title of my research from the letter I wrote to them and also from the semi-structured interview conducted before the lesson observations.

A video recorder was utilised to record data because I wanted to gather as much information as possible as it unfolded; other observation instruments like the tally system may result in the elimination of useful information. Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner and Steinmetz (1991, p. 48) argue that:

The seemingly most mundane happenings may be crucial in hindsight. In any case, it is impossible at the beginning to judge whether what seems trivial or important is really so in the larger, longer scheme of things.

I decided to use video recording with the help of an assistant while I wrote down as much information as I could to supplement what was video recorded, paying attention to the strategies and the texts used by the teachers, the classroom atmosphere and classroom organisation and how these affected the learners' reading capabilities. DVDs were developed from these video recordings and used for stimulated recall and the transcription of the lessons.

- **Stimulated recall**

Stimulated recall based on the observed lessons was conducted with each teacher from the Caprivi Region while teachers from the Otjozondjupa region indicated their need to attend to other classes or duties. The three Grade 9 ESL teachers were given a mini questionnaire based on their lessons to answer at a later stage in writing. However, only one teacher responded. I nonetheless found that unlike the responses from the semi-structured interviews, written answers to questionnaire were sometimes incomplete and unclear and therefore not useful.

- **Identification of SARs**

Teachers' experience and knowledge was used in the Caprivi region. I asked the Grade 9 ESL teachers in the Caprivi Region to point out SARs because such learners were usually grouped in one class and they comprised automatically promoted learners and repeaters. I had found that Grade 10 examination reports indicated that learners mostly failed examinations because they did not comprehend what they read (Simanga, 2007). While the participating teachers in the Caprivi Region identified SARs using their own experience and knowledge, I decided to use a test modified from PIRLS 2001 (Mullis, Martin, Gonzalez, & Kennedy (2003) to identify and diagnose the presence of SARs in Grade 9 classes in the Otjozondjupa Region. The PIRLS 2001 is an international test for Grade 4 learners [freely available on their website] and therefore did not need to be piloted. It should be pointed out here that since no manipulations and interference was allowed; learners had to write this test within a period of 40-45 minutes. For this reason, I decided to adapt the test by only using two of the three sections: one based on a fable (*Hare Heralds the Earthquake*) because many Africans are familiar with oral fables; and the second one involved reading an information text and doing some directed writing (*Follow the River Nord Trail*). Reading and directed writing is part of the Grade 9 ESL syllabus. It should be understood that the *PIRLS 2001 Test* was not the main focus of this research; some sections of it were only used to detect the presence of SARs (see Appendix 6.5 on how it was adapted).

3.5.2 Semi-structured interview

According to Bloland (1992, pp. 2-3), researchers "use interviewing to gain access to ideas, thoughts, emotions, etc., that [they] can't readily identify through observations alone".

Questions for the semi-structured interview were piloted on the 17 April 2008, from 18:15 to 19:15 with a Grade 9 ESL teacher teaching at one of the secondary schools within the Okahandja area. Changes were made and important events like the Readathon week were taken note of. The semi-structured interviews with teachers – Mr Muusa, Ms Zima and Ms Mbuli from the Otjozondjupa region took place before the observations, while in the Caprivi region it was after the observations.

Observations and document analysis were the only methods that were initially intended to be used to collect data in the Caprivi Region. Realising the shortcomings presented by not interviewing the Caprivi teachers – Mr Rhino and Ms Mwinte, I went back later and interviewed them. Since Ms Mwinte was not available at that stage, a telephonic interview was conducted with her.

Some of the issues the semi-structured interviews looked at were the following: whether participating ESL teachers had encountered SARs in their teaching career; the support they provided to SARs; the strategies they used and how they used them; the classroom organization and how it supported the teaching of SARs, and the resources they used to teach and support SARs. The participating teachers' biographical and professional profile was obtained through a mini-questionnaire.

3.5.3 Document Analysis

I collected data from the teachers' lesson preparation files as well as learners' workbooks. Documents were studied such as teachers' lesson preparations to find out some of the strategies they used. For example, if teachers used creativity to counteract limited resources, learners' workbooks would reveal that in the form of photocopied sheets pasted in them. They would also reveal hand-copied texts, which may be proof of schools not having enough resources such as books or reading texts. Information gathered from documents was cross-checked against that obtained through observation and semi-structured interviews for patterns and themes.

3.6 ETHICAL ISSUES

I telephonically contacted the teachers and the regional directors first to explain my intentions. Only when they had given their consent did I contact the school principals. When both the teachers and the regional directors had agreed, I then wrote official letters not only to them, but also to the school principals and the Grade 9 learners' parents and faxed them as agreed. The directors faxed the responses back while letters of consent from the teachers and the principals were retrieved on my arrival (see Appendix 1).

Ethical issues also demand that participants be protected and respected. To achieve anonymity, participants and their respective schools were given pseudonyms as indicated earlier under section 3.4. In addition, I explained to individual participants that they had a right to pull out from the research at any time.

Authorisation to video record children was also requested because some learners were minors who required the protection of their parents. Because they understood that the research was for academic purposes and it would not be misused in any other way, the parents authorised the school principals to allow me to video record the observed lessons. Only the learners in the identified

Grade 9 class received such letters. In each of the 5 schools, only one Grade 9 class was used after the identification of a few SARs.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The data was repeatedly read during and after transcription, and cross-checked to identify patterns and themes. Emergent patterns and themes were coded using different colours – themes and categories were written at the end of the paragraph or in the margins. This led to easy identification of themes used to develop each teacher's case record. The same procedure was repeated, themes were identified from participants' individual case record, colour-coded and used to write a single case reported in Chapter 4.

The other technique that was also used for easy referencing was line numbers. I numbered each line in each document to make it easier for cross-referencing and cross-checking. As I read the transcribed data, I used a pencil to number different themes and patterns identified in each document. When a theme or pattern was repeated, the same number was used for it. This process was repeated when lifting the main ideas from each participant's case record for the main case study to reported in chapter 4.

3.8 VALIDITY ISSUES

Validity, as a component of your research design, consists of the strategies you use to identify and try to rule out these threats (Yin, 1984, p. 106).

...in qualitative data validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 105).

This section presents strategies by which I tried to eliminate threats of biases and subjectivity in my research.

- **Subjectivity and consistency**

I ensured that I was able to stay for at least a week in the schools in the Caprivi region so that I had sufficient contact with the teachers and their learners. This made it possible for me to see how teachers dealt with reading generally in their teaching; hence, I did not rely only on the reading lessons that I recorded and transcribed.

In order to avoid the possible abuse of my status as a national education officer, I made sure I did not force teachers to comply with my needs as a researcher. For example, if a teacher chose to offer only one reading lesson for observation, I accepted this or if a teacher offered five lessons I accepted that as well.

I used a variety of techniques to collect data so that I could cross-check and validate the information where possible. I also tried to enhance the validity of my research by trying to be as consistent in the way I collected the data and the manner I related to each of them as possible. For example, to put teachers at their ease, I requested them to see me as a student who had come to learn from them.

- **Multiple sources of evidence**

Multiple sources mentioned in 3.5 above were utilized as sources of evidence using different techniques, a strategy known as triangulation (Yin, 1984). Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant or passive observations using audio and visual recording tools, stimulated recall to get more clarity on some of the activities in the lessons as well as through analysis of teachers and learners' documents. What was reported during the semi-structured interviews was either confirmed or refuted during the lesson observations. Documents like learners' books provided evidence of the amount and type of reading activities given on reading texts used and on the scarcity of resources.

- **Keeping a data base**

Data sources like learners' test scripts, transcriptions of lessons and semi-structured interviews were archived in the form of booklets for future reference as well as to serve as evidence. Where teachers' work plans were made available, these were photocopied, filed and reserved for future reference or proof of evidence. This strategy also helped me manage my data. Tape recorders and DVDs from video recordings were also kept safely in a big envelope.

- **Respondent validation**

Each participant was given the transcribed data for validation before the information was used in the report. They were asked to read and sign a form to show that they agreed with its contents. Afterwards, the case records were sent to the individual participants to verify that I had interpreted their information correctly. However, 2 respondents neither validated nor signed the forms despite the initial offer to do so. Where those who validated pointed out errors, they were rectified in the final report.

3.9 LIMITATIONS

This was a preliminary investigation – very little research had been done on the topic in Namibia (if any at all), I therefore faced many challenges concerning issues, for example, finding literature on SARs from the Namibian context.

Another challenge, apart from some technical challenges that will be reported in chapter 5, was following up on all the teachers' claims. 2 participating teachers allowed me to observe less than five lessons, 2 teachers did not respond to my request for stimulated recall; 2 teachers were not prepared to allow me to see their documents.

One of the claims made by all the participating teachers was that they taught and supported SARs through remedial teaching. In this study, I used semi-structured interview, observations, stimulated recall and document analysis. Interviewing teachers was one of the ways to find out what they claimed to do. I could not follow up on all the teachers' claims about remedial teaching – this was not feasible in a small-scale study due to time constraint. It was, however, possible to identify classes with SARs and observe them during classroom observation to see how teachers accommodate SARs in their classes.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the research design, the process of selecting the methodologies used, based on my goals and research questions. The chapter also described ethical and validity measures employed in carrying out this research.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research findings gathered through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, stimulated recall and document analysis. Categories and themes used to describe and report the findings were inductively derived from the data and the research questions:

- What strategies and methods do ESL teachers use to teach SARs to read?
- Why do they use these strategies and methods?
- What kind of texts/resources do ESL teachers use to teach SARs to read?
- How do they select these texts?

The research findings are presented here in word and table form for easy accessibility, using the following framework:

- Teachers and their school profiles
- The presence of SARs
- Teachers' knowledge and perceptions about SARs' problems
- Descriptions of teachers' lessons
- The evidence of teachers' instruction and support of SARs
- Conclusions

4.2 TEACHERS AND THEIR SCHOOL PROFILES

In Table 13, I present the five secondary schools and the Grade 9 ESL teacher profiles while Table 14 presents additional information on classes and schools.

As can be seen from Table 13 below, this study had five participants: three female and two male teachers. The two male teachers are Heads of Department (HODs) for languages at their respective secondary schools. The participating teachers' teaching experience ranged from 3 to 17 years while their ESL Grade 9 teaching experience ranged from 5 months and 10 years.

According to Table 13 below, all participating teachers specialised in English teaching at the secondary phase except Ms Mwinte of Luvuma Secondary School. Ms Mwinte's two courses, NEC and EDSP, are for Upper Primary level while DAL qualifies her to teach an African language like Silozi.

Table 13: Grade 9 ESL teachers' profiles and school type

Teachers' pseudonym	Pseudonym of school	Type of school	Teaching experience	Teacher qualifications	Experience: ESL Grade 9	In-service training: teaching reading
Mr Rhino	Jaba Secondary School	Government	15 years	BETD	10 years	0
Ms Mwinte	Luvuma Secondary School	Government	12 years	NEC; EDSP; DAL	10 years	0
Mr Muusa	Nanvwi Secondary School	Government (former whites only)	16 years	BETD & HED	14 months	0
Ms Zima	Matako Secondary School	Government (former whites only)	3 years	DE	5 months	0
Ms Mbuli	Nandavu Secondary School	Government	17 years	BETD	8 years	0

Table 14: Additional information on schools

Pseudonym of school	Number of teachers	Total of learners per school	Total of learners in selected Grade 9 class	Repeaters in selected Grade 9 class	Total of transferred learners in selected Grade 9 class	Predominant language at school
Jaba Sec. School	16	421	36	23	0	Mbalangwe
Luvuma Sec. School	22	561	36	6	2	Subia
Nanvwi Sec. School	18	580	46	28	1	Afrikaans
Matako Sec. School	28	670	42	1	0	English & Afrikaans
Nandavu Sec. School	13	332	31	10	2	Otjiherero

However, her 10 years of teaching Grade 9 ESL seem to compensate for her lack of subject specialisation at this phase. Apart from teaching English, she also acts as a school librarian albeit not being a trained librarian.

It is interesting to note that the former white only schools, Nanvwi and Matako Secondary schools, had the largest enrolment of 580 and 670 respectively, while it was observed that their school classrooms had the smallest intake capacity. I observed that all the schools had a form of library structure albeit very small and under resourced, with the exception of Matako Secondary School

(Ms Zima: 05/02/2009), while Matakoko and Nandavuvu were the only schools with hostels.

Unfortunately, the libraries were not used while I was on any of the sites.

4.3 THE PRESENCE OF SARs

It is necessary to discuss some important issues regarding the identification of struggling readers and the causes of their reading problems. In this section, I describe how I learnt about the possible presence of SARs in the Grade 9 classes used in my study. I start by describing the presence of SARs in Grade 9 classes in the Caprivi Region before I describe how I tried to identify the possibility of the presence of SARs from the Otjozondjupa Region. I will then describe the methods participating teachers claim to use to identify SARs.

4.3.1 How I came to learn about the possible presence of SARs in schools in the Caprivi Region

Coming from the Caprivi Region, I already knew the common method used to identify and group SARs. I knew of the tendency to use the previous year's examination records to sort and group learners according to their performance. Still, I needed to verify this information with the respective teachers. I thus asked Mr Rhino and Ms Mwinte to offer me a class with learners repeating Grade 9. This was done prior to classroom observations. Apart from asking, I also used classroom observations to see if indeed there were learners who struggled with reading. For example, during Mr Rhino's lesson, I observed that:

Mercy comes to lead the class to read the words pronounced wrongly. She also pronounces yet the following words wrongly: robbed as /ribed/, legend as /legend/, pregnancies as /pregneci/, Transvaal as /transviel/ and Mpumalanga as /Mpumulangi/. She gets stuck at 'Now Mpumulanga' as it is even divided into two: Mpumu and Langa (Appendix 2a, p. 36, 1173-1176)

The name Mpumalanga seems to have transparent orthography similar to that of Silozi – Mercy's supposedly first language in which words are decoded as they appear. However, she failed even to relate its pronunciation to words in her first language. On the question of whether he had encountered SARs, Mr Rhino said "... quite a number of times. ...I have encountered learners who really struggle to read" (Appendix 3a, p. 3, 84-86). On the question of SARs, Ms Mwinte said that "Yes, we have such learners" (Appendix 3b: 1, 32). Though I realised she had used one of her best performing classes (confirmed during informal post observation discussion with the teacher), I noticed during the lessons that many learners struggled with comprehension, and noted it in my note book as such: "These

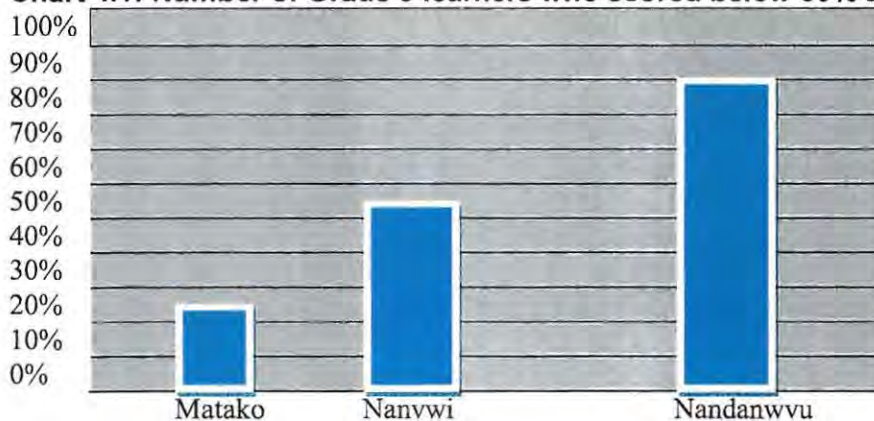
are simple knowledge questions that some learners fail to answer...” (Appendix 2b, p. 30, 931-934).

Since I detected some misunderstanding on the part of Ms Mwinte, I realised that asking teachers to identify classes with SARs did not prove reliable and thus decided to use a different method in the next the Otjozondjupa Region.

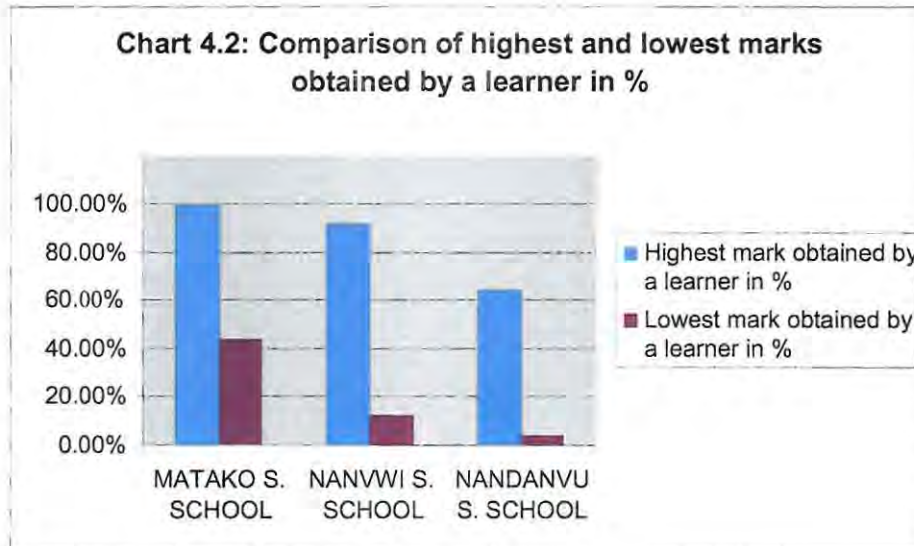
4.3.2 How I learnt about the possible presence of SARs in schools in the Otjozondjupa Region

Three reasons made me use an adapted test in the Otjozondjupa Region; the first was the misunderstandings I mentioned above while the second was that I had no knowledge of how the region grouped their learners. The third reason was a need for me to see how the respective teachers in this region handled learners of different reading abilities in their classes. Thus one Grade 9 class at three different schools: Nanvwi, Matako and Nandanwvu Secondary Schools wrote a test adapted from PIRLS 2001 Test sample papers, to give an indication of which learners might have reading problems. While Bar Chart 4.1 presents the number of learners who obtained below 50% in this modified test (here termed SARs), Bar Chart 4.2 below shows the highest and lowest marks obtained by a learner at these respective schools. The reason for classifying learners who obtained below 50% as SARs is that the PIRLS 2001 Test from which some sample texts and questions were taken for my test, was meant for Grade 4/5 learners who had acquired their initial literacy in English. In consultation with my supervisor, I decided to use this test since it assessed retrieval, straightforward inferencing, inferencing requiring synthesis, and critical reading. It thus enabled me to establish learners’ level of reading. However, I anticipated that competent Grade 9 ESL learners could be expected to excel on the test.

Chart 4.1: Number of Grade 9 learners who scored below 50% at these schools:



As Bar Chart 4.1 indicates, Nandanvu has the highest number of learners who scored below 50% out of 25 learners; 43.5% out of 37 learners at Nawvi scored below 50% while only 12.5% out of 40 learners at Matako scored below 50%. On the other hand, Bar Chart 4.2 below shows that the highest mark was obtained by a learner at Matako Secondary School, who got 100%, while the highest mark obtained at Nandanvu Secondary School was 64%.



A learner from Nandanvu Secondary School obtained the lowest mark – 4%, while scores by learners at Nanvwi Secondary School range between those achieved by learners at Matako and Nandanvu.

During the interview, the teachers in this region also revealed that there were SARs at their schools. However, Ms Zima indicated that her grade 9 classes had few SARs by saying, “*There might be one or two*” (Appendix 4d:, p. 2, line 38) and she added, “*But it is not like they have a big problem of reading. Most of them can read...*” (Appendix 3d, p. 5, 153-154). Bar Chart 4.2 seems to support her statement because her Grade 9D class had the lowest number of SARs.

Ms Mbuli on the other hand indicated that many of her apparently fluent readers do not understand what they read. She said “... *they [apparently fluent readers] do not understand ...*” (Appendix 4e, p. 2, 49-56) and Bar Chart 4.1 above confirms her statement. She had the smallest number of learners in her class – 25 learners, but the test indicates that the largest number of SARs came from her grade 9D class.

Mr Muusa claimed that generally learners at the secondary phase experience reading problems. He said:

...reading difficulties... is experienced from grade 8, grade 9 and 10 up to grade 12 ... Grade 9 at this current moment learners are struggling to read. ...pronunciation ... is a major problem ... because they cannot read and understand ...versions from reading passages (Appendix 4c, p. 2, 44-51).

Having developed an idea of SARs' presence, the next stage was for me to find out the methods participating Grade 9 ESL teachers use to identify SARs, which I report in the next section.

4.3.3 Methods teachers use to identify SARs

Though four techniques, interviews, classroom observations, document analysis and stimulated recall were used, it was mostly the interviews that revealed the ways teachers identify SARs. In this section, I will firstly present the methods used in table form and then give some examples from the interviews.

Table 15: Techniques used by teachers to identify SARs

Technique	Participating Grade 9 ESL teachers					Total
	Mr Rhino	Ms Mwinte	Mr Muusa	Ms Zima	Ms Mbuli	
Comprehension questions	√	√	√	-	√	4
Summarization of texts read	√	-	√	-	-	2
Reading aloud	√	√	√	√	√	5
Silent reading	√	√	√	-	√	4
Observation	√	√	√	√	√	5
Previous mark sheets	-	-	√	-	-	1
Spelling test	-	-	√	-	-	1
Standardised test conducted by a specialised person	-	-	-	√	-	1
Totals per teacher	5	4	7	3	4	

Table 4.3 shows that teachers in this research use a combination of informal strategies like observation and formal strategies like comprehension tests to identify SARs. The most common strategies used to diagnose SARs within mainstream classes by participating teachers are reading aloud (5), observation (4) and comprehension (3). For example, Mr Rhino said:

... you have to test their reading with insight ... you give them something to read and then there are comprehension questions to answer... Secondly ...you can test them by giving them something to read. It can be an article that they read and then summarise it. ...thirdly they can read aloud to you ... (Appendix 3a, p. 2, 40-52).

In an informal discussion, Mr Rhino indicated that diagnosing and knowing learners' reading abilities from the earliest stage, then organising mechanisms to assist and support them might work better for him if he taught the whole phase. He said that:

What I usually like to do is to teach learners for a phase. I would observe how they behave in reading ... In this way I will know how to handle them ... by the time they reach say Grade 10 (Appendix 3a, p. 3, 137-149).

On the other hand, Ms Mwinte used reading aloud to identify SARs. She said:

... you will identify this learner; you give him or her [a] task to read, he is failing or he will be stammering to pronounce the words so those are regarded as weaker readers ... (Appendix 3b, p. 2, 35-38).

Regarding her learners, Ms Zima said that "*they might not be able to pronounce one word within the reading ... may be they are slow [observation] ... But there are no major problems or like a learner who cannot read*" (Appendix 3d, p. 6, 170-173). It was interesting to note that it was only Ms Zima who indicated having a learner who was diagnosed as being dyslexic. However, the learner was in one of her classes not selected for this study and Ms Zima was not present at the time of diagnosis.

Mr Muusa also confirmed that he used reading aloud as a strategy in addition to using mark sheets to diagnose SARs. He said:

... we use ... the mark... I simply ask the learners to look for a book, to read ... the book to the class. Before telling me the story about the book ... (Appendix 3e: p.4, 98-110) ...sheets and from the mark sheets, we really only try to concentrate on those who are performing under the average given (Appendix 3c, p. 9, 265-267).

Ms Mbuli used a combination of reading aloud and writing. She said:

...sometimes it is also ... from our question papers ... there is also reading and directed writing, they have to read and write. (Appendix 3e, p.13-14) ...you give a chance to everyone to read, that is, when one is having time to read. So that is where you do the observation (Appendix 3e: p.13, 400-401).

Having presented diagnostic methods, I now describe the participating teachers' beliefs and perceptions about SARs' problems.

4.4 TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS ABOUT SARs' PROBLEMS

This section presents Grade 9 ESL teachers' understanding of what SARs are. I present the SARs' profile, causes and factors teachers believe to be aggravating the reading problems of such learners.

4.4.1 SARs' profile

Teachers revealed their understanding of what SARs are by defining them or defining problems learners have as reported in Table 16 below.

Table 16: Profile of SARs according to participating teachers

TEACHERS:	Zima	Mbuli	Muusa	Mwinte	Rhino	Total
PROFILE AND PROBLEMS FACED BY SARs :						
do not understand what they read/ have shallow understanding	√	√	√	implied	√	5
have poor or no self-confidence/are self conscious/are reserved/are shy; do not participate/ are not motivated/have no interest/have negative attitude	√	√	√	√	√	5
have spelling problems	-	-	√	-	implied	2
are slow in catching up	√	√	√	√	√	5
have pronunciation problems/they can't read most of the words at their level of education	√		√	√	√	5
lack concentration	-	√		implied	implied	3
lose interest quickly	-	√	implied	implied	implied	3
read below grade level	√	√	√	implied	implied	5
have other problems besides reading problems: being degraded by teachers at the lower grades and parents/ un-conducive environments; natural or genetic causes; poor or no proper reading foundations; not knowing the medium of instruction (English); automatic promotion	√	√	√	√	√	5
have discipline problems	√	-	-	-	-	1
don't give themselves time to read/do not practise/initiate extensive reading on their own	√	-	-	-	implied	2

The column for 'total' on Table 16 represents the total numbers of teachers who reported each feature of the SARs' profile and those who implied it. As can be seen, all the participating teachers, with the exception of Ms Mwinte, seem to define SARs as those who do not understand what they read and hence their use of comprehension tests as a means of diagnosing SARs. All the teachers seem to agree on five points – they either directly stated them or they indirectly implied them (see total above). They seem to imply that reading poorly leads to learners becoming self-conscious, shy and lacking in motivation. Only Ms Zima referred to learners not reading extensively as a contributing factor.

4.4.2 Causes of reading problems

While some teachers acknowledged heredity as a cause of reading problems, some cited human negligence as the main culprit. Table 17 below shows what teachers reported. From Table 17, one observes that they all agreed on 1 and 2; 2 points out of 9.

Table 17: Causes of SARs' reading problems according to participating teachers

CAUSES	TEACHERS					Ranking
	Mr Rhino	Ms Mwinte	Mr Muusa	Ms Zima	Ms Mbuli	
1. Not enough attention given in lower grades and by other stake holders	√	√	√	√	implied	5
2. Lack of qualified teachers/teachers not trained to teach SARs	√	√	√	√	√	5
3. Learners not reading extensively	√	√	implied	√	-	4
4. Genetically originating	√	implied	-	-	-	2
5. Slow in catching up	-	√	-	√	-	2
6. Policy (automatic promotion)	implied	-	-	-	√	2
7. Assuming they have already learnt reading at the lower primary/ secondary teachers not reading teachers	-	-	√	-	√	2
8. Large classes (too many learners in one class)	-	-	√	-	-	1
9. Overloading of teachers	-	-	√	-	-	1

Table 17 shows that all five teachers seem to blame teachers from the lower grades and lack of support from other stakeholders as the main culprits. For example, Mr Rhino cited teachers, parents and learners as causes of reading problems. He said that:

First and foremost it could be background problem... You find that for a Junior or Lower Primary phase the reading attention was not ... given time and that they just go through ... the Lower Primary without having the right skills in terms of reading. (Appendix 3a: 3, 88-95).

The other reason could be ... lack of ... qualified teachers, who know precisely what to do in terms of language teaching. And also the problem would lie with the learners themselves because they don't read ... Some other problems are genetic ... (Appendix 3a, p. 4, 99-108).

Ms Mwinte said that:

I think the problem might be their lower grades ... [it] comes from their lower grades. it might be the problem of the learner. We have slow learners ... he will remain slow just like that (Appendix 3b, p. 9, 268-276).

Ms Zima said that “...*the fact that they don’t give themselves time to read* (Appendix 3d: 7, 217); ... *they don’t get to meet some of the words* (Appendix 3d: 7, 219). Ms Mbuli, on the other hand, blames not only parents and Lower Primary teachers; she also places the blame on the automatic promotion policy as a contributing factor for SARs’ reading problems. She says that “*Some people are just transferred from lower primary, one grade this year the other grade transferred ...*” (Appendix 3e, p. 4, 101-106).

While that is the case, Mr Muusa seems to believe that teaching reading is the responsibility of the Lower Primary teachers. He stated that “... *reading ... is not addressed ...*” (Appendix 3c, p. 5, 133-145). According to Mr Muusa, secondary school teachers believe that learners should have learnt reading in the Lower Primary Phase. He said:

So, it is difficult for me in grade 8 and 9 to go back to the basics ... I will just proceed because, assuming that learners are supposed to [have] gone through these basics. So I think the focus must be the primary schools, the primary classes – grade 1 and 2 the foundation must be there (Appendix 3c, p. 5, 133-145).

However, he acknowledged the harm caused by secondary teachers’ focusing only on content by arguing that:

...this is probably the way we [are] putting more harm to the learners. ...we fail also as secondary teachers by just continuing with the content ... (Appendix 3c, p. 5-6, 158-169).

Mr Muusa further pointed to large classes as another contributing factor: “...*big numbers of classes – that is another problem.*” During the lesson observation, I noted the problem raised by Mr Muusa by noting that:

One of the learners used his lap to write on as there was no space for another bench. Learners remained in rows arranged in pairs to make room for the teacher to squeeze himself in-between to reach the end of the class. The school, originally intended for a small number of white students, had very ... small classrooms. Since such schools were known to have abundant resources many black parents send their children to such school and this has led to overcrowding (Appendix 2c, p. 5, 144-150).

Another causal factor Mr Muusa referred to is the overloading of teachers. Teachers find themselves teaching more than one subject to different grades. This means that preparations are done superficially.

Participating Grade 9 ESL teachers also indicated factors they believed aggravated the reading situations of SARs in addition to the causes and this will be dealt with in the next section.

4.4.3 Factors aggravating SARs' reading problems according to teachers

According to the 5 Grade 9 ESL teachers, shortage of resources, poor communication between the teachers, schools and the parents, as well as lack of support from guardians are some of the factors that aggravate SARs' reading problems. To save space, I will present here minimal examples to support my claims and to avoid repetition of some examples. For more information on factors aggravating SARs' reading problems, the reader is referred to Appendices 3 and 4.

- *Scarcity of resources*

All the participating teachers put blame on the scarcity of resources in general and quality reading materials in particular, as a source affecting the teaching and support of SARs. Often, teachers have to search for suitable reading materials. Where schools have photocopying facilities, their use is hampered by lack of printing paper (Nandanvu) and/or lack of electricity (Jaba). Sometimes teachers have to supplement their resources by using the meagre school development fund. However, one teacher, Mr Muusa indicated that schools are not allowed to use the school fund to buy the much needed resources. He said that "*Resources are really a problem. ...school fund to try to acquire certain resources ... it is also a taboo so I am stranded*" (Appendix 3c, p. 15-16, 482-490).

- *Poor communication between teachers*

Teachers reported having communication problems not only between schools and parents, but also amongst teachers themselves. This was apparent when some teachers failed to confirm whether learners who struggle to read in their English classes have similar problems in their first languages. Often the answer was that they were not aware if this was the case. For example, the discussion with Ms Mwinte revealed the following:

Researcher: ... these ... three learners ... struggling in the Grade 9 ... are these learners just struggling in English or do they also struggle in their mother tongue?

Ms Mwinte: Not really, yes.

Researcher: Have you tried to find out about that?

Ms Mwinte: ... I did not try that one (Appendix 3b, p. 9, 277-284).

According to Ms Mbuli lack of support from other teachers also aggravates reading problems. She said:

... I can't remember anything [done to support SARs] from the school side ...but like from other teachers ... they... to refer to the English teachers always, when it comes to poor spelling or poor readers they say 'You, English teachers ... do something to these learners' (Appendix 3e, p. 19, 591-600).

It would seem that teachers other than those teaching English do not regard teaching reading as part of their job. Another factor hampering the support of SARs is the lack of linkage between primary and secondary teachers indicated by Mr Muusa.

- *Poor communication between the school and parents*

Mr Muusa, Mr Rhino, Ms Mbuli and Ms Zima bemoaned the lack of communication between parents and teachers. Ms Zima said that:

... But you will also find that the learners who do well their parents come to parents' meeting ... it is like they have a positive attitude towards learning ... And they support their children. They are the ones who also come for these meetings. The parents that we really need of the learners who are not doing so well – they don't turn up (Appendix 3d, p. 13-14, 221 – 430).

Ms Zima further stated that the SARs' problems may be aggravated by lack of supervision, encouragement and motivation by saying that "...maybe they just don't have someone to follow up on how they are doing" (Appendix 3d, p.14, 434). It would seem that Ms Zima feels that SAR's guardians other than parents may not provide them with the necessary support and encouragement. Such learners thus fail to take risks and they end up lagging far behind their peers.

On the issue of parents, Ms Mbuli expressed similar sentiments by saying that:

...call them to parent meetings, they never turn up. ...because we and our parents ...we don't communicate ... because it's our learners, with us here ... they really don't contribute (Appendix 3e, p. 20, 622-646).

Unfortunately, it would seem that teachers also do not take the initiative to visit such parents when they observe this problem. For example, Ms Zima said she has not repeatedly called parents when they don't turn up for the first time. Similarly, Ms Mwinte said "*In my case, I have never involved parents, may be that is my weakness also...*" (Appendix 3b, p. 11, 328).

Having described causes and factors aggravating reading problems in the previous section, I now turn to strategies, texts and teachers' lessons.

4.5 DATA FROM THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

All the 5 participating teachers were interviewed prior to classroom observations. In this section, I present each participating teacher's responses to questions I posed during the semi-structured interview. Having already presented data on how teachers identify and diagnose SARs, the causes for their reading problems and the factors that aggravate these problems, this section concentrates on what teachers do to teach and support such learners. In the extracts from interviews quoted below key strategies and resources used by the individual teachers are underlined.

4.5.1 Mr Rhino's responses on how he teaches and supports SARs: strategies and resources

On the question of what he does to teach and support SARs, Mr Rhino stated that, once he identifies them, he goes back to teaching them the basics. He said:

If they don't know the phonics, it is difficult for them to read. Once they know the sounds, then I would gradually give them something to read; but simplified material that they can read, paired with those who can read to assist. ...they are given tasks ... they are given readers ...magazines to go read then they come and report without looking into the magazines (Appendix 3a, p. 4, 118-133).

When asked why he uses pair work he explained that:

...pairing a clever child with a suffering child [SAR], the suffering child will learn more from the knowledgeable child ... [through] Leaner Centred Approach (LCAP)... [they] share ideas ... skills and learn from each other (Appendix 3a, p. 5, 152-158).

He further explained that during reading lessons, he distributes his attention on all learners irrespective of their reading abilities through 'topic exploitation'. He involves SARs in 'vocabulary exercises', 'simple activities' (Appendix 3a); and arouses their interest by using 'warming activities' and by bringing realia in class where possible in order for learners to touch such objects. Giving reasons for arousing learners' interest, he argued that:

...it is important that the minds of the learners are provoked so that the interest is created in the end. By so doing learners will work hard and they will be competing because they are interested ... without interest ... then teaching would be worthless (Appendix 3a, p. 7, 205-210).

Mr Rhino indicated that he also uses remedial or compensatory teaching in which he exploits the 3 stages of reading to teach and support SARs so that they improve their reading skills. He defined remedial teaching as a lesson like any other except it is 'a bit slower', and a class will be composed of SARs only, who are then given the opportunity to ask questions. Additionally, he encourages SARs 'to read to either their parents or siblings' for practice. He also gives 'comprehension and true or false questions, summarization, retelling activities while dramatisation' (Appendix 3a: 9-10, 282-298) is used to support SARs obtain clarity from what has been taught.

Mr Rhino further stated that his school has 'a small library' where magazines on topics like HIV/AIDS and newspapers are kept. He said he sometimes uses such materials, especially when they do not have enough resources. This researcher saw the 'small library'. It is a small room that might be a metre wide and two and half metres long with some shelves. On the shelves are mostly textbooks no longer in use, a few magazines, novels and newspapers. There is no space for a bench or a chair which could be used by learners. For the rest of the school visit, I did not see it being used.

4.5.2 Ms Mwinte's responses on how she teaches and supports SARs: strategies and resources

When it comes to how she teaches and supports SARs, Ms Mwinte said she "encourages SARs to read inside and outside class, listen to the radio, read newspapers, magazines and gives them some opportunity to participate in activities" to improve their reading skills (Appendix 3b, p. 3, 68-74). According to Ms Mwinte, learners including SARs' interest will be aroused when they listen to their role models reading news.

She further stated that she uses peer coaching and remedial teaching to teach and support SARs. Ms Mwinte said that during remedial teaching:

...you have time with them [SARs] because in class you are looking at the ... big number but if you identify learners with the problem and you decide to use remedial teaching it means you are going to concentrate on the a few number. ...they will get more attention from you rather when you are teaching the whole class (Appendix 3b, p. 5, 150-157).

On peer coaching she said:

... When they are reading as a group ... the weaker reader maybe encounters problems, he or she is going to ask those group members to help – maybe with pronunciation of the words or any other problem (Appendix 3b, p. 9, 257-260).

Ms Mwinte also uses a variety of resources to help SARs improve their reading abilities. In addition to authentic materials like newspapers and magazines, Ms Mwinte said she also uses ‘*story books from the library to help SARs to practise on their own*’ (Appendix 3b, p. 4, 119-122). She further explained that magazines have stories and articles that arouse SARs’ interest. Interest seems to be a criterion used to select resources for SARs.

Ms Mwinte’s school has a spacious classroom which is utilised as a library. She acts as the school librarian, a task she finds very difficult to execute effectively due to lack of time. She further said she was not trained for library work. I observed that books were just spread on benches since there were no shelves nor benches or chairs where learners could sit and read. The lack of a proper library may hamper the development and encouragement of reading. Where there are issues of teachers acting as librarians, the lack of time spent assisting those who visit it may not be conducive to the effective functioning of such school libraries.

4.5.3 Mr Muusa’s response on how he teaches and supports SARs: strategies and resources

Mr Muusa reported working in collaboration with his subject head, a teacher who teaches the senior grades, to teach and support SARs. He said that together with his colleague, they use:

... extra classes [in the] afternoon, inviting learners [to] stay behind ... to help them to read ... short story books [of] lower levels so that they can get used to certain requirements of the language (Appendix 3c, p. 2, 53-55).

Another strategy Mr Muusa uses is remedial teaching. However, Mr Muusa confessed to not knowing what should be taking place during remedial sessions. According to him, he is not the only one who does not know what should be done during remedial teaching. He said:

Remedial teaching is to be honest is not functioning as the wish of the ministry (Appendix 3d: 5. 129-130). ... Remedial teaching, I came across it at the college, but it was not done in depth. And many of [us] teachers, we are lacking when it comes to remedial. It is a term that we are using. But what ... exactly ...are we doing in remedial classes? That is also lacking (Appendix 3c, p. 7, 201-205).

Mr Muusa said he sometimes uses story books, reading passages from the previous question papers for Grades 8-10 to teach and support SARs. He said:

...we try to let them read the question and try to underline the main phrase, main part in the question and try to answer that main part by looking in the diagrams, in which paragraphs is this mentioned ... in the passage? So we are trying to drill them to come to a conclusion or come to a realisation [of] how to look for an answer (Appendix 3d, p. 8, 249-254).

He further said he separates learners and explained what he meant by this:

Separate them is meaning that ...I will be forced to do two exercises for that day – meaning I will give those in the advanced level so to say, a different activity ... And then I will concentrate on those that having difficulties concerning looking for the answer, understanding the concepts and so on (Appendix 3c, p. 9, 277-281)

In addition to what has been reported above, Mr Muusa also indicated he would like to use group work to support SARs in class. However, he said he is not implementing group work effectively as a strategy because “*I realised we cannot manage because of the crowdedness of the class*” (Appendix 3c, p. 15, 468-469).

It would seem Mr Muusa is not only struggling with the classroom crowdedness but also with a shortage of resources. When it comes to resources, he stated that “*Resources is really a problem. ... And I don't know what to do with this*” (Appendix 3c, p. 15-16, 482, 486). He said due to scarcity of resources, he resorts to making copies from a few that are available. He further said he could not even use overhead projectors because those at his school are not functioning. The issue of overhead projectors not working seems to be due to negligence by the school management. As a head of department and a member of the management, Mr Muusa should also be responsible for the effectiveness of the school's equipment. But it seems he was waiting for a technician from somewhere to come and repair the school's equipment.

4.5.4 Ms Zima's response on how she teaches and supports SARs: strategies and resources

Ms Zima, like the other 3 teachers discussed above, indicated using remedial teaching as a strategy to teach and support SARs especially on how to deal with difficult words by saying:

I would, sometimes use what is... called remedial lessons whereby maybe I get to meet them after hours ... when all the other kids is gone, then I might ask them to come back ... Then I would have to come down lower than their level and maybe trying to teach them the sound of words. ...you ask them to try and read the difficult words using the sounds of the alphabet (Appendix 3d, p. 2, 43-54).

She further stated that during such remedial sessions, she uses “*books that are below their level*” (Appendix 3d, p. 3, 79). Some examples of books she uses are novels and textbooks. In her teaching, if a learner did not understand, she then would “*go all over everything once more*” (Appendix 3d, p. 4, 123). She stated that she also encourages them to read as much as possible because “*it is good that they read; that they give themselves time to study at home*” (Appendix 3d, p. 7, 221-222) and that it is “*because you only get to widen one’s vocabulary by reading more*” (Appendix 3d, p. 7, 197).

This researcher found a few books that Ms Zima kept in her classroom cupboard. She said she encourages all learners including SARs to borrow library books from her class, school and the community libraries. She however said she observed only the able learners regularly borrow books from her class library. But she said she does not give up; she pushes them through requiring “*book reviews ... [in which] they write about the book*” and prepared speeches “*whereby each learner will have to come up-front and tell the other learners what he or she has read about*” (Appendix 3d, p. 8-9, 257-272). She hopes that by so doing, learners, including SARs, will be motivated to read more. However, the literature says that putting learners on the spot, by calling them to stand in front of other learners, might further discourage SARs from reading – they would become self-conscious.

4.5.5 Ms Mbuli’s response on how she teaches and supports SARs: strategies and resources

Ms Mbuli came out strongly on the issue of secondary school teachers not being trained to teach SARs:

...really ...we also don’t know how ...to cope with those learners who can’t read in Grade... it is difficult because we were never trained, you just try by yourself because you see these pupils need assistance, and the only person that is there is me. So sometimes you call them [for] ...remedial classes and then give them something to read something short and then ask them to explain in their own words the way they understand it ... because ...what I believe in is that practising reading is the only thing that will help people ...to upgrade their reading skills, nothing else. So I use to encourage them also to go to the library because we do have a library at school, and when they come there they have start with easy stories... (Appendix 3e, p. 6, 167-179).

She said she realised that some SARs do not even try to read; they do not follow her advice to visit the school library. She has realised that those who try to work with her by following her advice do improve their reading skills. It should be stated here that due to lack of time, I could not visit the school library that Ms Mbuli refers to above.

Ms Mbuli also claimed to use pair and group work. When asked the reasons why she used pair work, she said “...*the learners have to learn from each other. They can't only learn from the teacher*” (Appendix 3e: 14, 438-439) and that “*they feel free when their mates are assisting or they are discussing things with their classmates*” (Appendix 3e, p. 14, 441-442).

After the interview, I followed Ms Mbuli in class to observe how she teaches and supports SARs as was the case with all the participating teachers.

4.6 DATA FROM CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS, STIMULATED RECALL AND DOCUMENT ANALYSIS: STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES USED TO TEACH AND SUPPORT SARs

In this section, I summarise the lessons taught by each teacher by concentrating on the strategies and texts used. Because some reasons were given only during stimulated recall OR observed from documents analysed, these will also form part of this discussion where applicable. It should be understood here that for three teachers, Mr Muusa, Ms Zima and Ms Mbuli, questions on stimulated recall were sent to them by post; only Mr Muusa responded. However, Mr Muusa's responses were not very useful.

I observed Mr Rhino's 5 lessons from the 4th to 7th March 2008. Each started with the usual greetings, and the teacher writing the name of the subject and date on the chalkboard. On 6 March 2008, Mr Rhino presented 2 lessons: one in the morning and another in the afternoon. I only observed 4 lessons taught by Ms Mwinte between 10 and 11 March 2008. I observed Mr Muusa teaching 3 lessons between 29 May and 4 June 2008. I was only able to observe 1 lesson each taught by Ms Zima and Ms Mbuli on 10 and 12 June 2008 respectively. Only Mr Rhino was willing to let me observe 5 lessons while the others were not. Not willing to force them, I had to accept the opportunity accorded to me thus far even though it would not provide enough evidence on what I was looking for.

What follows below are strategies observed in the participating teachers' lessons. I discuss what each participating teacher did or did not do under each strategy.

4.6.1 Pair and group work

- *Mr Rhino*

Learners in Mr Rhino's class were organised in a U-shape of two rows/lines – one behind the other and paired either in two's or threes. Some of the strategies Mr Rhino used were: pair work, brainstorming, pictorial illustrations, demonstrations and questioning. During stimulated recall, he said he uses individual work to enhance learners' self esteem while pair and group work is used for learners to learn from each other. In the next section, I present the individual strategies and resources and give examples of how he used them. During the lessons, Mr Rhino would usually ask learners to share ideas in pairs or in a threesome on a concept or question before presenting him with the answer as he claimed in the semi-structured interview. Below is an example of how he uses pair work:

...just talk to someone next to you and I want you to answer this question for me. ...What is a computer? (Appendix 2a, p. 2, 40-43).

During stimulated recall, he explained the reasons for a U-shaped classroom as follows:

The way a class is set up would indicate to whoever comes as to what types of learners are being dealt with. Again first and foremost the U-shape was ... initiated for eye contact purposes, that is ... very important because I can see all learners and they can all see me, so that is very important... Also if you observed very closely these learners are paired meaning the, they work in twos or threes.

So between the two or three learners, one is ...better-off than the other(s). So the one who is struggling would rely on the better-off... for support in terms of reading exercise ... this child who has a problem, who cannot read would always rely on the friend; ask the friend to assist – say for example maybe it is a problem of pronunciation ... the friend who is better-off will always indicate to the struggling friend this is how we do it, this is how we pronounce the word, this is how it must be done, so that is why you see the learners are paired and the reason for that is support (Appendix 5a: 2-3, 50-71).

Apart from group work, Mr Rhino also used individualisation as a strategy. In answer to my questioning on individualisation during stimulated recall, he said:

...individually, that is very important ... to promote ...learners' self esteem. Learners must know that they are in school for themselves ... so there are times that they are given individual work ... to help them learn on their own. ... (Appendix 4a, p. 4-5, 122-133).

- *Ms Mwinte*

Ms Mwinte sometimes used peers to assist learners who struggle. For example, in lesson 1 she instructed learners to work in pairs to brainstorm the meanings of 'illiteracy' and 'literacy' as such: "I want you to work in pairs and write as many answers as you can on the topic "

(Appendix 2b, p. 3, 67-69). The terms illiteracy and literacy were written on the board while one of each pair of learners was to write on pieces of papers.

During stimulated recall, when asked to explain what strategies she used apart from peer coaching, she said:

I don't think I also have a specific knowledge on how to handle struggling learners but because I'm in such a situation I have to try and help where I can (Appendix 4b, p. 1, 25-28).

When asked about her training concerning SARs, Ms Mwinte responded during stimulated recall as such:

I would say that is the case, we were trained; I was trained generally to handle the English lesson. ...so when you come across a situation as such as a teacher you have to do something to help the situation, to correct the situation (Appendix 4b, p. 2, 48-51).

What was prominent about Ms Mwinte's use of pair work was the simple form of her questions. Though learners were to work out the meaning of the concept 'illiteracy', the task did not necessitate pair work.

- *Mr Muusa*

Though Mr Muusa indicated in the interview that he uses pair and group work, this strategy was not observed in his class. One of the reasons for him not using pair and group work during observations might be due to the overcrowding that was caused by the classroom's limited space, that I discussed under the semi-structured interview above.

- *Ms Zima*

Ms Zima, just like Mr Muusa, did not use pair work during the lesson observed. Since it was the only lesson observed, I cannot conclude that she never uses this strategy.

- *Ms Mbuli*

Ms Mbuli's learners sat in groups of four. However, tasks given during group work were meant for individual work and did not require pair or group work. In tasks that lead to higher achievement within group work, learners /members will not only share ideas and skills but the questions or tasks may require convincing and "elaborative answers" (Chizhik, 2001, p. 179). Members in such group work tasks may decide on how to go about doing such a task. Ms Mbuli's learners sat in groups and individually read the poem aloud to the whole class.

In total, four learners read the poem aloud and of these, two learners, a boy and a girl struggled with decoding; I recorded the following observation:

The learner, a boy, struggles to pronounce every word in the stanza. Booikie seems to have problems with decoding. But since the poem was hand-written and then photocopied, it might be that he cannot see the teacher's handwriting properly (Appendix 2e, p. 5, 136-139).

4.6.2 Questioning: guiding and directing learners on what to do

- *Mr Rhino*

Though questioning was not mentioned during the semi-structured interview, it is one strategy used across all lessons by all teachers, including Mr Rhino. Apart from asking comprehension questions, Mr Rhino pre-reads questions with learners. During the lesson observation, he asked learners to analyse questions by reading them aloud during the pre-reading stage. He instructed by saying "...before we read ... Just study the questions first, don't read the text ... Go through the questions silently" (Appendix 2a, p. 5, 152-155).

Teachers usually ask questions during any lesson. However, it is the types of questions that are important in facilitating comprehension. One would expect to observe questions at different levels of difficulty. However, it came out clearly that Mr Rhino used more knowledge questions than higher order cognitive questions as can be seen in Table 18 below.

Table 18: Types of questions used by Mr Rhino

QUESTION	TYPE
• What is a computer? Is it a paper, is it an animal...?	Define: knowledge question
• How does it look like?	Describe: comprehension question
• What is that word?	Knowledge question
• What kind of a virus do you know either from Life Science or somewhere?	Knowledge question; asking learners to connect to prior knowledge
• How do we get ... How do they get HI Viruses?	Describe: knowledge question
• What are the latest modes of communication mentioned in the passage?	Knowledge question
• ...the HI Virus that we get, if we get it, what will be the end result?	Knowledge question
• Describe the effect of Friday the 13 th on computers?	Synthesis question

What should be indicated here is that Mr Rhino's data was collected when schools had just opened for the New Year and thus he was possibly trying to acclimatise the learners to new content, hence the use of many knowledge questions.

- *Ms Mwinte*

Ms Mwinte also used questioning as a strategy. Like Mr Rhino, she asked questions during all three stages of reading to facilitate comprehension. Learners also asked some questions during her lessons. Though learners were inaudible on many occasions, I was able to hear a few who asked questions during the first period. One learner asked:

I used to see that those people who are from the ... struggle they use to speak English and they know how to write. How did they get to know how to write and to speak English if they just went there [to the struggle] without being taught by anybody? (Appendix 2b, p. 11, 357-360).

The question above was referred to another learner to answer it. Ms Mwinte used questioning in many ways; however, many of her questions, as with other teachers in this research, were knowledge questions as seen from the following quotation where she directed learners to the specific answer:

Ms Mwinte: Where did he live?

Learner: Okahandja, because it said outside Windhoek

Ms Mwinte: The answer if she said outside Windhoek; that is not, there is a difference. What I said is 'just outside Windhoek'. Meaning it was even closer than Okahandja; just. Do you agree? (Appendix 2b, p. 33, 1022-1039).

- *Mr Muusa*

Unlike lessons by other participating teachers, Mr Muusa's lessons were characterized by lengthy directives and teacher talk, in which he pointed out what learners needed to do or take note of but with very few questions. Most of the questions used in his class were those found at the end of the texts or what he had set before the lesson for the learners. Here is an example of questions taken from one of his lengthy directives:

Now you try to read up and see. So we are going to plan for the final product, we are going to plan a final product, means we are going to address things in our final product, isn't it? Number one; first question, where you saw the position advertised? ... What position you are applying for? The position is indicated there on the advertisement paper, it is there. It is ...personal assistant. Why you want to apply for the position? Of

course you want to be employed, isn't it? You are looking for employment. So that is your desire. (Appendix 2c, p. 2, 49-59).

During lesson 1, learners went through the stages of a formal letter using items specified in an advertisement - photocopied from a newspaper. Below is a sample of his teacher talk:

The first one is the sample of the formal letter. There underneath there are questions we need to address, whenever we are writing the formal letter. ...we are now finalising our product. ... So we are going to use the sample, compare and finalising the product ... (Appendix 2c, p. 1, 20-27).

Mr Muusa would ask a question and before receiving an answer from learners, he ended by providing it himself as can be seen from the second last line in the quotation above.

- *Ms Zima*

Ms Zima's most prominent strategy was questioning. When asked what strategies she thought assisted and supported SARs in her lesson she said "*I tried to go through the events in the passage, asking questions on them and allowing the learners to answer most ... questions with the teacher's guidance*" (Appendix 4d, p. 4, 103-104).

- *Ms Mbuli*

Ms Mbuli's lesson was characterised by the question and answer method. What I found interesting about it were three things: how she asked the learners, how she handled responses from the learners and the type of questions she asked. Sometimes she would summarise what was discussed before phrasing the question. Sometimes she repeated learners' responses before directing them with another question. When asking learners, she would not just ask once; she would repeat a question more than once. Here is an example of her questioning style:

Banja: The Wind.

Ms Mbuli: The Wind is the title of that poem. And who is the poet, who is the poet? [Pause] What is another word for a poet? What is a poet, Joseph?

Joseph: A person who wrote it.

Ms Mbuli: A person who wrote the poem. Now who is the writer of that poem, The Wind, who is the writer or the poet of this poem? He is there, at the bottom. Yes, eh...Mary?

Mary: James ...

Ms Mbuli: James Reeves, James Reeves is the writer of this poem (Appendix 2e, p. 4, lines 118-127).

She seemed to give as many learners as possible an opportunity to respond to the same question as she moved from one group to the next by stating that "...something else here" as seen in the example above or "... somebody with a different view, yes? (Appendix 2e, p. 6, line 186).

When it came to the type of questions, she seemed to be fond of questions that were phrased in a way that made learners realise that each one of them was being addressed by it before she called one of them to answer:

...now what is the title of that poem; the one you are having there? Its title, Banja? (Appendix 2e, p. 4, lines 116-117).

Another interesting strategy regarding the handling of questions is that she seemed to teach the learners to analyse the questions first before they read. By so doing it would be easier to identify the answers when learners read the text. For example:

...now before you come to the poem, let us just go through the questions quickly. Like question 1 ... is clear and it's easy, it wants the main message of the poem. So you read it in detail and then you have ... to write there what you think is the main message of that poem (Appendix 2e, p. 12 lines 367-374)

4.6.3 Using the 3 stages of reading

- *Mr Rhino*

Though not mentioned during the interview, this strategy was one of the most commonly used by all participating teachers. The pre-reading stage was prominent in the lessons observed and for that reason, it will be the one discussed here. During this stage, a variety of sub-strategies were used such as: stating the main focus / skill or the objective of the lesson, questions, warmers, prediction and exploiting the topic to prepare the learners for the next stage of the lesson. Other strategies observed were those that enhance motivation or learners' interest and vocabulary acquisition. While other participating teachers may not have mentioned the three stages of reading at all, Mr Rhino indicated using it during the semi-structured interview. Additionally, while some participating teachers used one or two of the sub-strategies, Mr Rhino used a blend of most of the sub-strategies in the five lessons I observed. For example, he directed the learners' attention to the lesson's topic during Lesson 1 as follows:

In today's lesson boys and girls, we are going to talk about the word that I am going to put on the board and ... I need one of you to read the heading aloud ... Who will read the heading for us? (Appendix 2a, p. 1-2, 29-34)

In another lesson he introduced what was to be learnt and used pictorial illustration as follows:

So today ... We are going to focus on reading aloud and pronunciation. But before we start ... let's have a look at today's picture ... (Appendix 2a, p. 32, 1046-1048).

- *Ms Mwinte*

Ms Mwinte, just like Mr Rhino, also used the 3 stages of reading; however, her usage of the pre-reading stage was more observable in comparison to the while- and post-reading stages. During the pre-reading stage, she asked learners to brainstorm the meaning of terms written on the board before they read (see Appendix 2b for more information).

- *Mr Muusa*

Mr Muusa's use of this strategy was more prominent during the pre-reading stage where he would either monitor by checking learners' homework, deals with vocabulary or instructs learners on what to take out from their satchels (see Appendix 2c). When he dealt with vocabulary, he relied heavily on the use of the dictionary. His reference to dictionary use can be seen under texts and resources below.

- *Ms Zima*

Unlike other teachers, Ms Zima's use of all the three stages was more prominent in her lesson. During the pre-reading stage, she guided learners to predict the content of the story. After reading, Ms Zima used questions pre-prepared to further support her learners' comprehension.

- *Ms Mbuli*

Ms Mbuli used pre-, while- and post reading as a strategy. Some sub-strategies were included in this technique. She started her lesson by asking learners about the day's topic. Just in the pre-reading activity, she seemed to use a variety of strategies such as:

- Activating learners' prior knowledge
- Relating content to learners' lives
- The question and answer method
- Prompting

This is illustrated in the following discussion:

Ms Mbuli: What is a poem? When one is talking of a poem, you know what is going on because once you have written your own poems, isn't it?
Class: [In chorus] yes.

Ms Mbuli: So, I just want to hear from you. What is a poem? What is a poem? If somebody asks you what a... what a poem is, how are you going to explain it for her? (Appendix 2e: 2, lines 58-60).

4.6.4 Pictorial illustration – utilisation of visual teaching aids/diagrams and asking learners to visualise

• *Mr Rhino*

This strategy was most prominent in Mr Rhino’s lesson as can be seen in the examples taken from his lessons below. He used chalkboard illustrations/sketches and pictures in textbook or articles to facilitate comprehension. He used pictorial illustration to “...*provoke their interest on reading*” (Appendix 3a: 6, 196). He used the chalkboard both as a strategy by asking individual learners to lead others in reading aloud what was written on it and as a teaching aid. Figures 5-7 shows how he used the chalkboard as an aid:

<p>A</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dear Sir 2. Dear Peter 3. Use of contractions 4. Formal language 5. Informal language 6. Yours faithfully 7. Best wishes 8. Reference 9. Greetings 10. Thank you for your letter 	<p>Formal letters Match A and B</p>
	<p>B</p> <p>FORMAL /INFORMAL</p>

Figure 5: Mr Rhino’s chalkboard work in Lesson 3: 06/03/2008

<p>Luck Transvaal Lucky Mpumulanga Icon Birth Robbed Legend Siblings Pregnancies Now Mpumulanga Childhood</p>	 <p>Lucky Dube He is a musician Born in SA</p>	<p>Icon = symbol</p>
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Figure 6: Mr Rhino’s chalkboard-work in Lesson 4: 06/03/2008¹

¹ The picture of Lucky Dube was retrieved from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/53911892@N00/1634612262/> on 23/11/2010.


	Scanning	<p style="text-align: center;">SKIMMING AND SCANNING</p> <p>Skimming is reading a text quickly to get a general idea.</p> <p>Scanning is reading a text quickly to find specific information.</p>
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Figure 7: Mr Rhino’s chalkboard work: Lesson 5: 07/03/2008.

When asked why he used pictures and diagrams in his lessons during stimulated recall, Mr Rhino said that *“It invokes curiosity even the dullest child in this world if ever there is, that picture will force him/her ... to even utter a single word. That child will try because the picture will force him/her to say something”* (Appendix 4a, p. 7, 221-224). Mr Rhino was the only participating teacher who asked learners to visualise something as he was describing something in class.

- *Ms Mwinte*

Ms Mwinte was one of the few who used pictorial illustration as a strategy. She used chalkboard illustrations and cartoons in a photocopied article. Below is an example of how she used this strategy:

<u>Speaking</u>	<u>Chart with questions here</u>	<u>Illiteracy and literacy</u>
Adult illiteracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not enough money • no schools • struggle • lack of teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - why? -what are the disadvantage ...? - how did they manage? 	

Figure 8: Ms Mwinte’s chalkboard work in Lesson 1: 10/03/2008

I could not perceive the main objective in Ms Mwinte’s lesson and thus asked her during stimulated recall to explain her use of media and she responded:

...to help those who are unable to read ... I could ask one learner to read out the words and if he or she fails to read out the words or pronounce the word correctly, then I could ask the other one to help I think in such a way those who are unable to read also could see ... that word is pronounced ... in this way (Appendix 4b, p. 3, 92-97).

Lesson 2 continued with the same topic of Adult Illiteracy. Analysis of her preparation file revealed the objective for the silent reading lesson as such: “... to distinguish between different types of questions and respond appropriately”. The tasks given were found at the end of the text and they were true/false and matching questions photocopied from a textbook. She checked learners’ homework before learners were asked to read silently in order to complete the questions at the end of the text. Afterwards, learners read their answers aloud and marked each other’s work. Ms Mwinte used photocopied articles throughout all her four lessons. The articles were all photocopied from Grade 9 ESL textbooks. When asked during the stimulated recall why she used photocopies from textbooks, Ms Mwinte said:

I think that one is an indication of a serious problem ... we don’t have enough resources. ...at the end I could collect all the handouts because I needed to use them with the other classes. ...we don’t have enough textbooks (Appendix 5b, p. 7, 211-217).

Ms Mwinte had stated sometime before the lesson observation that the class used for observations had only 3 SARs. However, during the observation, I realised that many learners in her class failed even to retrieve information from the text. I observed:

These are simple knowledge questions that some learners fail to answer. The answers are directly within the article. The teacher is emphasising that there are only two struggling readers, but from what one can observe from this, one may disagree (Appendix 2b, p. 30, 931-934).

- *Mr Muusa and Ms Zima*

The two teachers mentioned above did not use the chalkboard during the period of observation. However, they both used articles photocopied either from the textbook or a newspaper. Since teachers referred to a shortage of resources in general and reading texts in particular, one would have thought they would use the chalkboard extensively to the advantage of SARs by, for example, drawing diagrams and writing important items so that SARs could see.

- *Ms Mbuli*

Ms Mbuli used photocopies of a poem. The poem was however not illustrated. However, her class had all the illustrations and articles written on charts displayed on the wall. Such display of materials might help SARs read what has been taught during their spare time.

Prior to the lesson, she had written some vocabulary on the chalkboard as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rhyme• Personification• metaphor• imagery	<u>POETRY</u>
--	---------------

At the beginning of the lesson she asked learners to define the words on the chalkboard, starting with the topic for the day - poetry. Below is an example:

What is a poem ... (Appendix 2e, p. 2, lines 58-60)?

Now what do you think is a metaphor.... What is a metaphor (Appendix 2e, p. 10, lines 301-307)?

4.6.5 Integration of skills

- *Mr Rhino and Ms Mwinte*

All the teachers integrated skills in their teaching. However, it was more prominent in Mr Rhino and Ms Mwinte's lessons and thus examples from their lessons will be described below. Mr Rhino integrated skills and strategies in many ways. He would start with a reading lesson and bring in grammar or creative writing. For example, the main skill for Lesson 1 was speaking and he integrated this skill with reading aloud of questions. In Lesson 2 – a listening lesson, he used skill and strategy integration to teach vocabulary as seen below:

...another word for tale? Listen to what I would say: yesterday, I listened to one of the teachers telling his class a very interesting tale. ... I have given you a wonderful guess now, I mean clues not guess (Appendix 2A, p. 13, 432-434)

Ms Mwinte integrated skills in many ways, for example, she used one topic in two separate lessons whose focus was a different language skill. When asked how a thematic approach could assist SARs she said:

... it could help... like ...when we were covering the speaking skill, some of the learners had even some questions which they did not ask that day then they could come with those questions the following day. So long the skill like I mentioned the skill is different and the objectives will be always different (Appendix 4b, p. 5, 149-154).

At the end of lesson 1, she ended by asking learners to write two to three paragraphs on Adult Illiteracy as homework. This was one of her ways of integrating skills – speaking and writing.

4.6.6 Demonstration, modelling, use of gestures and realia and giving reasons for doing something

- *Mr Rhino*

Piller and Skillings (2005: 11) describe demonstration as a strategy that includes the “use of real objects, performing actions, using gestures and facial expressions”.

Though demonstration, modelling and gestures were not mentioned during the interview, they were prominent mostly in Mr Rhino’s classroom and thus examples given here are all from his lessons.

Modelling

In lesson 4, Mr Rhino demonstrated how reading aloud could be applied by reading twice: the first reading was very fast while the second was moderate. He asked learners to differentiate the two models as follows:

Learner: The first was a bit slowly but the second was, was too fast.

Mr Rhino: ... the first one read slowly that you could all follow what he was reading. The second one had a hot potato in his mouth that some of you couldn't follow what he was reading ... rhythm and speed ...very important. Remember when you are reading there are people listening to you. They want to get a message. So read moderately, adjust your speed ... (Appendix 2a, p. 40, 1315-1335).

During stimulated recall he further said that:

... it is my duty ... to... give them examples especially ... when they are stuck it's important that I come in to give them clues, to give them guidelines so that they can follow ... appropriately (Appendix 4a, p. 4-5, 129-133).

Gestures (body language)

Mr Rhino was the only teacher who applied this strategy by combining modelling with gestures. It is one of the strategies that ran throughout his lessons and I recorded / it in my notes:

As he explains what the learners ought to do, he uses gestures to explain what he means, for example, he bends and moves closer to one of the learners, and joins his fingers to show that they should share ideas with partners next to them (Appendix 2a; 2, 49-52).

In another example as he interrogated learners concerning extensive reading during their spare time he said that “... *don't you sometimes read your bible in church?*” and I noted that “he cups his hands to make a sign of an open bible” (Appendix 2a, p. 31, 1036-1037).

Below are some further examples of gestures in the class and my observations are given in brackets: “*They are called laptops because you use your laps*” [he bends to show and indicate laps] (Appendix 2A: 3, 73-74); “*If they refer to you as an icon then you must ... beat your chest*” [he shows them by beating his chest to show pride] and say “*Yes*” (Appendix 2, p. 35, 1145-1147).

In another case, he touched his ears to indicate to learners that they should pay attention to the scenario he was going to describe to introduce the skimming skill (see Appendix 2A, p. 52, 1718-1719). After that he used another gesture to describe the act of skimming as such:

You page through, that is skimming. You page through it in order to do what – to get an idea of the whole newspaper. ... You page through quickly just to know what the newspaper contains [emphasises with gestures of paging through and ... using a fist to show what he means by ‘contains’]. ... *You page through* [shows by paging through the book] (Appendix 2a, p. 55, 1808-1816).

Mr Rhino seemed to use gestures to make a point or to emphasise an important issue and to assist learners to comprehend what was being taught.

4.6.7 Code-switching and translations

The only teachers who used code-switching were Mr Rhino and Ms Mwinte.

- *Mr Rhino*

Mr Rhino allowed code-switching, for example:

Mr Rhino: What sort of animal is it...? We have ewes in your village... Come on?

Learner: Mwa Silozi kappa mwa sikuwa? [Should I answer in Silozi or in English?]

Mr Rhino: You are welcome to tell us.

Learner: Ki to tulila inge tumbumbu [They are those that cry like babies].

Mr Rhino: Alright ... she says ewes cry like babies ... (Appendix 2, p.: 44, 1456-1462).

After the learner had been allowed to ask and given the answer in Silozi, the teacher translated the learner’s answer and continued using English.

- *Ms Mwinte*

In Lesson 1 Ms Mwinte used code-switching as follows: “*Have you heard about ‘Sikolo sa Busile’?*” literally translated as: ‘The school of Dawn’ – meaning where one gets new hope for acquiring literacy” (Appendix 2b, p. 2, 41-43). She further encouraged learners to think in their vernacular languages, and then translate what they thought into English:

Examples of more idioms that you know which you know; if they are in Silozi or you know them in Silozi or whatever language you know; just translate straight as they are (Appendix 2b, p. 40, 1246-1248).

Although Ms Mwinte used code-switching in lesson 1 and 4, in lesson 1, she discouraged it by saying: “*No, we are not talking any Silozi*” (Appendix 2b, p. 2, 47-48).

Lesson 4 was a language lesson and its objective was for learners “*to learn about the meanings of idioms*” (Appendix 2b, p. 39, 1212). After the usual greetings and the writing of the topic on the chalkboard, lesson 4 commenced with the teacher asking learners to define ‘*Idioms*’. When learners did not respond, she asked them if they were seeing the word for the first time, a question to which they answered in affirmation. Then she code switched and asked: *Do you know ‘linguli’* [Nguli – is singular for idiom; and linguli is plural in Silozi]. *What are ‘linguli’?* (Appendix 3b, p. 38, 191-192). Ms Mwinte encouraged learners to translate the Silozi idioms into English which they did. Afterwards, learners read the text on idioms and completed the task at the end of it. She ended the lesson by reminding them to bring the photocopied article to class the following day in order for her to use it in other classes. Further analysis of her lesson preparation revealed constant reference to the following strategies: brainstorming of the topic and some concepts (lessons 1-4), the question and answer method (lessons 1-4), pictorial illustration (lessons 3 and 4).

4.6.8 Teaching skimming and scanning skills

Mr Rhino

Mr Rhino taught scanning in Lesson 4 and he was the only teacher who taught learners how to use this skill. He started by explaining what learners were supposed to do before using the skill. Learners were asked to look for specific information, using titles and sub-titles. He instructed them thus:

... I want you to concentrate ... on... the heading ... read silently, first the heading and the first paragraph which talks about ... Lucky Dube 's early life... Underline the words that you have problems in pronouncing ... so we can share afterwards with the whole class (Appendix 2a, p. 34, 1124-1135).

Skimming, on the other hand, was taught in Lesson 5, in conjunction / with story-telling.

4.6.9 Narration or story telling

Only Mr Rhino used this strategy. In Lesson 5, Mr Rhino described items that would help somebody to identify a friend through a story. After identifying items learners would use to

identify their friend, they were informed that what they had just done was similar to using skimming. Then they were given the opportunity to use items to obtain a general idea about the whole text (see Figure 4.3: Rhino’s Chalkboard work above).

4.6.10 Chanting and drilling

Though there were other teachers who used this strategy, it was more evident in Ms Mbuli’s lesson to show how words rhymed, which is why I use her example:

Class: ‘Key’
Ms Mbuli: *Again all of you?*
Class: ‘Key’
Ms Mbuli: *And the second word?*
Class: ‘Tree’
Ms Mbuli: *You see the sound?*
Class: *Yes...*
Ms Mbuli: *You see the sound it made is the same b (Appendix 3e)*

Since there was no time to ask her questions after the lesson, I drafted post-observation questions which I forwarded to her. She however did not respond to my questions.

Table 19 below shows the strategies that were mentioned or used by the teachers. The table includes strategies from lesson observations, semi-structured interviews and the stimulated recall. The reader is directed to Appendices 2-4 for further information on how they were used.

Table 19: Strategies observed and those claimed to be used by the participating teachers:

STRATEGIES AND MATERIALS USED	Rhino	Mwinte	Muusa	Zima	Mbuli	Total of Trs
1. Remedial teaching	√	√	√	√	√	5
2. Pre-reading strategies	√	√	√	√	√	5
3. Pictorial illustration – utilisation of visual teaching aids/diagrams and asking learners to visualise	√	√	√	√	√	5
4. Integration of skills	√	√	√	√	√	5
5. Questioning: guiding and directing learners on what to do	√	√	√	√	√	5
6. Demonstration: modelling and use of gestures	√	√	√	-	√	4
7. Giving clues	√	-	-	√	√	3
8. Pair and group work	√	√	-	-	√	3
9. Summarisation	√	-	√	√	-	3
10. Verbal illustration	√	√	-	-	√	3
11. Chanting, drilling during reading	√	-	-	-	√	2
12. Thematic teaching	√	√	-	-	-	2
13. Reading strategy teaching	√	-	-	-	√	2

14. Narrating	√	√	-	-	-	2
15. Code-switching	√	√	-	-	-	2
16. Teaching skimming and scanning skills	√	√	-	-	-	2
Total = 16	16	12	7	7	11	

4.7 SUMMARY OF RESOURCES USED DURING OBSERVATIONS AND REFERRED TO DURING THE INTERVIEWS

Though I referred to some instructional materials in the preceding sections, I have decided to outline them in a table form. Thus Table 20 below shows a summary of texts/resources used or claimed to be used by the Grade 9 ESL teachers to teach and support SARs. The most common ones are simple and photocopied texts. Two teachers, Mr Rhino and Mr Muusa, used texts photocopied from authentic materials while the rest used texts photocopied from textbooks [Ms Zima and Ms Mwinte] or an anthology of poetry [Ms Mbuli]. Mr Muusa used a combination of texts – those photocopied from textbooks and those from authentic materials like newspapers. However, the use of strategies and resources by participating teachers does not seem to assist and support SARs. Even though Mr Rhino came closer to how SARs should be taught and supported, his teaching, like everyone's in this group of teachers seemed to lack differentiation of reading abilities, such that SARs did not seem to receive the individual attention they needed.

Table 20: Materials observed and those claimed to be used by the participating teachers:

STRATEGIES AND MATERIALS USED	Rhino	Mwinte	Muusa	Zima	Mbuli	Total of Trs
Using simple texts	√	√	√	√	√	5
Use of photocopied texts from textbooks and authentic materials	√	√	√	√	√	5
Chalkboard scheme	√	√	-	-	√	3
Dictionary	√	-	√	-	-	2

4.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented my findings on how teachers identify SARs in their classes; teachers' beliefs regarding causes and aggravating factors for reading problems; and strategies and texts teachers claim to use to teach SARs as directed by this study's research questions.

After reporting and analysing my findings, key themes were identified with the support of my research questions and they form the foundation for the discussion in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Having presented the analysis of my data in chapter 4, this chapter presents and discusses the research findings, drawing on the literature reviewed. I also discuss limitations of the research and lessons learnt, and I make some tentative recommendations for further research.

5.2 FINDINGS: CATEGORIES AND IDENTIFIED THEMES

In this section, I present the themes that emerged from the data. These are captured in phrases expressed by the teachers, which I have termed “phrase categories”. These categories form the framework whereby the four themes identified in chapter 4 will be modified and grouped for discussion purposes. The phrase categories were chosen because they juxtapose the data collected from the five Grade 9 ESL teachers as well as capture the essence of the findings.

5.3 WE ARE JUST TRYING – WE ARE NOT TRAINED TO TEACH SARs: PARTICIPATING TEACHERS’ KNOWLEDGE OF SARs

In this section, I discuss issues pertaining to the teachers’ knowledge of SARs by looking at diagnosis, the presence of SARs in participating secondary schools and the teachers’ understanding and interpretation of policy in relation to the teaching and supporting of SARs.

5.3.1 Diagnosis and the presence of SARs in the participating Namibian secondary schools

It is expected that teachers assess learners’ knowledge and skills in order to establish their needs, including those related to their reading abilities. This diagnostic assessment would enable teachers to plan and design lessons that would cater for the varied academic abilities of learners (Namibia. MEC, 1993; MoE, 2005; MoE, 2006; MoE, 2007). The assessment or diagnosis could either be through informal or the formal techniques (Peterson, et al., 2000; Irvin, no date; Namibia. MoE, 2006).

Table 4.3 in Chapter 4 shows a range of techniques that participating teachers use to diagnose or identify the presence of SARs. Only Ms Zima’s school reported having access to specialised support. From Table 19, one can observe that participating teachers rely on reading aloud and

observation techniques to diagnose SARs. In other words, they do not use formal and standardised diagnostic tests. One reason for not using formal and standardised tests might be lack of such support. The only support Namibian teachers have at their disposal are the Advisory Teachers (ATs) and School Counsellors who are operating from regional offices. Even ATs are not available in every region – for example, there was no AT for ESL in the Otjozondjupa region at the time of collecting data for this research. Teachers' in this study reported not being trained to teach SARs; assuming all learners entering the secondary school phase should be reading and not knowing what to do with SARs, hence their reliance on informal diagnostic means. Though such informal techniques provide valuable information by revealing the presence of SARs (Peterson, et al., 2000; Irvin, 2006; Torgesen & Miller, 2009), they may fail to reveal the specific reading components learners struggle with (Boardman, et al., 2008; Wren, 2002), which may lead to the support SARs receive being too general as was observed in this study. General teaching may lead to the specific reading difficulties experienced by SARs being ignored.

This study has found that the five Grade 9 ESL teachers agree about the presence of SARs in their classrooms; they know some of the causes for SARs' reading problems, including the factors that aggravate their reading problems. However, this study has found that there might be a lack of knowledge on how to teach and support SARs.

5.3.2 Types of reading problems experienced by some Namibian learners in this study

According to all the five participating Grade 9 ESL teachers, their learners have specific reading problems that range from poor comprehension, lack of self-confidence to motivation, word recognition, and poor English language proficiency. As a result, they may not cope with the academic demands of the Secondary Phase, a factor found to be one of the causes for learner drop out (Wren, 2002; Biancarosa & Snow, 2004). For example, in Mr Rhino's class, many learners not only struggled with comprehension, but they also struggled with pronunciation of words with transparent orthography similar to Silozi, their supposed mother tongue. According to Gholamain & Geva, 1999, cited in Veei (2006, p. 2), the differences:

...in letter-sound correspondence rules lead to variations in the prevalence and patterns of reading difficulties from one language to another, as well as to differences in the development of reading processes and skills between languages.

One can understand if some Namibian learners struggle decoding English words because its orthography is different from their mother tongue. However, if learners struggle to decode words

with an orthography similar to their own as those in Mr Rhino's class did, it might be an indication of their poor literacy in their mother tongue.

5.3.3 Causes of reading difficulties and a profile of SARs in this study

According to the five Grade 9 ESL teachers, SARs' reading problems may be caused by "*background*" – their reading foundation at the lower primary phase was not solid enough, "*unqualified teachers*" and the fact that they – learners themselves, "*don't read*" (Mr Rhino – appendix 4a). According to Ms Mwinte and Ms Zima, they are "*shy*" and "*slow in catching up*" (Appendix 4b and 4d). Pang (2008) found slowness in catching up as one of the causes for some learners reading problems. According to Ms Mbuli, SARs "*... don't have self-confidence*" and are "*... not encouraged enough to learn to read*" (Appendix 4e). She further said that what SARs usually face from both parents and teachers, especially some primary teachers is abusive and demotivating language like "*... you are nothing ...; you are not going to make it...*" (Appendix 4e, p. 4-5) thus exacerbating such learners' problems. Many of these causes are reported by Peterson, et al. (2000). Self-confidence has been found by Garbe, et al. (2009) to be one of the main issues that SARs grapple with and would therefore need teachers knowledgeable with research based strategies to bring them up to par with their peers.

5.4 THE TEACHING AND SUPPORT OF SARs IN THE PARTICIPATING SECONDARY SCHOOLS

This section discusses the participating Grade 9 ESL teacher' reading instruction by looking at the strategies and texts each teacher uses to teach and support SARs in their respective classes.

5.4.1 Teacher knowledge of strategies to teach SARs

Specific examples of strategies used by teachers in this study will be discussed under 5.4.2 below. This section presents a more general discussion. When it comes to strategies, teachers in this study also seem to teach SARs using general approaches and strategies. Something I noticed was that there was no individualised (or differentiated) teaching. It was all whole class teaching with the same text for all the learners. There was no recognition that the learners in the class might be at different levels of competence. Where teachers try to incorporate research-based strategies, it would seem they are guided by their instinct and it is haphazardly done with no in-depth knowledge as the quotations below indicate. Research has also shown that teachers do not understand certain

strategies and approaches they are required to use (Nyambe & Wilmot, 2008; Van Graan, et al., 2006; Imene & Van Graan, n.d.). Three out of the five participating Grade 9 ESL teachers said:

- a) *I don't think I... have a specific knowledge on how to handle struggling learners but because I'm in such a situation I have to try and help where I can* (Ms Mwinte, Appendix 4b, p. 1, 25-27)
- b) *... we also don't know how to... cope with those learners who can't read ...at grade 9 level ...it is difficult because we were never trained, you just try by yourself because you see these pupils need assistance, and the only person that is there is me...* (Ms Mbuli, Appendix 4e, p. 5-6, lines 163-167).
- c) *So, it is difficult for me in grade 8 and 9 to go back to the basics, eh... I will just proceed because, assuming that learners are supposed to go through these basics* (Mr Muusa, Appendix 4c, p. 5, lines 141-144).
- d) *What we are trying to do is we assume that it has been dealt on [with] already. We start with grade 8 to grades upwards. So it will be difficult from grade 8 again to go back to grade 1. And the other thing is that we are working with the syllabi, certain work must be covered. So that is why we are just proceeding with the content* (Mr Muusa, Appendix 4c, p. 5, lines 150-155).

Some of the quotations (a) to (d) above are found in chapter 4 of this study. I have decided to repeat them here to emphasise how secondary school teachers, who find themselves faced with a struggling readers, feel. They also support the main arguments and findings of this case study. The findings concur with Bryant, et al. (2001); Bintz (1997); Moats (2001); Courier (2005) and Grabe, et al. (2009) on the issue of secondary teachers not being trained to teach and support SARs to read. There are many reasons for this. One of the reasons could be that at the time when these teachers were trained, lecturers in Colleges of Education were themselves not knowledgeable about the processes involved in learning to read and how to support SARs (Namibia. MEC, 1993; Grabe, 2002). Though secondary teachers are willing to teach and support SARs, their efforts are being hampered by their lack of skills as testified by quotation (a) above, taken from Ms Mbuli and the first quotation from Mr Rhino found at the onset of this section (Appendix 5a, p. 17: lines 552-554). The situation of the five Grade 9 ESL teachers is exacerbated by many things such as their attitudes (quotation (b), taken from Mr Muusa above (echoed by Ms Zima and Ms Mbuli) – they presuppose that by secondary level, learners should have learnt to read while the other reason might not understand the reform policies (Nyambe & Wilmot, 2008) and the isolated and un-sustained in-service training that if given, usually takes place outside teachers' school environment. Another factor is that the Grade 8-10 ESL curriculum has low expectations with regard to reading achievement, as was seen in chapter 4 of this study. Expectancy has been found to influence performance (Robert, 2001).

Furthermore, research has found that secondary school content subject teachers seem to be concerned with covering the syllabus at the expense of quality teaching (Laverick, 2002; Bintz, 1997; Kamil, 2003; Moats, 2001; August & Shanahan, 2006; Boardman, et al., 2008). Quotation (c) above, taken from Mr Muusa, seems to concur with these findings and similar sentiments were echoed by Ms Mbuli.

It has been found that worldwide, secondary teachers are neither trained to diagnose or identify SARs (Stiggins, 2007, cited in Torgesen & Miller, 2009, p. 58; Garbe, et al., 2009, p. 242) nor to teach them (Bintz, 1997; Moats, 2001; Corrier, 2005; Garbe, et al., 2009). Instead, they use their intuition not only to diagnose or identify SARs but also to teach such learners during remedial teaching. Though some of them find their intuition works it is not enough to improve and close the gap between the proficient and the poor readers (Garbe, et al., 2009), especially when teachers use verbal encouragement to try and remedy the problems without identifying specific problems SARs grapple with (Imene & van Graan, n.d.).

5.4.2 I tell them – I advise them to read

5.4.2.1 Reading elements SARs in this research struggled with and how some were taught

Though research has found that SARs may have problems with reading elements like decoding and fluency it is comprehension that they struggle with (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Peterson, et al., 2000; Boardman, et al., 2008) and this seems to be compounded by the use of a lecture / method used by some secondary school teachers (Frey & Fisher. n.d.). All five participating Grade 9 ESL teachers indicated comprehension to be one of their learners' biggest problems, an issue pointed out by Simanga (2007). However, during observations, some teachers seemed to be pre-occupied with pronunciation and decoding. This could mean two things, either they regard their learners as problem-free with these elements of reading or their learners have more problems with pronunciation and decoding than any of the other elements of reading. If the latter were true, then it would explain the comprehension problems experienced by learners from three participating schools who took a test adapted from the PIRLS 2001. Research states that if learners are at the decoding level they spend most of their energy trying to make sense of the words. Thus, very little energy is left for comprehension. Likewise, research states that most secondary learners have problems with comprehension rather than other reading elements (Boardman, et al., 2008). In addition to comprehension, two of the five teachers Ms Mbuli and Mr Muusa, also indicated decoding and fluency as problems that cause SARs to lag behind their peers in learning. In this research, there was no evidence of any teacher using a research-based strategy to teach either decoding, fluency or comprehension.

All five Grade 9 ESL teachers taught vocabulary, which is one of the reading elements that influences one's reading ability (Boardman, et al., 2008). It should be pointed out here that, apart from using dictionaries, glossaries and teacher questioning, participating teachers did not use the research-based strategies to improve the acquisition of vocabulary. Second Language learners need vocabulary to improve their reading understanding (Boardman, et al., 2008). It can thus be assumed that the strategies used by the participating teachers in this study may be the only ones they knew. Unfortunately, these are insufficient to improve the SARs' vocabulary size to a level that would lead to learners improving their reading abilities. It has also been demonstrated by research that teaching learners how to use comprehension strategies, for example, improves their reading achievement (Alvermann, 2000; Armbruster & Osborn, 2003; Frey & Fisher, no date; Kamil, 2003; McEwen, 2007; National Institute for Literacy, 2007; Kamil, Kamil, Dole, Kral, Salinger & Torgesen, 2008).

5.4.2.2 Strategies in use

All the teachers in this study reported and were observed using the three stages of reading as a strategy: pre-; while-; and post-reading which is said to be an example of collaborative strategic reading that inclusive content area teachers use (Klingner & Vaughn, 1998). In the structured interviews, Ms Zima and Mr Rhino indicated that they re-teach the same lesson during remedial sessions/, in the afternoons. On the other hand, Mr Muusa, Ms Mwinte and Ms Mbuli seem to be using the chalk- and –talk / method when conducting remedial teaching. Research indicates that learners who usually lag behind their peers are sometimes supported through remedial or compensatory teaching. Imene and Van Graan (n.d.) found no evidence of Namibian teachers using remedial teaching correctly.

It is interesting to note that Mr Muusa pointed out that teachers do not know how to conduct remedial teaching (Appendix 4c) even though some of them may have attended a half-day workshop on it. Because teachers neither know how to teach reading in inclusive classrooms nor during what is termed remedial teaching, it is an indication they need support from specialists in these areas. Research has found that in order to be successful, content teachers need to work hand-in-hand with special or reading specialist teachers (Mastropieri, et al., 2001; Bryant, Linan-Thomson, Ugel, Hamff & Hougen, 2001). Unfortunately, this is not the case in Namibia where English teachers use and rely on general reading strategies to teach to the detriment of SARs. Chapter 4 of this research outlined some of the general strategies used by the participating Grade 9 ESL teachers. However, many of these strategies are not research-based strategies that could lead to SARs' reading improvement as reported by Boardman, et al. (2008) and Kamil (2003). Where

collaborative strategies like group work are used (three out of five participating Grade 9 ESL teachers used it), its use was not in line with what was explained by research. As Nyambe and Wilmot (2008); Van Graan, et al. (2006) and Imene & Van Graan (n.d.) found out, in Namibia group work is equated with sitting in groups as can be observed at the end of the following instruction from Ms Mbuli:

We have four stanzas ... therefore I need one pupil from each group, we have four groups. One here for the first one, group two for the second one, the third one, the fourth one [as she talks, she points at the different groups] there you go. Okay, just read while you are there. [Classroom organisation: groups of four but the activity given doesn't need it] (Appendix 2e, p. 4-5, lines 128-133).

This is the only place where this teacher referred to what seemed to be group work. However, it should be pointed out here that only one lesson presented by this teacher was observed.

On the other hand, Ms Mwine seemed to use group work as a support group that encouraged and stimulated and boosted the morale of its members by cheering and clapping hands after each correct answer had been given (see Appendix 2b), hence motivating them to keep trying. Motivation is one of the deciding factors in SARs' performance (Boardman, et al., 2008; Alvermann, 2000; 2001). Without motivation, SARs would not learn. Some teachers in this research also used authentic texts (Mr Rhino; Mr Muusa) to motivate learners while only Mr Rhino and Ms Mbuli used diagrams to enhance understanding and interest. Research has found that display of diagrams and graphics could also lead to incidental learning of vocabulary words as well as improving understanding ((Boardman, et al., 2008).

Participating teachers in this study also used other strategies such as summary and questioning. However, their use seemed not to be in line with what is explained in Boardman, et al. (2008). For example, all teachers asked a variety of questions which learners were expected to answer verbally or in writing as reported in chapter 4. However, none of the teachers taught learners how to ask their own questions based on the text (Kamil, 2003). Where learners were given the opportunity to ask questions aloud, the teacher ended answering such questions herself (see Appendix 2b).

5.4.3 When one uses such instructional materials like photocopies, it means that (reading) resources are in scarcity

5.4.3.1 Participating Grade 9 ESL teachers' concerns

This study found that the Grade 9 ESL teachers are concerned with many issues that hamper their teaching in general. One such concern is the lack of reading materials. With the exception of two teachers, Mr Rhino and Mr Muusa, who also employed / authentic texts from newspapers and magazines, all the participating Grade 9 ESL teachers used hand-outs photocopied from textbooks. Ms Mwinte stated, even though they know it is wrong to photocopy from textbooks, the serious shortage of resources forces teachers to violate copyrights and permissions.

One other concern is the lack of support from other colleagues in the profession, parents and even the government. All five participating teachers indicated that when parents are called to school, it is usually the parents of children who perform better who turn up for such meetings and forums. Parents whose children perform poorly at school never turn up to give support to their children when invited.

Teachers in this case study also reported not being supported by a community of professional practice, including the management. When asked how the school management supported SARs, teachers in this study reported not knowing how the management could support SARs apart from providing printing papers.

This researcher made an interesting observation when it comes to physical infrastructure like buildings. Three schools – Jaba, Nanvwi and Matako Secondary Schools - experienced space problems. The last two schools were formerly for whites only and were built with the intention of accommodating a smaller number of learners. They therefore have more limited space when compared to schools previously meant for blacks only. What was discovered was that the two former whites-only schools now struggle with larger numbers of learners to the extent that teachers have difficulty moving between rows of benches. At Matako, I found that a learner had to use his lap as a 'bench' due to lack of space.

Teachers in this study also revealed that communication between them and other stakeholders like fellow teachers (including school management) and parents is non-existent. This support would alleviate some frustrations experienced by teachers whose learners have reading problems. There are many ways stakeholders can render support to secondary teachers whose learners struggle with

reading. For example, teachers need support through ongoing and school-based professional in-service in order to confidently teach and support their SARs (Bryant, et al., 2001; Namibia. MEC, 1993; Van Graan, Leu, Price-Rom & Barrow, 2006; CONNECT, 1997), while parents can support through attendance of parental meetings and provision of reading materials to their children (Garbe et al., 2009). Unfortunately, parents in Namibia do not turn up when called for such meetings because they think they are only called when schools want financial support from them (Siririka, 2007).

5.4.3.2 *The selection of texts in use*

When it comes to the type of texts learners use and how they select them, teachers in this study indicated that they use simple and interesting texts to teach SARs. Interest has been found to be a motivating factor, especially when SARs are given the opportunity to choose their texts (Boardman, 2008). However, this researcher did not get the chance to observe learners choosing texts or to find out how the learners select their texts. During my whole research at the participating five schools, I saw only one learner reading a novel and that was in Ms Mbuli's class. When asked, the learner stated that she was interested in reading novels.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

A variety of limitations were encountered during the data collections such as my lack of research expertise at the time of data collection; and collecting data while in the initial stage of reading on the topic which restricted my capacity to follow up on answers provided by respondents. In addition, some of the participating teachers in this study were not willing to verify the transcripts of their interviews. Another limitation is that this researcher was unable to observe any of the teachers to see how they conducted remedial teaching outside of normal class time, though several claimed to do this. Time was a constraint, both on the side of the teachers who did not make it possible for me to observe such a session, and the limitations of time that could be spent collecting data for a small-scale, master's research project.

Finally, having used only five participating teachers, the findings in this study cannot be generalised.

5.6 LESSONS LEARNT

Conducting this case study accorded me the opportunity to learn a lot: I was able to improve on my research skills. I also learnt valuable lessons concerning the use of technological devices like the internet engines. Most of the literature I reviewed in chapter 2 above was gathered from the internet articles.

I chose the topic of my study with one goal in mind: to learn how some of Namibian ESL teachers teach and support SARs. The research has divulged to me that I was not the only secondary school teacher who needed professional development in the teaching of SARs. Secondary school teachers' training seem to neglect literacy teaching; while this is the case, many secondary school learners keep dropping out of school due to lack of continued support from their teachers because teachers are not trained to help them.

Through this research, I have learnt about some models, approaches and strategies to support SARs in order for them to improve their reading skills. I have also realised there is a gap in both the Upper Primary and the Junior Secondary ESL syllabuses as far as SARs are concerned. The ESL syllabuses need some improvement in order to cater for SARs. ESL teachers need some guidance on what to do during remedial sessions. Such guidance should be found in the curriculum. As a curriculum developer, I will use this acquired valuable knowledge to minimize this gap for the improvement of secondary school teachers' knowledge and the betterment of SARs' reading abilities.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Because this is a case study, the recommendations given here are tentative:

- Tertiary institutions should offer a course on teaching reading in general and teaching SARs in particular as part of the curriculum for trainee teachers irrespective of their school subject specialisation
- The government should provide reading specialists – even one per region - to support not only in-service ESL teachers but also other content teachers on how to teach SARs best
- The government should fund more research on teaching SARs – looking into specific reading elements that may cause reading problems
- The government should provide more support in the form of reading resources and textbooks

- More research needs to be conducted to see how teachers support SARs during remedial or compensatory teaching.

5.8 CONCLUSION

Since this study might be the first on SARs in this country (as testified by the lack of research literature on the topic), I hope it might add some new insight on the topic and result in more attention being paid to the needs of SARs and their teachers, and to further research in this field.

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APPENDIX 1

LETTERS

APPENDIX 1a: A LETTER TO THE DIRECTORS

TO: Whom it may concern

DATE: 29 FEBRUARY 2008

SUBJECT: PERMISSION FOR A RESEARCH STUDY

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Elizabeth Miyaze Simanga, an education Officer for English as a Second Language (ESL) at the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED).

I am currently a part-time student in Masters of Education in English Language Teaching (MEd ELT) at Rhodes University. My student number is 607s2173. MEd ELT is a two-year course when taken on a part-time basis. I am writing to ask for permission to conduct research in your region at two or more of your secondary schools offering Grade 9 English Second language (ESL). The topic of my research is: *Teaching struggling adolescent readers (SARs): a case study*. The research will look into the strategies and texts Grade 9 ESL teachers use to teach and support SARs to read.

I will adhere to ethical ethics by ensuring that the names of teachers and schools remain anonymous.

I hope to hear from you soon.



E.M. Simanga

APPENDIX 1b: A LETTER TO THE TEACHERS

TO: Whom it may concern

DATE: 29 FEBRUARY 2008

SUBJECT: PERMISSION FOR A RESEARCH STUDY

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Elizabeth Miyaze Simanga, an education Officer for English as a Second Language (ESL) at the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED).

I am currently a part-time student in Masters of Education in English Language Teaching (MEd ELT) at Rhodes University. My student number is 607s2173. MEd ELT is a two-year course when taken on a part-time basis. I am writing to ask for permission to conduct research at your secondary. The topic of my research is: *Teaching struggling adolescent readers (SARs): a case study*. The research will look into the strategies and texts Grade 9 ESL teachers use to teach and support SARs to read.

I will adhere to ethical ethics by ensuring that the names of teachers and schools remain anonymous.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely



E.M. Simanga

APPENDIX 2
EXAMPLES OF TEACHERS' TRANSCRIBED LESSONS

APPENDIX 2a: MR RHINO'S LESSON 1

DATE: 4TH-7TH MARCH 2008 AT JABA SECONDARY SCHOOL

REGION: CAPRIVI REGION.

LESSON NUMBER: 1

VENUE: JABA SECONDARY SCHOOL; GRADE 9B CLASSROOM

DATE: 04 MARCH 2008

SKILL: SPEAKING & READING

TEACHING AIDS:

- The chalkboard
- Pamphlets/Article
- Chart

DURATION OF PERIOD: 40 MINUTES

TOPIC: Computers

OBSERVATION: *Mr Rhino was requested to point to the researcher, the class that has learners who struggle to read for the research, which he did. After the learners have entered the class, he then called us in. He then proceeded to introduce us, explained the purpose for our visit, how long we would be with them as well as advised them to behave normally in the way they usually did when there were no visitors.*

Mr Rhino: In today's lesson boys and girls, we are going to talk about the word that I am going to put on the board and eh, I need one of you to read the heading aloud. [*The teacher proceeds to paste the chart on the board.*]

Afterwards, he claps his hands to get rid of the chalk]. Who will read the heading for us? (Learners raise their hands and the teacher points to a girl). Yes?

Girl 1: Computers.

Mr Rhino: All of us?

Class: Computers.

Mr Rhino: Computers. Eh ... that is very good. Computers, ehm ... just talk to someone next to you and I want you to answer this question for me. (*Mr Rhino reads the first part of the question written on the chart*). “What is a computer?” Start with that one; “what is a computer?” Is it a ... is it a paper? Is it an animal? Eh ... is it a bulldog without a tail? So talk and give me feedback; also you must say what the computer is used for. Start with “What a computer is”, for two minutes.

Observations [As he explains what the learners ought to do, he uses gestures to explain what he means, for example, he bends and moves closer to one of the learners, and joins his fingers to show that they should share ideas with partners next to them. Learners start sharing ideas with the partner closer to them. As the learners discuss the question that was given to them the teacher moves around between the rows of benches. The learners are sitting in a U-shaped style, with one row being inside, while the other row is behind it. Between these two rows is a small space in which the teacher moves to go to this or that side of the class].

Mr Rhino: Okay?

Learner 1: A computer is a machine.

Mr Rhino: Okay he says a computer is a machine. [*As he writes the answer given on the board*] What do others say?

Learner 2: It gives us information.

Mr Rhino: How does it look like?

Learner 3: Eh ... television; [*as the learners gives the answer, one can see that he is struggling with the language. He seems to have an idea of what a computer is. He uses gestures*] keyboard and ehm ...

Mr Rhino: I hear these words for the first time. [*He writes on the board*]. It looks like television. It has a key board. Unfortunately we cannot use computers in our school because we don't have electricity. But there are those computers that do not...eh...that can ...function without electricity. What do we call them?

Class: Laptops.

Mr Rhino: Lap tops [*as he writes it on the chalkboard*]. They are called laptops because you use [*he bends to show and indicate laps*] your laps, okay. You don't need a table; you can use a laptop even in the bush. [*He writes a new word on the chalkboard and the word is "computer virus" and asks...*], what is that word?

Class: [Inaccessible] Computer virus.

Mr Rhino: Eh?

Class: Computer virus.

Mr Rhino: Computer virus. Okay? What is it? Or what kind of virus do you know either in Life Science or somewhere?

Girl 2: HIV.

Mr Rhino: HIV, okay. How do you get it?

Boy 3: How do you get it?

Mr Rhino: Ja.

Boy 3: We get it from sexual practices.

Mr Rhino: We get it from sexual practices. How else?

Girl 2: Blood transfusion.

Mr Rhino: Blood transfusion. Now, also computers suffer from viruses, okay?

Class: Yes.

Mr Rhino: Also computers. But they are not similar to the ones that we suffer from. Because computers do not have girlfriends, do they?

Class: No.

Mr Rhino: So how do they get these viruses? How do they get viruses? You told me we can get viruses because if we get into sexual business we are likely to get a virus, okay?

Class: Yes.

Mr Rhino: But now what about computers, computers are not human beings. They don't, they don't have girlfriends, have boyfriends, they are not married. How do they get these viruses? Ehm...? No girlfriends but they get viruses, Sihela? [*No response*] they get viruses and when they get these viruses they do not function properly, you see. They do not function properly. For it is the same the HIV ... as the HI virus that we get, if we get it, what will be the end result?

Learner 5: Death

Mr Rhino: Death, isn't it?

Class: Yes.

Mr Rhino: So, even the computers, if they are infected with the virus they will also do what? Malfunction. So how do they get them [clapping his hands]? Come on, you told me

that you know, you know computers. Some of you have used them and you have heard about computer viruses. [*The teacher draws a rough picture of the computer drive and indicates where a CD or DVD is supposed to be inserted. He further demonstrates how it is done*]. Now you want to play music for example on your computer. This is the slot for DVD, press a button and insert a disc [yes], okay; you know what I mean by disc?

Learners: Yes

Mr Rhino: Or CD. If you insert a CD; if that CD contains a virus, if that CD; this is a CD, this is a CD [showing the CD to the learners] if this CD contains a virus; if I insert it into the computer, that virus will be transmitted onto the disc, the hard disc of the computer. And it will affect the normal functioning of the particular computer. So that is a computer virus. We get it from CDs, eh... computers get it from eh... memory sticks. Unfortunately I don't have my memo... memory stick here. A memory stick is an instrument where you store information. You store information on that instrument and if you want to retrieve that information, you insert that eh... instrument onto the computer and you retrieve that information or get that information that you want. Also we have diskette, diskettes also carry viruses into your computer if they are infected, okay?

Class: Yes.

Mr Rhino: So that is what I meant by computer virus. For example, some of you were going to ask me, if computers have girlfriends; because we can only get viruses if you sleep around, okay?

Class: Yes.

Mr Rhino: Eh ... that is about computers. So we are going to read a story on computers, okay [yes], before we read, before we read, eh ... we do not have enough copies, so you work in fours. Just study the questions first, don't read the text. Study the questions first [and he distributes the articles out to learners]. Ja? Go through the questions silently ... there my friend, okay. [Learners carry on reading through the questions. As they do so, they keep moving their lips – they sound out the words as they read to the extent of making noise even for themselves. They read like that for a time]. When we go to the questions, you must read out loudly, okay, eh? [Yes]. Read out loudly? [Learners start reading the questions as a group, the teacher stops them]. [*And one learner reads aloud. Then the next one does the same till all the questions have been read. Some read fluently while others struggle to read or even pronounce certain words. The teacher does not interrupt any of them*].

Class: How does a computer help increase

Mr Rhino: Just one person; one person.

Learner 5: How does the computer ... [a boy struggles to read]

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Loudly [directing another learner]

Learner 6: What are four ...? [a girl reads fluently]

Learner 1: What are the /lutest/.../lutest/ ... [another girl struggles]

Mr Rhino: What are the latest modes of communication mentioned in the passage? [Teacher repeats the question]

Learner 7: A computer virus.

Mr Rhino: Good. Eh ... that is question 4, question 5?

Learner 8: How does a computer /various/...

Mr Rhino: How does a computer virus, all of us /virus/?

Class: /Virus/ [again] /virus/

Mr Rhino: How does a computer virus get into a computer system?

Learner: Describe the effect of Friday...

Mr Rhino: Describe the effect of Friday the 13th on computers? Uh, that is quite amazing. I ga... I gave you two clues: is it a good or bad day?

Class: Bad day

Mr Rhino: Eh?

Class: Bad day

Mr Rhino: Why is it bad? Why is it bad? It is believed that ... eh? It is believed that eh ... Friday the 13th is a bad day. Some people do not travel on that day because they believe that it is not a good day, okay [yes]. Anything may happen to them – either getting involved into a car accident; that would be the first thing. Most people avoid driving on that day. Prevent your computer from being contaminated by

All: virus.

Learner 9: Give two examples of how people can use computers to commit a crime?

Mr Rhino: Okay, yeh? Rape is a crime, rape is a crime. Now what are the crimes – do you know? What are the crimes do you know? [Claps his hands] Okay, now that we have gone through the questions, do you all understand the questions?

Class: Yes

Mr Rhino: Eh?

Class: Yes

Mr Rhino: If you all understand the questions, now we are going to read, okay?

Class: Yes

Mr Rhino: We are going to read the text now. [*Learners start to read silently, most of them moving their lips*]. As you are reading focus your attention on the questions that we have discussed, okay? See if you can find answers to those questions and if there are any new words, please underline them in pencil. [*At a later stage, individual learners are asked to read aloud. The first one to read is a boy who struggles very much. He stammers at almost every word. The next one is a girl, who reads almost fluently*]. Thank you. [*Learners start reshuffling in their bags to get out exercise books*]. First of all, you must make a list of all the new words that you do not know; all the new words. Start with a list of all the new words you do not know from the passage. [He writes “New vocabulary” on the board]. Okay, that could be your heading. Start with the list that; make a list of all the words that you do not know. The words that you have seen for the first time or may be you know the words but you do not know their meanings, okay?

Class: Yes

Mr Rhino: Make up that list and during your spare time at home, look up the meanings of the words using a dictionary, okay?

Class: Yes

Mr Rhino: And secondly answer all the questions at the backside of your text, okay?

Class: Yes

Mr Rhino: Remember to follow the instructions, alright?

Class: Yes

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much class for your participation. [*Learners rise up to greet the teacher and us – the visitors, goodbye, signifying the end of lesson 1*].

END OF Mr RHINO’S LESSON

APPENDIX 2B: MS MWINTE'S LESSON 1:

DATE: 10-13 MARCH 2008
REGION: CAPRIVI
VENUE: LUVUMA SECONDARY SCHOOL
GRADE: 9E

LESSON 1

OBSERVATION: The English teacher, Ms Mwinte introduced us to the class and told the learners what the purpose for our visit was all about. She then wrote two words on the board and these were: ILLITERACY and LITERACY. On the board, there is 03/03/08 even though the first day took place on the 11th March 2008. It seems the teacher forgot to erase that part. The other thing written is the skill: Speaking.

NB: Apart from the name of the region, all the names that are used here are pseudo names. Where the teacher does not call a learner's name, the term 'Learner' is used in that instance and where the teacher refers to a learner by name, a pseudo name is given to that learner. In cases where there is a dialogue between the teacher and one learner that learner is referred to as either 'Learner1 or Learner A' to show that the same learner was involved.

Ms Mwinte: [The teacher has written two words on the board earlier before the learners came into the class. After greeting them and introducing us, the lesson starts]. Who is going to read out those two words for us?

Learner: /illiturance/ and /liturence/

Ms Mwinte: Okay. [She then asks them to explain what each word means. Volunteers are standing up to give answers].

Learner 2: Literacy are those people, are those old people who didn't know how to write, so they are being taught.

Ms Mwinte: That is what, the first one?

Learner 2: No, literacy.

Ms Mwinte: Literacy, is she correct class?

Class: No

Ms Mwinte: Who can help? Anyone who wants to guess or try, yes?

- Learner: Illiteracy they those people who don't know how to read and write and literacy people they are those people who know how to read and write. **[From Line 27 – 37: Pre-reading activity as a strategy for teaching is being used].**
- Ms Mwinte: Okay, thank you very much. When we say people, we are going to say there are those who are illiterate and the literate ones. These are people, the illiterate, the illiterate are the people who are unable to read and write and the literate are those who can read and write. Have you heard about 'Sikolo sa Busile'? [Literally translated as: The school of Dawn, meaning where one gets new hope for acquiring literacy]. **[Code switching is another strategy that is being used here, but is not encouraged much].**
- Class: Yes
- Ms Mwinte: What do they do?
- Learner: Baituta ... [they learn ...]
- Ms Mwinte: No, we are not talking any Silozi (the lingua franca of the Caprivi region). Yes eh... Kamimi. **[Code switching is another strategy that is being used here, but is not encouraged much].**
- Kamimi: They are learning
- Ms Mwinte: Learn, what do they learn?
- Kamimi: They learning to read and write.
- Ms Mwinte: They learn how to read and write.
- Class: Yes.
- Ms Mwinte: Yes?
- Learner: People who are staying in the village.
- Ms Mwinte: People in the village?
- Learner: Yes, so that they can know how to read. When they send they give they find the letter from somewhere then they can read themselves.
- Ms Mwinte: Okay that is very smart [claps from the whole class]. Our topic for today is on *Adult Illiteracy*. [She proceeds to write the day's topic on the board]. We need to find out the reasons why our grandparents from the village (s), do not, are not able to read and write. I want you to work in pairs and write as many answers as you can on the topic from the questions which I will display [inaudible]. On a piece of paper please, in pairs. [Learners start grouping themselves in groups and not in pairs]. Let's do this in five minutes' time quickly. I am talking about pairs you should make pairs and not groups. Write as many answers as you can on those pieces of papers. Go, go, when we talk of pairs it should ... [to one group of learners who are

four in one group]. The what ...? Yes, just one to three, find answers to those questions [after one learner asked her something that was inaudible as learners push the benches in order to form groups]. One, they cannot read or, or eh...write I used 'Did not go to school' because a lot of you they could have written that one as the reason. 'Why didn't they go to school' is the question that is for number one. There were problems in there that is what we mean; you need to mention them all. [Learners share ideas in pairs and sometimes in threes]. You are not working as a team, you are also writing and he is writing? **[Pair and group work is used as a classroom organization strategy. Apart from that, learners are encouraged to brainstorm ideas on a new topic].**

Learner: No, we are

Ms Mwinte: You are working together?

Learner: Yes

Ms Mwinte: You on question number?

Learner: Number 2

Ms Mwinte: Number 2

Learner: Yes

Ms Mwinte: You should at least have two questions for each of the questions, at least. **[She is moving from one pair to the next assisting individual learners and groups.** As she moves around, she asks one question here and there; answer learners' questions as well. Unfortunately most learners speak very softly that one cannot hear what they are asking her. **What is important to note is that she answers the questions herself when individual learners ask her something.** Where she feels others might be stuck with the similar problem, she raises her voice in response to the specific answer]. Can you finish up? While others are still on the task can you add one the ... questions instead of one, one? Number 2 – you only have one [noise heard]. Are you all through?

Class: Yes

Ms Mwinte: Okay, can we start with our report (s)?

Learner: Some did not go to the school, that is point one

Ms Mwinte: That is not a reason, if you check on the board 'Why didn't they go to school?'

Learner: Okay, some were not having the school develop, development fund to go to school.

Ms Mwinte: Yes, continue

Learner: Number 2, you, you do not be able to communicate in English with other people. And 2, do not be able to read and write your name. Only number 3 we only managed to ... we have one answer. By going to the illiterate classes or studies.

Ms Mwinte: How do they manage that answer, the people who cannot read eh... or write?

Learner: Ja, by going to the illiterate classes.

Ms Mwinte: Can you explain that?

Learner: Okay, you find that like in the some villages there is [are] these people there is these people there is this teacher who will be those people that do not know how to read ...then...

Ms Mwinte: Yes, we know about those classes

Learner: Ja, then, then that teacher will inform those people that do not know how to read or write, so they will be going there every time or even in the evening to go attend those classes.

Ms Mwinte: Is she following the questions?

Class: No

Ms Mwinte: How do they manage, like if you are unable to read or read ...

Learner: Okay?

Ms Mwinte: and write, how would you manage? Let's not talk about these classes now

Some Learners: Yes

Ms Mwinte: You have not gone to these classes, how would you manage because there is money involved, a lot of things? **[Lines 127 – 132: Relating the situation to the learners' own life]**. Do you still remember our Readathon for last year, what happened, those people who were unable to read or write?

Learner: Ja

Ms Mwinte: How do they manage, if you want information what will happen, what would you do? You need this information it is important to them? [Cell phone ringing in the background].

Learner: Some people will learn you, they will teach you.

Ms Mwinte: Teach you what?

Learner: How to read and write your name.

Ms Mwinte: Is it so easy?

Learner: Of course

Ms Mwinte: Okay, thank you very much, that is what they think. Yes Mowa?

Mowa: Number 1, the first point is that they could not afford to pay their school fees. Second, they were taken off from school to take care of their livestock. And eh...

second question, when someone writes a letter to them, they will not be able to read it. Second, third, by asking for help from some, from some people who went to school, by trying to read for themselves.

MS Mwinte: How do they try to read Mowa, if they do not know, is it possible for them to try, try to read if you do not know?

Mowa: Sure, they will be ... trying to read some of the words they know, or eh... trying to read with someone who knows.

Ms Mwinte: Okay

Mowa: Yes [clapping from his group].

Learner: On eh..., on question 1 we only have one answer: they were, because they were not up, because they were poor and they didn't afford to pay their school fees. Number two, you cannot, you cannot be able to read or write your name and if you, and when you do a business, all, all the customers will always rob you because you, because you do not know how to, how to read the money. Number three: number three by, by going to those people who were educated so that they can teach you.

Ms Mwinte: Okay ...you can go out [to one learner] thank you

Learner: At our table, number one we wrote they didn't have enough money, second point, they did want to go to school. Number two, we wrote you can apply for a job but you don't know how to write or to fill a form. Number three we just wrote by having to concentrate, to concentrate to people who teach you, some they can manage.

Ms Mwinte: Uhm.

Learner: Because there was [were] no schools, [inaudible] no schools. Number 2, may be your son is at overseas, he can send you a letter. May be just to do something; if you don't know how to read and write, nothing you can do. You just sit. Number three: they can man..., they can manage by asking those people who are, who are able to read and write.

Ms Mwinte: Okay that is how they can manage. Okay thank you, Simbuwa?

Simbuwa: On question one, we got two answers – the first one some elders were unable to read and write due to the support from their family. Second answer: some spent most of their lives in the struggle and they were unable to go to school. Second question: if you do not know how to read and write you won't be able to get jobs or finding out an information in newspapers, magazines or etc. Question three: some people depend on their children when they need some information.

Ms Mwinte: Okay that is how they manage, thank you very much.

- Learner: The first answer is: other people they didn't have money and they were poor. The second one is: is that [cough] is difficult for them to find jobs to read and write. The third one is that [pause], they will manage by [...] to write their names or write. That is all.
- Ms Mwinte: Okay, thank you very much, yes?
- Learner: The first, the first is, is that they were not having enough money for their school development fund. Number two: is that because when you eh... given [sneeze] a letter to write, to read you won't be able to read or write. Number three: by, by working to, by working with people who know how to read and write.
- Ms Mwinte: Is that all?
- Learner: Yes
- Ms Mwinte: Thank you very much. Mbunga?
- Mbunga: The first question: eh ... long ago there was no school and there were ... financial, financial problems. Number two: disadvantages because eh ... they were, for example let me, someone who wrote the letter ...
- Ms Mwinte: We cannot hear you Mbunga, [laughter from other learners] what is going on, what is wrong with you?
- Learner: Thank you
- Mbunga: When ... someone ... wrote the letter to you, you cannot unable [able] to read it because you don't know how to read, yes. And then number two: you cannot communicate with people who speak English [inaudible], yes. Number three: they de ...[inaudible] on their children.
- Ms Mwinte: Pardon, number three?
- Mbunga: They on their ... children.
- Ms Mwinte: Okay, thank you very much. Where are we?
- Learner: Is that they didn't have money to pay for school fund. The third question eh... the second question is that eh... eh... [She is struggling to read a peer's hand writing] is that if someone write for you a letter you are not going to read it and you are not going to get the information on the letter. The third question: they ask people who are educated.
- Ms Mwinte: To help them?
- Learner: Yes
- Ms Mwinte: Because, eh...
- Ms Mwinte: You are on question number?

Learner: Number one. Because they were no school on [at] that time and they, they talk, they didn't have enough money. Number two: like in shop, buy something, they can leave a change. Number three: they man ..., they manage to get, they manage to ask to some people to read for them. That is all.

Ms Mwinte: Okay, thank you very much; is that eh ... the last bench?

Learner: First question: in the past there were no schools and there were no people and teachers who were educated to teach others, and then there was no money for ... to pay school fund [noise from a bench falling down]. Second question: second answer, if someone wrote a letter, someone wrote a letter for you cannot be able to read it because you don't know how to read. Eh ... the last question, they depend, they depend on their children.

Ms Mwinte: Thank you very much. Okay Mwinse?

Mwinse: Because in our country there was [were] some rebels.

Ms Mwinte: Rebels [laughter]?

Mwinse: Yes, who were far from, from the village.

Ms Mwinte: Who were?

Mwinse: Schools were far from the village

Ms Mwinte: Okay, reason number one is there were rebels?

Mwinse: Yes

Ms Mwinte: Can you explain that, we cannot understand you, we don't follow that?

Learner: there were rebels, when they go to school they think of, of the village, how they would be, I don't know how can, how to explain it.

Ms Mwinte: Fast, let your friend explain.

Learner: Number three: some people are rebels, because when they are go to school they thought of their rebels in their area [giggling from other learners].

Ms Mwinte: Do you get their point class,

Class: No

Ms Mwinte: ... who can help us because I am failing to follow?

Learner: Me?

Ms Mwinte: Yes Mbowa, you want to help?

Mbowa: that is, that is ...eh ... those time we were having struggle in this country, some people, the Boers, everyone in ..., when learners go to school, eh... they will just be think of what is happening at home. May be there will be war in the village. So when they are at school they will just be thinking that then they will be failing then they will just decide to leave the school.

Ms Mwinte: Okay, that is Mbowa`s idea on trying to help Mwinse. Yes?

Learner: I think what this one is trying to say may be those learners go to school, other parents may think that may be they are going to be killed by rebels.

Ms Mwinte: So they will deny them the right to go to school?

Learner: Yes maam.

Ms Mwinte: Okay. Is that what; what you wanted to say?

Mwinse: Yes.

Ms Mwinte: Okay, thank you very much. We can continue.

Mwinse: Number two: when they buy something in the shop, they don`t know their change.

Ms Mwinte: That is a disadvantage.

Mwinse: Number three: by going to the classes everyday.

Ms Mwinte: That is how they will manage?

Mwinse: Yes

Ms Mwinte: Okay, thank you.

Learner: Question number one: some of the, some of them, they are poor – they don`t have money to pay the school

Ms Mwinte: They don`t, are talking about today or...?

Learner: They were not have money to pay he school fund. Number two, so that they can more to those people who are educated

Ms Mwinte: That is answer number?

Learner: Number two. Number three, they can manage them by asking to those people.

Ms Mwinte: To which people?

Learner: Those people who are educated.

Ms Mwinte: Okay.

Learner: Question number one: because in the past there were no schools. Number two: because you can find the job but if you don`t know how to read, you cannot be able to find, to find the job.

Ms Mwinte: What are you trying to say, are you not contradicting yourself, you cannot find, you can find a job and on the other hand you are in the short situation. We don`t understand your point. Can you explain?

Learner: When you find a job, when you ...

Ms Mwinte: If you are not educated you can find a job, then?

Learner: Yes, when you find a job, if those people will report that will report you that you don`t know how to read they will take you out.

Ms Mwinte: Okay

Learner: Yes. Question number three:

Ms Mwinte: Question number three or number two?

Learner: Number three.

Ms Mwinte: Number one? We did not get your eh... answer to question number one.

Learner: Because in the past there were no schools.

Ms Mwinte: Okay

Learner: Number three: they will ask for help to those people who knew how to read so that they can, they can help them.

Ms Mwinte: Okay, thank you very much. Is that all? As you all know eh ...topics of discussion there is no wrong answer; no correct answer. But there are issues that we need to look into when we have topics like this. Like, the parents did not pay, did not have enough money – I don't think there was any money which, which was needed for them to go to school. The only serious problem about schools, there were no schools. If there were schools, may be for the whole of Caprivi we only had may be two schools: one at whether at Kasika or Kabulabula and one at Sibbinda. So people could not manage move from those places, from their places to those places where they were schools. That is the problem and with 'struggle' you also understand like if you look at our ... the people who went out for struggle some of them went there while they were still very young. But they did not have time to go to school. They were just sent straight to the front to just go and fight for the liberation of our country. And ... yes, the issue of schools being far away that one [is] already mentioned. And the lack of teachers; we did not, there were no qualified teachers in the field in those days, we are talking about olden days. Anyone who wants to add something on the topic? [**Lecturette is used by the teacher to explain certain concepts**].

Learners': What you said, I didn't understand it, do you mean that in those olden days eh ..., learners were not able to pay some school fees? [**Learners ask questions on what the teacher explained and not on the text itself**].

Ms Mwinte: Aren't if they were schools they were just taught because you can even get your grand father going to class. There was nothing charged, only that schools were few and there were no qualified teachers.

Learner: What about teachers, they were getting paid or [giggling]?

- Ms Mwinte: Yes, if they were, if they were teachers then something was supposed to be done, they need to be paid, even if it was eh five cents.
- Learner A: On ... struggle, you said about struggle, you said that those people who went to struggle
- Ms Mwinte: uh?
- Learner A: they just went there and they were not educated
- Ms Mwinte: uh?
- Learner A: I used to see that those people who are from the stru... struggle they use to speak English and they know how to write. How did they get to know how to write and to speak English, if they just went there without being taught by anybody?
- Ms Mwinte: Mbowa is going to answer you. [**Other learners are encouraged to provide answers to peer's questions**].
- Mbowa: I will try. Those people eh ... who went to the struggle, I heard that there were teachers there, yes.
- Ms Mwinte: Are you answering or ...?
- Mbowa: Oh, I am answering
- Ms Mwinte: Okay
- Mbowa: Yes, there were teachers there who used to teach them and eh... real doctors and nurses, they were all around; they were treating people who were sick. So there were schools there. They were using some of the countries fo... for that; that is how they how they learnt.
- Ms Mwinte: Yes, the question was, I said Lola, 'some', that is why I used 'some' because some of them went to school, others went straight to the front just to go and fight. If you go and check like the ... those in eh... our defense force, a lot of them only know how to speak Oshiwambo
- Some Learners: Yes
- Ms Mwinte: The reason is that they did not go to school they went there when they were still young. They went straight to the bush. Those who were lucky were sent to school. Teachers were there because there were those who went eh... into the struggle while they were already qualified teachers. And even the country like Zambia, they had people who could help them. But some of them did not go to school because when you go there you are just divided: this group will go to the front this will go to Cuba to further their studies. That is how it happened. Yes?
- Learner: Lulu want[s to] say those people, some of them were speaking English – my side I say it supposed to cancel it because English is just a language.

Because some people they know how to speak English, but they don't know how to write the spelling for English. [**Lines 357 – 368 Debating among learners is encouraged**].

Ms Mwinte: Yes, that is very smart, thank you.

Learner: People in the past they didn't know how to read or write because they were afraid when the teacher doesn't soldiers they were around the class so they were afraid of soldiers – may be they are going to shoot at them when they make mistakes in the class [giggles]. So they were afraid.

Ms Mwinte: Okay, that is one another smart, listen there, very smart one. [**Praise as a strategy?**]

[Observation: soldiers mentioned here were some of the teachers who taught this researcher. Yes, they had guns with them while teaching in class, and yes, whenever they heard anything suspicious, they would sprint from the classes as fast as they could to go and investigate the sound. But as learner, we got used to them because not everyone was such a monster as to shoot learners for such learning mistakes. Some of them were in fact just doing a job they had to do. Learners were not afraid of some of them at the same time; there were some in other schools who could severely punish blacks for nothing].

Learner B: Question

Ms Mwinte: Is it a question?

Learner B: The first one [pointing to the first question on the chart]

Ms Mwinte: Okay, you want to say something on that one?

Learner B: Yes. Before so, there were people who are South African black who were sold and eh ... to the Indian, European there to go and work for them so they were unable to ...

Ms Mwinte: Are you still on the topic?

Learner B: Yes

Ms Mwinte: Okay

Learner B: Some are unable to go to school because they were sold, they have been sold.

Learner: then question two, the disadvantage, ja, it is very ... like for me I don't I don't think it is a good idea because most of the people who are not at school there they just like they are being discriminated I don't want to see. For example, I don't know how to read, he knows, then we are friends but the relationship is not good, so I must find a

way so that me I can read also like him. Thank you [he wants to sit down, then changes his mind]. The last one, us people who don't know how to read like the Owambos, [are the Wambos the only ones who do not know how to read in this country? I am not a Wambo by tribe but both my parents never went to school and the reason for that had nothing to do with the struggle – it had to do with the dominate culture of that day: mom had no business to be educated as she was a lady while daddy had to look for the family's cattle and of course they had to contribute money for school fund. Those shillings were hard to get] they are officers, some of they are magistrates whatever, they don't know how to write or read [laughter]

Ms Mwinte: How true is that Pieter, how true? It can't be true – magistrate who does not know how to read or write?

Some Learners: It is true

Ms Mwinte: It is true? It can't be true – a magistrate who is unable to read or write?

Pieter: But there are those

Ms Mwinte: Those are nooo ...

Pieter: Sergeants ...

Ms Mwinte: Yes, with the army I can, may be I can believe... but with people like the magistrate aaa [refusal] that one, it cannot work [laughter].

Pieter: So, these eh...lieutenants or whatever officer, I am a government employee so I must talk to the government they must organize schools for us school whatever so that we can manage to do, to read at least.

Ms Mwinte: Like what Sihela said, he said you can be able to speak like what we are doing now but when it comes to writing it is a different story.

Some Learners: Yes

Ms Mwinte: What you get, you can say spoken word is very different from the written. You can be able to speak but you are unable to write.

Pieter: Ja, that is what I am saying, but there,

Ms Mwinte: What?

Pieter: eh ... you are there but you were not at school but you are an officer you free to talk to your government to supply for you, to give you school [isn't this one of the reasons for Illiteracy programmes? The teacher seems to have forgotten to relate this information to the discussion]. Even if you know how to speak English but you don't know how to write they will offer you and then you will know how to write.

Ms Mwinte: Okay, okay, thank you very much.

Learner: I disagree with what that one's idea that it can ...

Ms Mwinte: So what did she say ...who is this one?

Learner: This one, whether it is Namasiku

Ms Mwinte: Muyangwa or?

Some Learners: Namasiku

Ms Mwinte: Namasiku?

Learner: Yes, she said you can get a job while you don't know how to read, how can you get a job even when you did applying eh... though you don't know how to write?

Namasiku: You can get the form to your... to your family they will help you to write read the questions. They can help you.

Ms Mwinte: Okay, Theresa?

Theresa: Okay, this one she meant that those, those days there were no application forms. Like you can go to a house then you say that you want to, to do a certain job.

Ms Mwinte: [inaudible]

Theresa: Yes, but you cannot write or read, but they will give you a job, so [the bell rings] unfortunately they will know that this person doesn't know how to read or write then they will, they will fire you.

Ms Mwinte: Is that actually what you wanted to say [to another learner]?

Learner: Yes

Ms Mwinte: Aaah [is like say: rea...lly? – giggling from some learners]? Your hand was up also?

Learner: Okay, you find it that if there is a poster, I mean a post the there [pronounced as they] are people, they are asking if there are people who want to be involved they are looking for job, then you will find somebody, someone who fill that poster then they are going to allow you to be at that job. Then if they realize that you don't know how to read or write then they will, they will, they will fire you [together with the teacher]

Ms Mwinte: fire you.

Learner: Ja

Ms Mwinte: Okay, [she goes back to the chart and points at the questions and say] you have to write three paragraphs for each of these: paragraph one, two three. Like this section here, you can use your friends' idea. There were very powerful points which you can use to write this.

Some Learners: Yes.

Ms Mwinte: Yes, thank you very much

Class: Thank you teacher.

[Observations: as learners are discussing, the teacher moves around assisting learners who seem to be having problems here and there. When they report their ideas, the teacher writes some of the learners' answers. Learners are allowed to report even those answers that have been reported by other groups already, which may be boring to others, but on the hand, helpful, especially with the struggling adolescent readers. When everybody has been given the opportunity to report back, the teacher starts explaining the answers she wrote on the board. The teacher's chalkboard work looks like this]:

<p><u>Speaking</u></p> <p>Adult Illiteracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not enough money • no schools • struggle • schools were far • lack of teachers 	<p><u>Chart with Questions here:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what are ...? - what are the disadvantages ...? - how did they manage? 	<p><u>Illiteracy</u> <u>Literacy</u></p>
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THE END OF Ms MWINTE'S LESSON

APPENDIX 2c: MR MUUSA'S LESSON 1

OTJOZONDJUPA AREA, NANVWI SECONDARY SCHOOL

GRADE: 9 C

DATE: 29 MAY 2008

[Learners come into the class 5 minutes before the lesson starts. Mr Muusa tells me that the first five minutes are used for are used for devotion, so I do not need to be there. Respecting his request, my video recorder and I decide to stay in the car. When the bell strikes, we move to the class. Unfortunately, we come into the class after the teacher has started the introduction.]

[The teacher told the learners to take out their work books and the pamphlets they received. He moves around checking the learners' work. Then he carries on to explain what they are supposed to do, then read through the questions aloud as the learners follow both their rough work and the advert.]

Mr Muusa: ... on the sample this formal letter there is...also a letter There are certain questions and ... so, where is your ...yes, ...take it out. I want to see your work, before I can give you the sample. ... open, open, ... (teacher moves around checking the homework). The first one is the sample of the formal letter. There underneath there are questions we need toknow address, whenever we writing the formal letter. ...finalising, we are now finalising our product. ... so we are going to use the sample, compare and finalising the product. Please take out your dictionary. You need to take out your dictionaries, please, take out your dictionary. ...I only made forty of these samples so I need them after the period neh, so I can also use them with the other classes. ... [*Scratch of the bench and turning over of papers*] eh? Solomon? You are going to rewrite these examples. It is; it is not what we are trying to do. It is just example you see, the structure, layout, so that we can, if you finalise your letter it must **be in the same format or the layout.** [*Teacher talks to individual learner*] **let me see, that is my formal letter. ...You already reading the sample?** [MONITORING]

Learners: Yes.

Mr Muusa: Good! Everything is there... Good, let us just look through the sample and see. I want you to have your rough work copies with you just keep it there and see. It is a

formal letter, as we mentioned yesterday, at least the style we are going to use, must also be formal. There is the address, the personal address, the left [right hand corner]; you can see clearly there. And then the address of the addressee is on the left hand corner. ...And the salutation also is there, heading is there: Application to work on ...in the entertainment division. Then you can even see the ending. That is the formal, the layout of the formal letter. Now, there are certain things you should... include in the formal letter. Now to include them, you have to answer the following questions. There are questions there, you can see them there. Following is important information that needs to be included. Okay. So you have your rough work, and you have the questions on the sample of the formal letter. Now you try to read up and see. So we are going to plan for the final product, we are going to plan a final product, means we are going to address things in our final product, isn't it? Number one; first question, where you saw the position advertised. Definitely, these advertisements, it is not indicated there, it is in the Namibian, newspaper. Let us be specific – Namibian Newspaper. What position you are applying for? The position is indicated there on the advertisement paper, it is there. It is (together with some learners) personal assistant. Why you want to apply for the position? Of course you want to be employed, isn't it? You are looking for employment. So that is your desire. Why you want to apply for the position, what makes you suitable for the position, meaning do you have qualifications? Because there is require..., there is, there is [are] certain requirements, the requirements are there in the advertisement. And we should meet, or you should meet the requirements in order to, to regard yourself as or compare yourself as a suitable candidate for the post. ...where you are ...for the interview, you can indicate: how soon you can start; how you can be contacted; please you only provide your contact details. But you are not going to demand; asking phone me, what time, this number. You ...we are not demanding. You should be humble and simple. They are asking for contact details there. Any other relevant information such as asking for confidentiality this will be the case if you are looking for another job; that we don't want the person, employers to know. Reference, we are not including, please take note; we are not including the ...curriculum vitae [learners: ehm]. But we are going to ...on a certain occasion, because it is also important, so we are going to address that on different occasion.

So what we ...what we are going to do now is, take out your rough work. See whether you answered these questions in your rough work. And if not we are going

to make some changes or amendments to our rough work. Okay? **[A SAMPLE OF A FORMAL LETTER IS USED; DEMONSTRATION]**

Learners: Yes!

Mr Muusa: So let us kick off. So you need; probably to compare first before you need another paper to rewrite it before we will finally write it [together with some learners] in the continuous ass – continuous writing books. And you need to have a dictionary because [pause] it is very important to know the spelling. And please one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty words – one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty words.

[Learner becomes busy taking out this, reshuffling papers making sure they have everything needed, including some dictionaries. The teacher moves around]. I want to see you rough work people. ... Where is your rough work, eh? ... Why? ... *[There is a long pause as learner carry own with their class activity].* The address is very important. *[More pause]* You are given something to do but you are not trying. If you are not trying, you never be succeeding. Always if you are given something, try. *[Pause as he continues to check the learners' work.]* One hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty words. Where you saw the date? Okay? *[As he moves around and points to one learner' work.]* How many words? ... one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty words... **[GUIDING]**

Some Learners: Yes ...

Mr Muusa: How do you see the questions ... please try to answer the questions; first of all read and understand the questions... where you saw the advertisement? It was advertised in the Namibian Newspaper. Okay? [yes]. ... You see... this is not ... so you get out your ... *[there is a lot of static noisy and shuffling of papers that most of the words used by either the learner and the teacher are not audible. The teacher is assisting the learner with the work.]* Let us take care of the way we use the words. *[Static noisy heard]* Make sure you understand the words; consult the dictionary, understand the definition. Sometimes you are using a word... a difficult... a word that will confuse the whole sentence. Make sure ... that is why I am saying you use a dictionary ... please? Just one ... put a date here.... *[One learner coughs],* application... advertised? *[There is another pause as the teacher monitors the learners' work, assisting those who are stuck, speaking inaudibly].* ... you saw the advertisement? ... Okay, okay? **[USE OF DICTIONARY ENCOURAGED]**

If you are done with the rough work, you check it. ... and before you rewrite it in the continuous writing book, take out the advertisement, cut it out with the scissors, paste it; and then you complete it ...; paste it there, you cut it out, you paste it nicely and then you finalise your idea. ... Okay ... check your work, if you are satisfied that everything is there, then write it down in your exercise book. Finalise and I will take in the books tomorrow. the period after the break. [*Long pause*]. Find your own pencil and write this, because I need to take the sample of the letter to be used with the others, only forty, so make sure you complete your rough work.

[*Long pause, then the bell rings*]. Make sure, finalise it, paste first the advertisement and finalise the work. Please no excuse; make sure you hand in your book. Make sure ... the continuous writing books. Please make sure you take out those books that are not covered. But it is not covered.

END OF LESSON 1

APPENDIX 2d: MS ZIMA'S ONLY LESSON

VENUE: Matako Secondary School in the Otjozondjupa region

DATE: 10 June 2008

TIME: 40 minutes

NB: Except for name of the region, all names used here are pseudo names.

Observation:

Ms Zima is a temporary teacher at Matako Secondary School in the Otjozondjupa region. She has been teaching English Grade 9 for 6 months only when this interview was conducted. What follows is the transcription of the only lesson observed. The previous day, learners in her class wrote a PIRLS test. After marking the test, learners were colour coded in order to see how the teacher differentiates between the advanced reader, the average and the struggling reader. Many learners in this class are advanced readers but there were still a few who according to the test, struggled with comprehension. Some even struggled with reading aloud as could be detected from this lesson.

Ms Zima: Good morning class?

Class: Good morning Miss.

Ms Zima: Today we are going to read about the "Leopard Boy". What do you think is the story about, yes? **[PRE-READING: guessing as a strategy]**

Learner: [Inaccessible]. About a man who likes to be with leopards everyday.

Ms Zima: Okay, she thinks the story is going to be about a boy who likes to be with leopards. Terry?

Terry: The story is about a boy dressed up like [inaccessible] everybody thought he was a leopard.

Learner: [Inaccessible]

Ms Zima: Have you already read the passage?

One learner: Yes

Others: Noo...

Ms Zima: [To a certain boy]: what do you want to say?

Learner A: I think it is about a boy who grew up with leopards

Ms Zima: A boy who?

Learner A: grew up with leopards.

Ms Zima: who's grew, grew up with leopards?

Learner A: yes

Ms Zima: Okay. I will not say what the story is about, let's read on. Let's have someone to read for the class?

[Most learners who volunteered to read do so fluently except two; one struggled with decoding of a few words while the other one read hesitantly, repeating some words].

Learner: Wynand suddenly sat down next to him. Ebraime felt a hand on his arm. "I don't know what happened to you", Wynand said softly. "It must have been awful. I think I may have seen you before ... before you disappeared. I sometimes go with my father to old Lamprecht's, to look at his sheep. Then after I heard about your disappearance I decided to look for you. I was near the hut – the climbers' hut – one afternoon, when I saw a boy walking from the hut, down towards the farm. He was far away, but I think it must have been you." He wanted to mention Timmie and the fear in his eyes, but he thought better of it.

Ms Zima: Thanks, Maria? **[SHOWING APPRECIATION]**

Maria: "Then one day I saw you in your hood. I was sure ...

Ms Zima: Please, read up [scratches her throat as she interrupts the learner]. Try to raise your voice up a bit.

Mary: After that I just went on collecting beetles and things. I knew we'd meet one day but I didn't want to scare you off". Ebraime lifted his head. His eyes were burning with tears. "It is getting late", Wynand said, standing up. "Look – the sun is quite low. I must be getting back now – here, here's my sandwiches – I forgot to eat them!" Ebraime stood up and faced the boy. Wynand extended a formal hand. Ebraime took it shyly.

Ms Zima: Thank you. Boys where is... John?

John: "I'm glad I've met you at last", Wynand said solemnly. "Now I'll have a companion on the mountain. I promise not to tell anyone else about you. I won't be here tomorrow but I will be next Saturday. Seven days – understand?" He held up both hands, hands and counted seven fingers [someone coughs]. Ebraime nodded. "Look out for a red click-beetle for me, won't you?" Wynand called, jumping off the slab. "See you next week!"

Ms Zima: Thank you.

- Learner: Ebraime watched the blue jacket and the fair ha ... hair melt away across the scrubby mountainside. He raised a hesitant hand in a farewell wave. It was nearly midnight when he reached the overhang. He dropped the strangled chicken next to the fireplace, and taking up a piece of charred wood, made a long mark on the rock, on the rock wall. Seven marks –seven days.
- Ms Zima: Thank you. [Some voices are heard from outside, including an announcement from the intercom].
- Learner B: he ate the chicken in the /flinkering/ light
- Ms Zima: flick, flickering
- Learner B: /flinkering/, flickering light of the fire. Wynand [*lay* is pronounced as *lie*] lie, lie staring at the ceiling, his light still on. The bed was warm and soft and the night was quiet. Tomorrow he would be back in the school dorm
- Ms Zima: dormitory [together with the learner after she corrected herself] **[INTERRUPTION OF LEARNER to correct pronunciation error]**
- Learner B: dormitory, the snores and the grunts of the, of the other boys disturbing his dreams. Who was
- Ms Zima: Okay.
- Learner: Who was Ebraime? Timmie said he'd come from the Reform School but he didn't say why. Why does he wear that hood? He shivered at the thought of the strange figure. He does not speak! Why doesn't he speak? Why was he walking alone on the mountainside, when everyone thought he was dead? He remembered the supper-time conversation and shivered again.
- Ms Zima: Thank you.
- Learner: "I went to see Pollie Nel today," his father said to his mother. "Old Lamprecht's stories were worrying me. But Pollie's had no trouble on his farm, so I don't think we need to go looking for Lamprecht's baboon or whatever it is. After all, it hasn't been here!"
- Selma: [Scratches her throat]. "It", thought Wynand [reading slowly]. "It" is Ebraime and Lamprecht thinks they should go, or hunt him". He sigh, he sighed and off the light. [She reads one sentence through into the next one, disregarding the punctuation marks]. People are like that, he thought. The bed was warm and the night was very... was very quiet. People won't leave each other alone. I mu... uhm, I must keep Ebraime a secret, or they will go and look for him again.

Ms Zima: Okay, that is our story, leopard story. Can someone st... try to summarise the events that took place in the story ...in short. **[ASSESSING LEARNERS' COMPREHENSION: summarisation]**

Learner: Ms I think, I think that the person the boy [noise from the bench] was lost... the people thought he was lost One day, one day he thought about was happening at home. He was lost and was just ...

Ms Zima: Okay, someone else wants to try? You want to try?

Vicky: [coughs]. Okay it like this" Wynand neh, was, was walking in the mountain side. And so he met Lamprecht on the ...Ebraime

Ms Zima: Ebraime.

Vicky: ja, Ebraime. Now the people may be wanted to kill Ebraime ...eh

Ms Zima: Do you think they wanted to kill Ebraime?

Some Learners: Yes, Ms ... already [in a chorus].

Ms Zima: Give her chance; give her chance [ENCOURAGING SARs]

Vicky: Already they wanted to her or capture him for some, some purpose. And now... ehm... Wynand decided not to tell the people and keep it a secrete.

Ms Zima: Ebraime's whereabouts?

Vicky: Yes

Ms Zima: You want to try [to another learner].

Learner: I think it is like Wynand like [inaccessible]

Ms Zima: Uhm...do you all agree?

Class: Yes

Ms Zima: Okay, so let's move on. I'm just going to pose to you some questions that you are going to discuss orally just to check on your understanding of the passage. The first question:

I want you to explain to me what race Wynand is? **[PROBING QUESTIONS]**

[Some learners indicate that they did not understand the question]

Explain what race, you know race?

Class: Yes

Ms Zima: What race is Wynand, Jack?

Jack: **I don't know race**

Ms Zima: You don't know what race [raising her voice a bit]?

Learner: {shouts} white boy

Ms Zima: Why do you say he is white? **[PROBING QUESTIONS]**

Learner C: Ms, here [meaning the passage] is he saying he is different by way like a white boy [in fact the passage does not talk of white. Instead, it talks of “fair hair” and this may be should be the reason].

Another learner: Yes

Learner C: According to the passage he is white.

Ms Zima: And Ebraime?

Learner: He thinks ...

Ms Zima: From our reading of the passage, what kind of a person is Wynand? How would you describe him? **[PROBING QUESTIONS]**

Learner: Soft-hearted guy

Learner: He is soft hearted {learners sometimes just shout their answers}.

Ms Zima: Do you think he is soft hearted, he is friendly?

Learner: Kind

Ms Zima: he is kind

Learner: And caring

Ms Zima: And caring

Learner: And respective

Ms Zima: Okay, yes respective

Learner: He doesn't want to lead the people other people to know where this guy was.

Ms Zima: You mean he wanted to...

Learner: Ja he wanted to

Ms Zima: Oh, you mean to say Wynand respected eh ...Ebraime's decision to ... to stay alone.

Learners: Ja

Learner D: He is a secrete person because he likes to keep secretes

Ms Zima: Wynand?

Learner D: Yes

Learner E: Ms, I think he is a nerd Ms.

Other learners: No, [they laugh] no [while others say 'yes', and 'a nerd, a nerd'].

Ms Zima: Explain yourself?

Learner E: He is like he is going out collecting beetles and I think he is wrong [as she explain what she means, other learners, especially the boys interjects] to keep ...

Learner: Ms

Ms Zima: Wynand?

Learner: He is a [laughter].

- Ms Zima: Okay, okay shh-shh; let's move on [She leaves some issues hanging which might be confusing for SARs]. Who is old Lamprecht, we get to meet him in, in the story. Who is he, who do you think he is?
- Learner: A farm owner
- Ms Zima: A farm owner, do you all agree?
- Class: Yes, yes maam. He is a farmer.
- Ms Zima: Why has Ebraime disappeared, yes?
- Learner: Ms eh... I think, he was eh... he was attacked by a leopard on his face and he killed it and then skinned ...
- Ms Zima: She said he [cough] was attacked by a leopard on his face and may be people didn't like him to see him was like that.
- Learner: Yes
- Ms Zima: Do you agree?
- Some Learner: Yes
- Other Learners: No
- Ms Zima: What do you say, he says no?
- Learner F: May be, may be he was suffering because he was afraid for white or maybe he was bitten because he was bitten because he is black.
- Ms Zima: So you don't agree that he chose to disappear or to go away because he was ...
- Learner F: [interjecting] he chose it ja, but not because his face was ... just because he was eaten up
- Ms Zima: So you think his face was alright there was nothing wrong with him?
- Learner F: There was nothing.
- Learner: Ms, no one knows why did he go [laughter] I agree with Learner F, because neh...Ms, his face neh ... was like destroyed by the, the leopard
- Ms Zima: [interjecting] but he is saying there was nothing wrong; there was nothing wrong with his face.
- Learner: No, I think he very wrong
- Learner F: The fact that he was wearing that mask doesn't mean, it is not the reason that...
- Ms Zima: You don't; you don't think it was ...
- Learners: No
- Learner G: Ms, because neh, if; if he had he should have stood there, I think there at, at the place. Now may be people would become scared and saying words and something ...
- Learner: [interjecting] no

- Learner G: and may be even hurt him with their words and something like that.
- Ms Zima: So he didn't want people to ... to see anything about his face. That is why he decided to just go away. *[It would seem some learners felt that they still had something to say on the matter, however the teacher decides to continue with a new item or question]*. We are also told that he wore a hood. What is a hood? He covered his service, face with a hoo... hood. What is a hood?
- Learner: It is like eh, eh... thing that eh... like, like, a thing that you cover on your head and sometimes you cover your face
- Ms Zima: Okay a covering of your head. Could we say a covering of the head?
- Class: yes [again some learners wanted to say more here, but the teacher did not give them a chance].
- Ms Zima: We are also told something about the hood. What does it mean to this hood that he put on his head?
- Learner: h skinned up a skin of a leopard.
- Ms Zima: Who do you think made up this hood for him?

[She asks very interesting and thought provoking questions for which learners have to use their imaginations. However, as said before, the teacher tends to cut the discussions while they are still in mid way. Is it because learners seem not to be disciplined? I remember her telling me that she sometimes gets stuck on what to do because of what she was warned – not to be too strict with the learners. So being a temporary teacher, one can understand her confusion whether to take a stand against such learners or not].

- Learner: Wynand
- Learner: Old Lamprecht.
- Learner: Lamprecht
- Ms Zima: Do you think it was old Lamprecht?
- Some Learners: No [others say "yes Ms" while others say "we don't know". May be this was tough one to ask as there was really no hint about it].
- Learner: Lamprecht
- Learner; I think he, his, his I think made himself.
- Ms Zima: Yes, I also think he made it himself.
- Learner: I think he killed the leopard and stretched its face and put it and put its skin.
- Ms Zima: And made the hood for himself?
- Class: Yes

- Ms Zima: Yes I think I agree with soon. Why was [*were*] Ebraime's eyes burning with tears when he was Wynand? Why do you think he wanted to cry? What was wrong?
- Learner: It means that Wynand wanted to cry back he ah... he or she he was to talk he is now thinking about now he is kind worried for his family may be it is the first time for him to see now a person now close to him. [The teacher laughs at this answer while some learners giggle].
- Learner: I think but I think neh, because he never tried, neh no one neh, tried to be speaking to her [*him*]. Now he wanted to speak with someone or like feel close to someone else. That is why the eyes are burning.
- Learner: Excuse me Ms, I think it is because he must feel like joking [*choking?*] [other peers say 'no', while one says 'to express his feelings'] he feels lonely neh ...[more noise as learners say what they think is the answer and others laugh].
- Learner: I think it is the first time someone ag [Afrikaans word], he has met someone who gives him company most of the time he was alone that is why he felt vulnerable just because he has seen someone else
- Ms Zima: He never expected to be visited by a white boy.
- Class: [together with the teacher] boy.
- Ms Zima: and also to be shown such kindness.
- Some learners: Yes
- Ms Zima: We are also told that this white boy Wynand brought him some sandwiches. [Some more voices from some learners are heard in the background].
- Learner: Ms by that time by that time I think there was this thing so called like apartheid something like that ...[the last part becomes inaudible as other learners laugh].
- Ms Zima: Yes, well I think it is during that time. [A learner shouts in the background: apartheid and he is ignored by the teacher]. Why do you think Wynand decided to look for Abraham, Ebraime? Why do you think he just decide to go and look up for him? **[Rephrasing as a strategy and the teacher uses her own set questions. She doesn't rely on questions in the textbook].**
- Learner: May be ...me I don't understand, okay.
- Ms Zima: Did he know that Ebraime was in the mountains?
- Some Learners: Yes [others say 'no']
- Ms Zima: There is something in the passage ...
- Learner: He didn't know that it was Ebraime he thought it was Ebraime he just saw a boy.
- Learner: He wanted to find out whether it was him or not

Ms Zima: So he went to the mountain to look for him so that he could find out whether it was him or not?

Some learners: Yes

Ms Zima: Wynand, he promised Ebraime that he would not tell anyone. Why do you think he made such a promise?

Learner: **Ms I think because eh...before ...and then went on there and then before he did not consider**

Learner: **He was the only black person**

Ms Zima: Do you think he was the only black person there?

Learners: Yes Ms, yes

Learner: I also get a feeling that may be he was the one looking for old Lamprecht's sheep.

Ms Zima: What do you say – looking after, being the shepherd to the sheep? What do you say?

Learner: Yes maam

Learner: Ms I think this may be Ebraime went on the mountains the people told stories about that he was dangerous or may be he is an animal or something like that so if he went and told the other people they will hunt him down because ...[some interjections are heard: Ms...] may be told people that he was dangerous to animals and like that.

Ms Zima: But according to the passage [there are more interjections by other learners in the class: Ms, Ms, did you ...] according to the passage, he once lived in the community and then one day we are told that Wynand saw him disappearing, he just decided to go away one, one day. So it is not like he has, had been living in the mountains all along, no. But at one point he, he decided just to go away. [Murmurings are heard]. So when you are friends you do things for each other.

Wynand asked Ebraime to do something for him. He, he went to see him in the mountain and when he was going back home, he asked him to do something. What did he ask him to do?

Learner: **First I think he asked to look for the beetles**

Ms Zima: Do you think Ebraime liked it?

Learner: Yes, he liked it [inaudibly]

Ms Zima: And if you say yes, why do you say yes?

Learner: because, because he **specifically ... not something** else.

- Ms Zima: No it is Wynand who liked him to look for the beetle for him. But do you think Ebraime liked to, to, to look for them very much?
- Learner A: Yes Ms
- Ms Zima: And why do you say yes?
- Learner A: Because he knows eh...eh mountain side very well and may be he asked him to look for ...
- Learner: Yes
- Ms Zima: Do you think he wanted to be friends Wynand?
- Learner G: Yes, yes because uhm he know that uhm his friend neh **despite uhm the scars on his facial** he travelled to see him.
- Ms Zima: Come again?
- Learner G: Uhm, yes neh because I think, I think he new that despite uhm despite the scars on his facial Wynand I think he was like happy they were friend he is gona [going] he is gona [going to] come back for him.
- Ms Zima: Do you agree with him?
- Learner: Yes
- Learner: Because when eh...Wynand was going away he stretched the hand it showed this.
- Ms Zima: When Wynand was going away he waved to say goodbye. If he didn't want to be friend with Wynand he could have just ignored him.
- Learner: Yes
- Ms Zima: Okay let's just look line 16, 17 in our books. We are told that when Wynand extended a formal hand to say goodbye Ebraime took his time he did not ignore the hand. And also when Wynand held up both hands and counted seven fingers, when he told him that I will back in seven days we told that Ebraime understood when Ebraime nodded to show that he understood well and that is line 21. And also line 28, when Wynand had gone Ebraime took a piece of charred wood and made 7 marks on the wall to indicate 7 Days [together with some learners]. So it also shows that he looked forward to Wynand's coming back. Do you agree?

[GUIDING]

- Class: Yes
- Ms Zima: And we are also told that that night he ate his chicken happily in the flickering light of the fire and that is on line 29. So on that day after Wynand's visit he was a happy boy. We are told that he got to eat his chicken happily.
- Learners: Yes [some repeat after her: happily]
- Ms Zima: What is a dormitory?

Some Learners: A what?

Ms Zima: We are told that Wynand was a boarder at a school, a dormitory.

Learner: A dormitory is a place at a school where he must sleep.

Ms Zima: Uhm, at a school. Who is being referred to as Lamprecht's baboon?

Class: [they laugh]

Ms Zima: Line 42, let's all go to line 42. They talk about who is referred to as Lamprecht's baboon?

Some Learners: 42?

Learner C: That was Ebraime

Ms Zima: Yes it was Ebraime. And he is the one who should be looked for or who should be hunted.

Learner: May be that is why he also ran away because how can you call person, a person a baboon?

Some Learners: It is not right

Ms Zima: Yes, it is not right. Earlier on I once said I think Ebraime was looking after Lamprecht's sheep and may be when he was trying to defend his sheep against the attack of the leopard that is when he got attacked. And now since he has run away he has Lamprecht, old Lamprecht would want him back so that he can continue to look for, to, to ... look after his sheep. Do you agree?

Learner: Yes we agree [some learners show signs of boredom: they sigh, they stretch].

Ms Zima: What have Wynand decide to do concerning Ebraime's disappearance – he finally decides?

Learner: Keep it a secrete.

Ms Zima: Yes he decides to keep it a secrete. And why do you think he finally made such a decision [a similar question had been asked already and the teacher repeats herself]. John?

John: Eh... What was the question again? [The other learners laugh]

Ms Zima: I said Ebraime at the end of the passage he finally decides he is going to keep it a secrete [the teacher should be saying Wynand and not Ebraime here]. That he, he has found Ebraime, why do you think he decides [the bell rings] to keep it a secrete; he didn't want to tell the others.

John: He decides to keep secrete because uhm may be old Lamprecht would want uhm... will have eh...want Ebraime back to look after his sheep but uhm Ebraime doesn't want to.

Ms Zima: Okay so I think he realised that the people who were looking for him did not care at all that is why he decided to keep it a secrete. Okay, for your homework I would like you to go and answer for me the exercise on page 77, exercise 2, A – F. And I will make sure you [inaccessible].

[Some learners grumble while others start to move out of the class].

END OF THE LESSON

APPENDIX 2e: MS MBULI'S ONLY LESSON:

VENUE: Nandanvu Secondary School in the Otjozondjupa Region

DATE: Friday, 13 June 2008

REGION: Otjozondjupa

THE LESSON

SKILL: Reading

DURATION: 40 Minutes

TEACHING AIDS:

- Hand-written pamphlets [due to a shortage of books, the teacher had copied the two poems to be used on an A4 paper, then made copied from this].
- Chalkboard

GRADE: 9D

OBSERVATIONS:

Only one lesson taught by this teacher was observed. The following lesson took place from 11:10 to 12:40. Grade 9D was used because it was the only one that took the PIRLS test the previous day; the teacher has volunteered to assist me after the teacher that had accepted my request prior to my visit decided not to continue with it. On hearing my dilemma she asked a colleague to call me. On my arrival, I found that the teacher had already taught the other grade 9 classes and she was left only with the Grade 9D class. Since the test indicated that there were struggling adolescent readers, I decided to go ahead with this class.

Learners come in from another classroom. Learners move from one classroom to the next for their respective lessons. After all learners had entered the class, my video camera man and I went inside. The teacher greets the learners and introduces us to them.

The teacher starts the lesson by referring to the previous lesson, in which the Grade 9D learners wrote their own poems.

*Only the board, Ms Mbuli had written the days' topic: Poetry and some literacy terms: **rhyme, personification and metaphor**. What follows is a transcription of this lesson.*

Please note that the names of the school, the teacher and learners are pseudo names. The square brackets

[] indicates some observation or corrections by the researcher.

Ms Mbuli: What is a poem? When one is talking of a poem, you know what is going on because once you have written your own poems, isn't it? **[PRE-READING: finding out what learners know]**

Class: [In chorus] yes.

Ms Mbuli: So, I just want to hear from you. What is a poem? What is a poem? If somebody ask [asks] you what a... what a poem is, how are you going to explain it for her? Walter? **[RELATING IT TO LEARNERS' LIFE]**

Walter: A poem is a story that is describing both something bad, weakness and bad, bad.

Ms Mbuli: Uh – yes, someone with a different idea or view? Yes Mary?

Mary: A poem, it's, it is like a speech or those type

Ms Mbuli: Uh [encouraging the learner to carry on]

Mary: it is like describing something

Ms Mbuli: Uh

Mary: to increase it is like, like a bank, like, like a dessert, I would say that it is having both feet

Ms Mbuli: Uh

Mary: because it is having both, it is like describing something that another person would understand.

Ms Mbuli: Okay, what, what fits, okay. Deon, let's hear your view?

Deon: A poem is the, is when you describe something like that, for example when you describe your name

Ms Mbuli: uh

Deon: like, from, from a first letter to, to the last letter.

Ms Mbuli: Okay, you can take the first letters of your name and then describe yourself. That's it, something else here [pointing at another group]?

Learner: I think to my side, eh... a poem it's longer, it describes something into singular, short sentences and short paragraphs, just describing something.

Ms Mbuli: Okay, you can describe something or someone. Talking of someone, it can be a person, you can describe something like eh...eh a flower, you can describe an animal, a cow or anything. We all know all these type of description[s] from our mother tongue, Otjiherero poem[s]; you also know very well how they used to describe animals, especially wild animals, some domestic animals like horses and so on. So that's what a poem is. Now, today [a learner coughs, the teacher takes a bunch of hand written pamphlets and goes to one group], I just want one person to hand out these papers quickly. We move ahead. So there is one poem there that we are going to analyse and see the verses and all those type of things [cough]. So we will make use of that [a lot of noise is heard: scratching of throats, benches being pushed this way and that way] main part just to explain. [More pushing and shifting of benches is heard, some chairs a falling down]. Give some this side so that they can help themselves, here, here, just take one and proceed [pass over] the others. That's it. [There are more benches being pushed as learners grab some pamphlets and pass them over, as this happens, there is a screeching sound heard]. **[RELATING TO LEARNERS' LIFE]**

So, the skill that we are going to touch mostly is the reading skills. When it comes to poems you read; you have to read; you have to analyse, mostly reading is the only one that plays a... a big role there. So before we come to the eh... one that you are going to read and then answer the questions and so on, I just want you to look at this one, the one in front of you. Eh...now what is the title of that poem; the one you are having there? Its title, Banja? **[STATING THE OBJECTIVE]**

Banja: *The Wind.*

Ms Mbuli: *The Wind* is the title of that poem. And who is the poet, who is the poet? [Pause] What is another word for a poet? What is a poet, Joseph? **[REPHRASING AS A STRATEGY].**

Joseph: A person who wrote it.

- Ms Mbuli: A person who wrote the poem. Now who is the writer of that poem, *The Wind*, who is the writer or the poet of this poem? He is there, at the bottom. Yes, eh...Mary?
- Mary: James ...
- Ms Mbuli: James Reeves, James Reeves is the writer of this poem. Okay!
Now I just need four people here. We have four stanzas there; you can see all the verses. Eh... therefore I need one pupil from each group, we have four groups. One here for the first one, group two for the second one, the third one, the fourth one [as she talks, she points at the different groups] there you go. Okay, just read while you are there. **[CLASSROOM ORGANISATION: groups of four but the activity given doesn't need it].**
- Girly: I can get through the doorway without any key [reads fluently]
And take trap the leaves
- Booikie: I can [the learner, a boy, struggles to pronounce every word in the stanza. Booikie seem to have problems with decoding. But since the poem was hand-copied, it might be that he cannot see the teacher's handwriting properly]
- Joey: [She struggles with the pronunciation of three words, including – 'sink' which she is pronounces as /snink/].
- Ms Mbuli: /sink/, [the teacher corrects the learner as she reads; she corrects her on every word pronounced incorrectly. **[ERROR CORRECTION AS THE LEARNER READS]**
- Ms Mbuli: That one is 'pink', the one [referring to a letter] between I and K is N, 'Pink', the last one, Tjipoka? [Could the learner's struggle with pronunciation be caused by failing to decipher the teacher's handwriting?] **[THE TEACHER HAND-COPIED THE POEM FROM THE BOOK. SOME DECODING PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY LEARNERS COULD BE DUE TO BEING UNABLE TO DECIPHER THE TEACHER'S WRITING].**
- Tjipoka: [She reads fluently also, pronouncing the words correctly].
- Ms Mbuli: You see, so that is the poem, *The Wind*. Now you have to analyse it, I just want to look at eh... how many verses does it has as you see it there, the verses? Ja?

Mimi: 4.

Ms Mbuli: It has only 4 verses. [CONFIRMING THE LEARNER'S ANSWER]

Some Learners: 4 [together with some learners]

Ms Mbuli: or call it a stanza. You see there on your ... the left hand side it is written [together with some learners] verses or stanzas. So we don't use the word eh... paragraph when it comes to poems. It is either verses [coughs] or [together with some learners] stanzas. [GUIDANCE]

Class: stanzas

Ms Mbuli: Verse four, now when you look on your right hand side, each stanza, how many, how many lines does each stanza has [have], how many, how many lines eh... Patrick?

Patrick: 2 lines

Ms Mbuli: 2 lines. Each stanza in the poem consists of [together] 2 lines

Class: 2 lines

Ms Mbuli: which rhyme. These two lines they rhyme. So that is why we have [coming back to the board] why the word 'rhyme, [she had written *rhyme*, *personification* and *metaphor* on the board earlier] this word here [pointing at 'rhyme']. I just want to hear from you what does that mean? Just look at the sentence, at the end of the lines, the way they ends [end]; what do you think does the word 'rhyme' mean? What does that mean, just look at the words, the last word in each ... line, the last word? Like, start with ...they are ... verse 1, we have 'key' we have 'tree', 'towers' 'flowers, 'pink' 'sink', 'riot' 'quiet', how does [do] they match? Because here they say, 'two lines which rhyme'; the way they appear there. Now, what do you understand under that word? Yes?

Trisha: About punctuation [inaccessible]

Ms Mbuli: They have to hear you, everybody; do it loud [aloud].

Trisha: I said it is about punctuation.

Ms Mbuli: Punctuation, the way they punctuate it, I don't think so. Somebody with a different view, yes?

Mary: I think they end with the same ending, like 'towers' 'flowers' they end the same.

Ms Mbuli: You see, you see there; so like, now what about the first verse? The 'towers' and the 'flowers' is okay, because eh... as you can see at the... the last four [five?] letters "o, w, e, r, s" is okay, they are the same. What about 'key' and

'tree'? That one is correct; it's one of the point[s]. [Pause], Tjipoka, do you want to say something there?

Tjipoka: They say the same [inaccessible]

Ms Mbuli: Like the first verse?

Tjipoka: Uh.

Ms Mbuli: What do you mean the same? I don't think so. Yes?

Learner: They have the same alphabet [also inaccessible].

Ms Mbuli: [The teacher goes to the board and start writing]. Okay, so let us do it. When we are talking about rhyme, so it means ... the, the lines or the sentences in a certain verse or paragraph, they end either in the same sound or in the same **vowels**. Like when you compare verse 1 and verse 2, verse 1, can you sound it the last word, all of you, the last word of line 1

Class: 'Key'

Ms Mbuli: Again all of you? [CHANTING]

Class: 'Key'

Ms Mbuli: And the second word?

Class: 'Tree'

Ms Mbuli: You see the sound?

Class: Yes, uh

Ms Mbuli: You see the sound it made is the same [CHANTING to emphasise a point]

Class: uh

Ms Mbuli: so if it ends with the same sounds, then we can say that it [learners together with the teacher] rhyme, and that is also the same when it ends in the same vowels like 'flowers' and

Some learners: Vowels, vowels, 'towers'

Ms Mbuli: 'Towers' 'sink, pink', but when you go take the last one it is just like the first one [some learners: yes], there it is not the spelling [one learner scratches his throat] that matter but it is

The sound [together with the learners],

Class: sound

Ms Mbuli: so that is what we mean with 'rhyme'.

Class: Yes

Ms Mbuli: Are we now up to date?

Class: Yes

Ms Mbuli: So, that's it. And then, let us look at eh... the punctuation, just, with this ... as I have said we are going to analyse this, only this poem, the one of the 'Wind', nothing else. Here they say each line begins with the capital letter, even when the previous line ends with a comma or a semi colon, you see there, all the first letters start are, are in capital. Talking of the semi colon is like [writes the symbol for a semi-colon on the board] that one, we call them, we call it a semi colon or a line that comes or the word that follow a... semi colon is supposed to be in ... small letter, but here you can see that all of them are in capital, so that is the format that is being used by poets. Now fur...eh further we are going to look at the content of the poem and its meanings. Which poem – the one of 'The Wind'; here we talking of special techniques of writing, when it comes to poem I used to tell you that a poem is not like an essay. [GUIDANCE]

Class: Uh

Ms Mbuli: the language that is being used in a poem might differ from the one we use in essays.

Class: Yes

Ms Mbuli: Sometimes we are talking of hidden meanings, if you don't, you need to read it in order to understand it or so, it is not always the way you to to try to understand the poem the way you see it because sometimes the meanings are hidden, so we will come to that as well. Now they are talking of technique of personification that is what I have there on the chalkboard.

Personification, what is that; let us look at the example there. What is the 'I' of the poem, what do you think is the 'I' in that poem of *The Wind*; what is that 'I' in the poem? *Things I can move and I can sink; I can carry the house* Who is that 'I' ... in the poem, Tjivero; whom?

Tjivero: He is the ... (inaccessible) wind.

Ms Mbuli: Motjavi? [OTjIHERERO word for *what do you mean?*]

Tjivero: Wind

Ms Mbuli: It's the wind itself, it is the wind. The answer of course is the wind itself. The poet makes the wind write the poem. That is why sometimes I told you that, you can, you can also use yourself, and then you write, you, you warn the community or other people against AIDS. And then, you yourself becomes AIDS now and then you warn other people against yourself, how dangerous you are, how you can kill people and all those type of things

[Some sounds are heard: learners grunting trying to scratch their throats. There is a long pause as the teacher goes back to the poem and some different sounds are heard, made by the learners]. Anyhow that is what we mean with eh... the poet makes the wind write the poem, and he uses vocabulary which would normally refer to people.

Class: Uh

Ms Mbuli: So the, the vocabulary that is being used here, you know the wind is not a human being, isn't it?

Class: Yes

Ms Mbuli: Then the wind eh... like where it says eh... eh '*Steal through a garden and not waken flowers*' can a wind steal?

Class: No.

Ms Mbuli: Impossible. It is used because eh... they want; they use the characters of the person as that of the wind. Now let us come back to this word, just from the information you gathered now. What do you think is 'personification'? The technique of personification, that technique that is being used; in the poem, like the word 'I', yes; what is person... what do you think is per... personification, what does that mean? ... Yes John? **[Elaboration, Then Followed By A Question]**

John: When something is referring to you.

Ms Mbuli: Uhm, to a person. You see, someone with a different view, you what do you say, Girlie? **[PROMPTING]**

Learner: It's when the non living thing is complained [compared] from [with] the living.

Ms Mbuli: That's it, so you are not wrong at all; you are just on the right track. Here they said [the teacher writes on the board and says out the words being written] 'it is the representation of a thing [is representation of a thing] or a quality ... as a person'; so it is a thing, but of [to] which it is compared to is a person. So like what we did with the wind here, here they personified so it means that they made a wind to have characters of a person. They personified. So that is personification. Now eh... let us look at the second point there [the teacher reads at the back of the pamphlet]. 'The use of the imagery may include metaphor.' A good example occurs in stanza two where the wind says it '... can steal from the garden and not wake the flowers' so that one is an example of metaphor. Eh... it can steal from the

garden and not wake the flowers. Now what do you think is a metaphor; what is it – just from that example, what is a metaphor? What is a metaphor? You can also; there is the use of imagery, the use of imagery can also include metaphor. A good example is the one that again stanza two, stanza two where they say it can steal, the wind says it can steal through the garden and not wake the flowers.’ As we have said, the wind can’t steal, isn’t it, it is obvious that it can’t do all these things. Now what do you think is the meaning of this word? Let us see, Joey?

Joey: It is the ... what he thinks.

Ms Mbuli: Eh, imagination?

Joey: Yes.

Ms Mbuli: Imagine that he can also do the same as the, as [together with Joey] as the thief is doing. Like a thief can also come and steal your things and you cannot see it. So that is the same by, the same way the wind or the writer of this poem was using also. That he can also steal through the garden and not wake the, the flowers. Just not be doing it and slowly without touching any flower or waking them up. So here this word metaphor [he teacher writes on the chalkboard next to the word metaphor and as this is done, what is written is also being voiced out] is ... a way ... of describing, a way of describing two things by comparing it to something else. You describe something; you describe the wind and then and you compare it with the thief, the way how he stepped in when he, he is stealing, with something else that has similar qualities, (writes) that has ...

Some Learners: Similar ...

Ms Mbuli: That has similar qualities. What does the word similar mean? Similar qualities – similar, similar, similar qualities, yes Tjipwea?

Tjipwea: The same ...

Ms Mbuli: Same qualities. You are hundred percent correct. That is very good. The same qualities; let us just turn over quickly there. **Reading** a deep meaning, does the poet want us to interpret his poem at a deep level of meaning, just from the way you understand this poem of the wind. Is it difficult to understand it?

Class: No.

Ms Mbuli: Do we need to interpret it ... or

Class: No.

Ms Mbuli: It is just clear?

Class: Yes.

Ms Mbuli: So we don't need to interpret anything. The answer is no, the poet wants to make us as sensitive, as sensitive ... to make us sensitive to this force of nature, the wind. And he wants us to appreciate and take pleasure in his work. So is; that is what I mean with deep or hidden meaning. So there is nothing to be [inaccessible] of the wind in this poem. This poem is just serious, there is ... nothing is hidden; nothing, it does not have any ... eh deep meaning. You just understand it the way it is. So it is just for pleasure for you to know eh... to appreciate the words and just to enjoy it. It is for pleasure. So that is how it is. Now with this information, I want us to read this poem [the teacher takes out another bundle of hand written pamphlets and distributes it to the learners]. Quickly Joey you can divide this. It is a poem with its questions. There is some shuffling of feet and papers are heard]. Those are the questions. Okay. ... So this poem is eh... what is its tit... title, the title of this poem, Tjivero?

Tjivero: *The Colour of Water.*

Ms Mbuli: *The Colour of Water.* It's ... it is an easy poem, interesting, you can enjoy it. So I just I want you to read it and then from there you are going to answer the questions. Eh ... now before you come to the poem, let us just go through the questions quickly. Like question 1, is, is clear and it's easy, it wants the main message of the poem. So you read it in detail and then you have to, to write there what you think is the main message of that poem. Note down all the colours the poet uses to describe water. So you mention them there – all the colours; we are talking of colours. Number 3, some of the lines in the poem rhyme because the last words have the same finer sounds. It is clear stated here and then the example is also given there. Eh... now note down each of other rhyming pairs, example, 'cock, rock'. So the pairs means that at the end of the **reading** you should get five pairs, the way it is written, so you are going to find it in your, in your poem. And then the final question, fill in the final question to complete the similes. What is simile as we have said? [**COMPARISON: the topic is different but the new poem uses another rhyming technique, which is relatively difficult**].

Learners together: Second, the ...

Ms Mbuli: Okay, simile is expression that describes something by comparing it with something else. And when it comes to similes, what are the two words that we use in comparison, you are comparing me with her. There are words that we are using there, two of them. Can you remember them, or do you know them?

Learner: Eh... you are like ...

Ms Mbuli: 'Like' when you are doing comparisons, 'like' is one of the words that we use, 'like' is what you: 'the dog is as black', aah-aah [denying what she has just given as an example] sorry, not the black one. The, the ...the 'he is fat like an elephant'. So he is comparing your weight with that of the elephant. Like is one word. And then the other word also, that we are using when we are using similarities or comparisons? Come on people, let's try. Just, ja, Tjiveka?

Tjiveka: Same.

Ms Mbuli: No, not that one. Not necessarily that one. Jerry?

Jerry: She and he

Ms Mbuli: Uuh, they you go, not exactly.

Jack: Is.

Ms Mbuli: Aah-aah, no talking. But it is good to try, people when you are at school that is what we have to do. We are here to learn. And if something come (s) across your mind you have to bring it out. Don't just keep it, otherwise you are not thinking, Jeckie?

Jeckie: Look.

Ms Mbuli: Aah-aah. Josh?

Josh: Is.

Ms Mbuli: Aah-aah, not *iszs*, just there.

Mary: Space

Ms Mbuli: Aah-aah

Girlie: As.

Ms Mbuli: 'As', 'as'. Like, who can give an example of comparison where we use 'as'? Yes?

Joey: It is like when I say, if someone is as fatter, is as fat as an elephant.

Ms Mbuli: You see, he, she is talking a comparison also. He is as fat as an elephant. Or he is fat like an elephant. Both those words we use them when we are comparing things. So here we said, fill in the missing words to complete the

similes, means that you have to go for those words. You have to do comparisons and from the poem not something out of your, out of the blue. Okay, can you start answering please? Remember when it, it comes to writing answers you have to take the total marks into consideration. Talking of one mark, so don't waste time writing a lot of things there, is only one mark. When they are talking of six marks; mean, eh...six marks means that you have to mention six things. The same with the, the last questions; eh... the third one, and then the others you can see from the lines, open lines. Make sure you..., you complete all those open lines. It is just like that. Those are just six questions; I hope you will finish them within this period. If you need anything please just feel free to ask. Uh ... [the teacher now moves around trying to assisting individual learners]. What are you doing with her pen? But she is writing. Rashat it is not good – how can you say someone's pen is yours but you have one? [*The teacher admonishes a boy who tries to forcefully take a girl's pen. Most of what she is saying to the learners is not heard. Benches are being pushed down forcefully, making a lot of noise as learners move from one place to the next, asking for pens*]. Study the questions of the poem; you don't understand it, go for the second time. Make sure you write the correct answers. ... Yes? **[STRATEGY TEACHING]**

Learner: Teacher what ... we write cock?

Ms Mbuli: Aah-aah, you write as or like here, from the poem. ... People you have to be careful there when it comes to ... question number three. The way this poem, '*Colour of Water*', rhyme is not the same as the one of '*The Wind*'. This one as you can see is cross, but still it rhymes. Cross means may be the first line end with '*er*'; and then the second one '*d*' the third one, '*er*' again, the last one '*d*'. So it means it still rhymes, the thing is that here it cross, but it is still rhyme. So that is how it works. If you take the word '*rock*' and '*cock*' it crosses. [There is a long pause – apart from learners grunting their throats, some coughing, some pushing the chairs. One learner calls the attention of the teacher to ask something].

Ms Mbuli: [Inaccessible] But I have just explained. You go back to the poem. Just take the example of those two, the cock and rock, as I shown you. Because here it says only some of the last word, the last words of the poem. In the same

verse, the same verse, uh, you see. It is just like I have explained there. Like this, this one it rhymes with this one [pointing on the pamphlet].

Learner T: And then eh... are they 4?

Ms Mbuli: Many, five of them.

Learner T: Like this

Ms Mbuli: Ja, rhyming like this word, like 'cock' 'rock'. So just there; and then look for others also

Class: uhm

Ms Mbuli: that rhyme the same way just like that.

Learner T: And these one also?

Ms Mbuli: Aah-aah, that means there they are others. Leave the way that is given as an example. Write other types, they are a lot of them. [Another learner calls the teacher's attention. But a lot of what is discussed is inaudible].

Learner TT: Ms, [inaccessible]. ...

Ms Mbuli: Yes ... like if you say, just pronounce this one, this one, you see, lo, lover; -oler, the way they sound, is the same

Class: Uhm

Ms Mbuli: Sometimes, don't only take the, the spelling. It means that you have sound that word and see whether it sounds that same as the other one. So you need to sound as well, because rhyming does not only mean the spelling. We are talking of sounds, then you have to sound the words, otherwise you don't know if they rhyme or not. [As she is looking at one girl who seems to have finished] Are you finished? You, you girl, you have time to finish. Are you finished? **[MONITORING THE learners' work and assisting SARs]**.

Girlie: Uh.

Ms Mbuli: and you? You see I am looking for five. Why did you leave the first one and the last one? So they are ten altogether. Five here, five on the other side, yes? You have to cover all the lines. [There is a sound of a chair falling down, then a long pause apart from learners shifting a paper this way and that way, while others grunts, scratching their throats. The bell rings].

Ms Mbuli: How far are you?

Some learners: We are to finish.

Ms Mbuli: The last question? [A long pause takes place]. You keep this one.

Some Learners: Yes. [There is another long pause, where only the sounds of learners moving from one place to the next].

Ms Mbuli: You, just give it to me. You can keep this one.

Ms Mbuli: Remember we have to use these two periods to write a test.

Ms Mbuli: Remember to write your name please. Only the one with the answers that is the one I need, the other you can keep them.

Learner: Finish.

Ms Mbuli: There we are.

[Another long pause takes place before learners write a test as stated by the teacher somewhere else. Those who finish writing are then released to go for supper. After an hour and half, everybody is through. The teacher checks all the papers before we move out].

THE END

**APPENDIX 3:
TEACHER'S TRANSCRIBED SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

APPENDIX 3a: Mr RHINO's

TRANSCRIPTION OF A SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH MR RHINO

DATE: 12 August 2008

VENUE: Jaba Combined School (HOD's office), Caprivi Region

TIME: 15:00 – 17:00

I set up an interview meeting with Mr Rhino because of two reasons: one of the tutors suggested I conduct one as with what I did with the others; I realized that the post-interview that I had done with subjects from Caprivi Region were incomplete. The cassette did not give an indication of being full on the second side and so, we continued discussing while the cassette was not recording. At the time of this interview, the researcher was suffering from bronchitis, which means that every now and then, she had to stop the cassette in order to cough. This means that there is a lot of static sounds due to stopping and starting the cassette.

On arrival, I found the teacher had been waiting for me since in the morning. I had presumed that learners were still writing their mid year examinations. What follows is this interview:

Elizabeth: Good Afternoon MR Rhino. Thank you very much for allowing me to come and conduct my semi-structured interview with you. And I hope you are going to feel free; you should regard me as a learner who came here with the purpose of learning from you. I am not the expert as I am here.

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. You are welcome.

Elizabeth: Thank you. To start with, I am doing a research on the Grade 9 English learners and I would like to find out if you could tell me something about the reading abilities of your learners. Do they have different abilities; reading abilities or are they reading at different levels and if they do, how different are they?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Eh... in terms of reading abilities eh... my learners are in different levels. There are those that eh... are good at reading I would say; there are those that are average and there are those are ... suffering in terms of reading

abilities. That means they really need a lot of attention. They are three groups in fact (Uhm).

Elizabeth: How do you eh ...recognize their reading problems, that you are able to differentiate them in three groups?

Mr Rhino: I mean there are many ways (uhm?). Firstly eh... you have to test their reading with insight. That would say you give them something to read and then there are comprehension questions to answer. And through that you can easily know if they are able to understand what they read. Secondly, eh ...you can test them by giving them something to read. It can be an article that they read and then summarise it. So, by so doing you will get to know whether they understand what they have read are able to interpret the material that you have given them. Eh ...thirdly they can read aloud to you as you listen and through that you would be able to know whether they have word recognition in them and they are able to read at, at a better pace that a teacher would recommend. So those are the ways that eh ... I basically use to find whether they are able to read. **[DIAGNOSIS OF READERS] USED BY TEACHERS]**

Elizabeth: Thank you very much. Eh ...you mentioned three categories: the good, the average and those you call "suffering in reading". Those who read, ... let us eh ...find out about those who are good in reading (ehm). Do they ...they are good in reading, in which way are they good in reading? Do they show that they understand what they read or what?

Mr Rhino: Ehm ... yes, what I mean by good at reading is eh... understanding what they read. So, that is what I meant by good at reading because reading is about understanding the printed material (ehm) and if you are not able to understand the printed material then you are not reading. So, eh ...the first group are [*is composed of*] good readers in the sense that they can exploit the material and understand it and maybe use it [*clinking noise from the tape as it is stopped and started due to the researcher's coughing*]

Elizabeth: Okay. You were telling me about the good readers ... that reading is ...about understanding what they read, (uhm) and you wanted to explain further (Ja). Can you please elaborate more (uhm) on good readers?

Mr Rhino: Ja, I mean, in fact a good reader would pick up any printed material, read it and understand it and may be apply it to himself/herself in terms of what the content is about. So that is, in fact being a good reader, because reading is about understanding what is printed in a book or any other material.

Elizabeth: Okay. [Pause] eh ... the other thing I would like to find out, is... concerns the last group; those that you say they are “those who suffer in reading”, that I have called struggling adolescent readers. Eh ... how many years do you have as ...have you been teaching grade 9 English?

Mr Rhino: Eh ... I've been teaching grade 9 eh...for ... 10 years.

Researcher: Okay. In these 10 years, have you come across struggling adolescent readers?

Mr Rhino: Yes, quite, quite a number of times. [HAD COME ACROSS STRUGGLING READERS]

Researcher: Okay.

Mr Rhino: I have encountered learners who really struggle to read and if, if you ... if you look at them and may be find out as to why, they are ... they are many reasons hampering the reading abilities of these suffering learners (ehm). First and foremost it could be background problem (uhm?). You find that for a Junior or Low Primary phase the reading attention was not, you know, given time and that they just go through eh ... the Lower Primary without having the right skills in terms of reading. So the problem is carried on to Upper Primary and sometimes in Upper Primary also these learners are ignored. They, they go to Junior Secondary with same problem.

[CAUSES]

Elizabeth: [Long pause as the researcher writes some of the information down] what else do you think is the reason apart from background problem, for learners encountering reading problems?

Mr Rhino: The other reason could be eh ... lack of ... I would say lack of qualified teachers, who know precisely what to do in terms of language teaching. And also the problem would lie with the learners themselves because they don't read, you know, during their spare time. Some learners read when they see a teacher; they don't have that culture of reading in them. And that is what is creating this serious problem. Some other problems are genetic; eh... some learners were born like that and it takes time really to develop their minds; they are retarded learners and it takes time for them to pick up the language. I mean it is not, it is not their fault that is a genetic problem.

[CAUSES]

Elizabeth: Uhm. Now, you have told me that you have encountered many struggling adolescent readers and you have elaborated on different reasons why they struggle to read. Eh ... how do you assist these learners; how do you teach them? They are here at the secondary (uhm) but they can't read. What strategies do you use so that may be some of them if not all can improve their reading abilities?

Mr Rhino: There is no other way, once such learners are identified, the only way out is to **start with the basics**. They have to know the phonics because that is the base. If, if they don't know eh ... the sounds, eh ... the alphabet sounds, eh ... ja, that is in fact phonology. If they don't know the sounds it is difficult for them to, to read. So I would basically start with that, phonics, to ... so, so that they get to know how these letters are related in terms of sound (uh). Once they get to know the sounds, then, I would gradually give them something to read; but simplified material that they can read, you know, paired with eh ... those ones who have the ability already, just to assist them. And eh ... they are given quite, quite a number of tasks: one is these learners are given guide, you know, readers, they are given magazines to go and read. After reading they, they have to come back and report back to the teacher on what they have read, without eh ... looking into the magazines; they report. That would give you some sort of guarantee that okay, may be there is some sort of improvement in terms of eh ... reading abilities (uhm). Sometimes it is difficult to know if a learner was given chance to go and read outside, could be that this learner was helped by a parent or friend. So in order for me to know, eh ... these children are given time. Eh ... they are being controlled as they read. And then after a given time, specific time; then they retell what they have read, and through this I can easily know if they are progressing. Also eh ... I would use testing like I give them a task to go and read under and supervision. And then they answer comprehension, simple comprehension questions, just to see if they can pick up answers from the text. These are some of the ways that I use. **[THE SUPPORT GIVEN AND HOW, MATERIALS USED, ASSESMENT]**

Elizabeth: Uhm (yes); Okay; I see. Let's come to the learners you said you sometimes eh ... pair them with those who can read (uhm). What does this pairing do in order to help these learners? How do they get this assistance if they are paired with somebody who can read?

Mr Rhino: Okay, thank you very much. I think eh ... in this world of today we talk of eh ... sharing of ideas and that is very important in terms of language learning. So pairing a clever child with a suffering child, the suffering child will learn more from the, the knowledgeable child. So this is why I would pair, I would pair them, just to learn from each other. That is very important in terms of eh ... today's teaching. You know, we talk of Learner Centred Approach; that is the only way these learners can share ideas, share skills and learn from one another. It is very important (uhm), ja; in any sphere of learning.

- Elizabeth: [Pause, then scratches her throat]. Eh ... at the beginning you mentioned some of your problems, reading problems they have like that eh ... they cannot eh ... identify the sounds. Are there, are there other problems that they, they reveal apart from not identifying the sounds, at the beginning that they are encountering?
- Mr Rhino: Ja, there are other problems [uhm?]. Eh ... eh... foreign language eh ... versus mother tongue, eh ... that is one of the key factors which I think is contributing to the downfall of the English Second Language learning. They tend to use their native languages most of the time because they feel they are comfortable in using their mother tongue. That also is a contributing factor to, to suffering learners, because, because if ... they find English to be a problem, say they are reading something and they cannot understand what they are reading, they will resort to vernacular and that would derail their concentration too; you know, the target language. And that is also one of the problem, they like native and tend to hate foreign language.
- Researcher: [Long Pause] let's come to the class, say you have got Learner A, who is a suffering reader or a struggling reader, and you are supposed to come and teach this lesson. What strategies do you use in class to assist them?
- Mr Rhino: Okay, (uhm) Eh ... say if it is, if it is a reading lesson (uhm?), I would make sure that I would concentrate; not only concentrate on the clever ones, but I would use the following strategies just to help involve the weak ones: first and foremost, I would deal with may be ... topic exploitation, if it is, I mean if it is a topic that needs analysis and they analyse the topic as ... eh ... in groups, pair-some or threesome. Then, after that, to help the weak ones catch up, then we would get into vocabulary exercises may be matching exercises; just to get them involved because those will be simple activities, you know, before they get into the actual reading. We will have all these warmer activities, just to help the weaker ones. And also we bring in teaching aids. If the, the topic is more on things that are around, then we bring realia in class, just to help them see, and feel, may be touch what we are talking about. That would also eh ... you know provoke their interest on reading.
- [STRATEGIES USED TO TEACH SARs]**
- Elizabeth: Can you please elaborate more on topic exploitation, what do you mean by topic exploitation?
- Mr Rhino: Ja, say for example, a topic is on I mean Global Warming and learners are seeing it for the first time, may be some of them are seeing it for the first time. So all the key words, all the key words in the topic will have to be tackled. Learners must understand the key words first before they read the text or article. For example,

global warming; they will look at “global” and say what it is, and then “warming” and then come up with a concrete definition before they read. That helps as, if they understand the key words it is, it would be easy for them to find information as they read the text (uhm). That is more on topic exploitation. **[MEANING OF TOPIC EXPLOITATION]**

Elizabeth: Uhm. You mentioned something interesting about provoking the learners’ interest with regards struggling readers?

Mr Rhino: Eh ... it is imperative that eh ... learners’ interest are provoked, because if something is boring eh ... I don’t thin that anyone will be eager to do it. So it is important that the minds of the learners are provoked so that the interest is created in the end. By so doing learners will work hard and they will be competing because they are interested in doing that particular thing that you have given them. So without interest, then (coughing), I mean without provoking their interest then teaching would be worthless because you only be talking alone and learner (click as the cassette is stopped). So it is important that learners get interested in whatever they do for any teacher to achieve his or her objectives. **[IMPORTANCE OF INTEREST]**

Elizabeth: [Pause] thank you very much. I just want to come back, a little bit on the eh ... (click) what is the real purpose, how important are these exercises, giving the learners these vocabulary exercises?

Mr Rhino: Okay, vocabulary is important (uhm), first and foremost, in the second eh... second language syllabus for English, learners need to acquire a lot of vocabulary, because they need it, number one, for speech purposes. When they speak they would use these vocabulary; secondly, it would also help them when it comes to writing, continuous writing. They will have a wide range of vocabulary to use in whatever topic that they are going to encounter. Be it longer piece or shorter piece; they will have the world within them to make ends meet. Also, not only for writing or for speech; it helps them to understand what they read, that is very important (interruption with a cough). **[IMPORTANCE OF VOCABULARY]**

Elizabeth: You were explaining about the importance of vocabulary. Can you explain more on that one?

Mr Rhino: Ja, I think, to continue on vocabulary I would say that English is not an independent language so to say; eh ... most of the words have been borrowed. So learners would know also not only the meanings bur they would know that English is rich because of other languages. And eh ... they will also know the root, or roots of words’

origins and how these words are used in terms of languages. Say for example we have quite a number of ways in which we can use these words. For example we have verbs, we have prepositions, we have adjectives, we have articles; to name just a few. So learners will be accustomed, they will know how to handle the language. And know where, you now, the language comes from, they will know where these words comes [come] from and then why the English is so rich in terms of vocabulary.

Elizabeth: I see, than you. Are you familiar with the term remedial or compensatory teaching, and if so, where have you come across this term?

Mr Rhino: Than you very much, that's a very good question. Well, as a teacher during my 3 years of teaching, eh ... I think, during my first year (uh?) we did remedial teaching or compensatory teaching. Eh ... re... remedial is from the word remedy, which could imply that if there is a deficiency in learning, then remedial teaching comes to play, this is when the suffering learners are given extra attention to help them, at least gain more and be on par with their colleagues. So remedial teaching is very important because it helps the weaker ones to pick up. **[MEANING OF REMEDIAL TEACHING]**

Elizabeth: And what materials do you use and strategies do you use during remedial teaching?

Mr Rhino: Eh ... say in terms of reading, I mean eh ... our ... our world is rich, we talk of newspapers, eh ... luckily we have eh ...ja, in terms of materials for remedial teaching, I think eh ... our world is rich. We have eh ... quite a lot of materials that we can use for remedial teaching. We have newspapers in place, we have magazines in place, we have a...a lot of story books in the library there learners can use for remedial teaching. And we follow the same pattern of teaching that we would do in a normal classroom situation. Because we don't want these learners to suffer, so we give them that, we follow all the stages of the lesson that eh ... any normal lesson would have undergone. **[MATERIALS USED DURING REMEDIAL TEACHING]**

Elizabeth: And what stages are these, can you please mention a few?

Mr Rhino: Ja, eh ...first and foremost, eh ... any reading lesson would undergo 3 stages and these stages are very important because they help learners to understand whatever a given text they are working on. Eh ... firstly we have the pre-reading stage. This is the ... the warmer part of the reading in which eh ... activities such as eh... may be matching tasks or definitions, or true or false questions or may be explaining or defining the topic. This is the part that would open up their minds before they get

into the actual reading business. Then after eh... the pre-reading stage, now we get into the actual reading business now, which is the while-reading stage. And during the while-reading this is where now they are given a task to venture into, may be I want them to read for understanding and answer comprehension questions. That is the time that we...; and may be I want them to read and summarise the text, this is the time now; they will do it. Then after the while-, we have the post-, now under post-, this where ...where we check now the understanding; could be ...may be they could be given follow up questions: eh...they could retell what they have read or dramatise it just to show that they have understood what they read about. These are the 3 stages and they are very important. **[3 STAGES]**

Elizabeth: Uh, okay. [*Scratch her throat*] So you use these stages even during remedial teaching?

Mr Rhino: Yes [okay], because remedial teaching is also a normal class like any normal other class, but a bit slower [okay], a bit slower. **[REMEDIAL LESSON SIMILAR TO NORMAL CLASS]**

Elizabeth: So that is the difference?

Mr Rhino: Yes, a bit slower, because you are attending to people who are struggling, they are not that fast as the other learners who have a...you now, better abilities, so the class is a bit slower. And you give them room to ask questions where they don't understand [uh]. And you have to change that it is very important that they are given opportunity to also ask questions. **[REMEDIAL LESSON SIMILAR TO NORMAL CLASS]**

Elizabeth: And do they ever ask questions?

Mr Rhino: They do [okay], they do, because the reason why they don't ask questions in a normal classroom situation is that they are at times laughed at. And they feel ashamed about that, they know that they cannot make it; they are struggling. So to avoid being laughed at or being made funny of, they, you know, choose to be quiet. But now, when they are isolated, then they are free, they have the freedom to express themselves [uh]. **[REMEDIAL INVOLVES ISOLATION OF SARs]**

Elizabeth: So... this means that when it comes to remedial teaching you isolate them?

Mr Rhino: Yes.

Elizabeth: Okay

Mr Rhino: They are isolated.

Elizabeth: Uh... Let's come to the classroom organization. How do you organize your class in order to assist the struggling readers [uh...]?

Mr Rhino: Ja, the shape... the shape of the class also ...of the classroom eh... means a lot. As first and almost before the class is set up one has to consider the abilities of the learners. Eh...my class is set in such a way that all the abilities; say I will start with the higher achievers and eh... I would go to the average and then the suffering. Each group would have the 3 that would mean they would pool together and work together. The ones that are suffering would lean onto the ones that are fast thinkers and that would help them pool up also. It is some sort of motivation rather than having them in eh... in a different group. They would feel, you know, to be some sort of outcast and the...they won't participant and concentrate [uh]. But now, if...if they feel that if they get to see that they are in a group where you know, better learners are, they would feel respected and try to do better, rather than isolating them. [CLASSROOM ORGANISATION]

Elizabeth: Uh, I see. What do you do if you find that you don't have enough resources, can you explain a little bit more on the resources that you have here at school?

Mr Rhino: Ja, thank you very much. we have eh...we are blessed with eh... a small library and eh...we receive monthly eh... magazines on HIV and AIDS, mostly on HIV and AIDS, they... and they come in monthly and sometimes quarterly. We also receive newspapers free of charge. And eh... there are also.... ja, magazines from eh...the, the government that we receive free of charge. Sometimes we receive reading materials from Bank Windhoek especially [uh?], ja, especially on eh...when they are promoting this eh...apple cancer project [uh], ja, we receive free copies [okay]. But that is my initiative [uhm], in fact rural schools do not get that only urban schools. So eh...I am blessed in the fact that the people who are behind the project know me well so I get copies free of charge. And that also I buy newspapers from my own pocket, I ...I buy magazines [clicking, the cassette is stopped due to cough], ja, I buy newspapers from my own pocket, I buy magazines, South African magazines and sometimes I get magazines from other countries, just to ...to show them what...what happens, you know, globally [uh]. So, if we have ... something that we can use [okay] uh. [RESOURCES USED]

Elizabeth: So how do you use these in the reading?

Mr Rhino: Ja, eh...what happens is that eh... sometimes we may not have sufficient materials [uh?], you know we, we are rural school. So what I do, I would use charts [uh], I would copy a story on a chart, then it would be available to the learners at once [uh]. Sometimes I make them copy a story from the chalkboard for use may be 2 days in advance. That is how we, we survive. We try to improvise, everything we have

around, because we are not blessed with the machinery [okay]. So we...we have to use what we can afford to use. **[IMPROVISING BY THE TEACHER]**

Elizabeth: When do you make them copy the stories from the chalkboard, when do they do this, during what time?

Mr Rhino: Eh... we have eh... we have afternoon classes. They come back during the afternoon from 3 o'clock to 4 o'clock and during that time we, we have all time in the world that we need to copy all the stories or articles from any source, from any resource [okay]. And it is available to all the learners for reading.

Elizabeth: How far are these learners just for interest sake, how far do they stay from the school? **[IMPROVISING BY THE TEACHER]**

Mr Rhino: Ja, some, some of them are 10 kilometers away from the school. Eh...but we have made a plan [uh?] that those are far from the school, say 10 plus kilometers away [uh?], then they stay within the school yard, you know, to avoid problem of late coming and the like. So when they are called in for extra classes, they are all in the lesson.

Elizabeth: What do you mean they stay in the class ...

Mr Rhino: They stay within the school yard ...

Elizabeth: ... they stay within the school yard?

Mr Rhino: So they, they... we have, we have a house [okay] earmarked for such learners [uh], we have 2, 2 houses [okay]. The... eh... they also erect tents.

Elizabeth: Oh, they sleep here [yes], they stay here?

Mr Rhino: They stay at the school.

Elizabeth: They just go back during the weekend?

Mr Rhino: Yes, they are free on Friday [together] to go and visit their parents [uh], ja [okay].

Elizabeth: Let's come to assessment of these reading abilities even though I think you mentioned some of them there. With these struggling readers, how do you assess their reading abilities?

Mr Rhino: Okay, eh ...assessment comes, would come in many ways. Firstly eh...we would assess, eh...one, their comprehension in terms of reading. Eh ...that would be comprehension testing, where they are given a text and eh... questions testing understanding would be set [uh]. So, this is one way of eh... means we would know how far they are with their reading abilities. Eh... the, the questions would be eh... direct questions, may be requiring eh...one word answer; eh... some questions would require sentence length answers, and eh... some questions would be matching

exercise and true or false questions as to give room to all the abilities in the classroom. [ASSESSMENT]

Elizabeth: May be the last one is to give you chance if you still have got a sort of another strategy that you use in teaching the learners to read that may be we didn't elaborate on.

Mr Rhino: Ja, the other thing is freedom, learners must be given freedom. Eh... they, they have to read on their own; they have to, to develop some independence in reading. Eh ... that means they, they are encouraged to read at home; may be read to their parents at ... eh... or may be read, not only school books, they can read, they can use the bibles to read to their parents they can also read the bible at the church. So this is also another strategy that I ...I'm, I have employed. And also there are times when I want these learners to develop their reading aloud abilities. So what I do I give them tasks in groups, they prepare speeches and they read speeches in front of, you know, their class and that would also help them to develop their sounds, especially the, the pronunciation part of the language. And it helps, I can see that and they are doing it. Although there may be problems here and there with pronunciation, but the fear of standing, state fright is being, you know, taken care of by so doing. So the, they have the freedom now to stand up and read. Also, eh ... in terms of encouraging reading in learners or just curiosity of reading. I encourage them to read whatever they see, it can be a notice on the wall, it can be on television; whatever they step their feet on, any printed material they have to read because if they don't read then they are doomed. Because reading has to do with information and if they cannot read then they are in danger. Because there are times when they should read to themselves privately without sharing information with their friends. And if they cannot do that then some of their secretes would be revealed, even to the people who are not supposed to get to know this information [okay]. So it is important that they read for life not just for assessment purposes but for life, for real life situations [uh].

[SARs NEED FREEDOM TO READ, PARENTS TO ENCOURAGE THEM]

Elizabeth: May be the last one that I almost omitted. Eh you have explained and elaborated on how you assist these struggling readers [uh]. What about the ...when it comes to the part of other teachers, may be the principal. How do, does, des the school and other subject teachers assist such struggling readers?

Mr Rhino: Than you very much. Eh... it is, it is a bit difficult because mostly the work of language teaching should be shared by all the stake holders in the school. Not only

the language teacher but all the teachers have to share the burden. You know we talk of English across the curriculum. And eh ... I mean teachers are eager to assist. I remember one other time when we were talking about spelling problems, and eh... you, you would find that in some subject areas they, they are very lenient to mark incorrectly spelled words. But in our school we, we have agreed to guard on that [uh] ja, so it is like all the teachers are trying to make sure that language abilities are developed to such an extent that learners know that every teacher in the school would guard against language mistakes. So they know that teachers would be, would penalise them even if it was not a language test; if, if they make language mistake, they would penalize them. So there is some sort of agreement here and there [I see]. Ja, also we have a strategy at our school [uh?]. Eh ...when I reported the reading abilities to the principal [uh?] we decided that eh... teachers would not be running assembly and devotion anymore. So we pick those learners who are struggling [okay] to get used to reading. so we give them text in the bible, go and prepare the assembly is yours this week. So they prepare to read a text in English and then they don't just read it but they, they should share the meaning [I see] you know, with the other learners on assembly point. So that is another strategy that we have put in place to help the struggling adolescent readers to read and it is working out. **[DEVOTION AND ASSEMBLY AS A STRATEGY]**

Elizabeth: Really, [yes], is this not, may be making them [no] shy or?

Mr Rhino: No, what happened is that eh... we talked to them [okay], and we gave, we gave them reasons as to why we are doing that and they agreed, they are enjoying it [uh], they are enjoying it. **[REASONS GIVEN TO SARs]**

Elizabeth: You gave them reasons?

Mr Rhino: Ja, they have reasons why they are doing it. And to be honest, some of the learners who have been doing that are improving [okay], yes, they are really improving and they enjoy it [uh].

Elizabeth: Uh... unless there is something else that you want to say to me?

Mr Rhino: Eh ... to conclude, I would say that eh... language learning has to start from homes, parents should also come in, because if parents would start monitoring the reading abilities of their children from home then, it would be such a wonderful shared, you know, task [uh] other than teachers doing it alone. It is important that eh... parents also come in because learners live into two different worlds. They have most of their entire lives with the teachers and we don't know what happens there at home. So once this task is, it is shared between and teachers and the parents it could be

easy for these two teachers to get to know how to help these individuals. So that is, to me that is very important [uh, uh] because if we get information from the parents on how these learners eh... behave or how these learners study at home, it would also help us plan better for them.

Elizabeth: And is this taking place, this sharing between parents and teachers at your school?

Mr Rhino: Ja, to a certain extent, I mean some parents would even follow their learners, I mean their children to school [uh], they would may be talk to various teachers just to find out how these learners are performing and eh... I mean that is, that is very good. There are times when we, we call parents' meeting just to share with them the problems that we encounter in, in the school. So it so happens that eh... some parents are not helping their children at all or motivating to study or so, and sometimes to get to know that their children have serious problems when they come to school; may be when they attend these meetings, this is the kind, eh... to have a chance, the time to know how their children are performing.

Elizabeth: When you call the meeting some parents do turn up and the others?

Mr Rhino: Some do not [okay], ja, and they have reasons why they don't turn up: some of them have no value for education and some of them are illiterate and they think calling them here is a worst of time. So they would better attend to their home activities and the like [I see] ja. **[A NEED FOR PARENTS TO ASSIST THE ELARNERS, SOME PARENTS DON'T ATTEND MEETINGS]**

Elizabeth: Eh... Mr Rhino, we have come to the end in this struggling interview (laugh) [yes], so than you very much.

Mr Rhino: You are welcome [thank you very much], yes.

Elizabeth: I think I have collected a lot which is going to be really useful.

Mr Rhino: you are more than welcome.

Elizabeth: If you still get something that you remember, please feel free, just put it in writing and fax it. Thank you very much.

Mr Rhino: Okay, I would do so, [thank you very much]

THE END.

APPENDIX 3b: Ms MWINTE's

**TRANSCRIPTION OF A TELEPHONIC SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH Ms
MWINTE**

DATE: 13 October 2008

TIME: 18:20-18-55

Elizabeth: Good afternoon Ms Mwinte. Eh ... I hope you are going to speak a little bit louder so that I am able to hear you. I am glad that you have accepted eh... to conduct this interview with me. And please, as it was mentioned sometime when we met, eh... you should regard me as an ordinary learner; don't see as eh... as somebody above you but I am there to learn from you, okay.

Ms Mwinte: Alright. Okay.

Elizabeth: Thank you very much. Eh ... we are going to talk about eh ... reading. Could you please tell me about the reading, different reading skills that your learners have in your class, the grade 9 class?

Ms Mwinte: Different learning skills? I can't get you; can you elaborate more on the question?

Elizabeth: Eh the reading abilities that they have; do they have similar abilities if not how different are they?

Ms Mwinte: Okay, they do not have eh... same ability when it come to reading some are good some are average and we have weak readers, so that is the problem teachers face I think all over.

Elizabeth: I see, okay. Have you been teaching in grade nine, and if so for how many years?

Ms Mwinte: It is about ten years now.

Elizabeth: It is about ten years?

Ms Mwinte: Yes.

Elizabeth: In those ten years have you come across eh ... learners who struggle to read in grade 9?

Ms Mwinte: Yes we have such learners.

Elizabeth: Uhm, what do you understand by a learner with reading problems at that level, at the secondary level?

Ms Mwinte: Uhm... I don't know whether I am to answer you question but what you know is that you will identify this learner; you give him or her task to read he is failing or he will be stammering to pronounce the words so those are regarded as weaker readers

if that is the right term. **[Reading aloud is used to diagnose learners' reading problems]**.

Elizabeth: I see, so you have mentioned one of the ways you identify the learners what else do you identify the learners who struggle with read at the secondary level apart from giving them something to read?

Ms Mwinte: Okay the....the ...I think it is the same learners who have problem with reading who fail to express themselves and whether it is orally or written. That is one other way of identifying them. **[Struggling readers have similar problems – they fail to express themselves in either speaking or writing]**.

Elizabeth: Okay so you are saying they will fail to express themselves when they speak?

Ms Mwinte: Uhm

Elizabeth: If they fail to express themselves when they speak it means eh... you understand that they also have similar problems in reading?

Ms Mwinte: Yes

Elizabeth: I see

Ms Mwinte: because when we talk like in... every day interaction or prepared speaking you will find these learners are shy to participate. It is an indication that there is a problem if to express yourself it means even in reading you have a problem, you might have a problem even though that is not the all ah... across the board. You find that some eh... just shy but when it comes to writing like most of them who are afraid... who are shy to express themselves or who fail to express themselves they have a problems with reading also. Some it just because they are shy but when it comes to reading and writing. **[Struggling readers have similar problems – they fail to express themselves in either speaking or writing. Shyness is seen as a symptom for struggling readers]**.

Elizabeth: Uhm, so some learners will be shy and those who are shy it means they have got reading problems while it can't be said that everybody is like that?

Ms Mwinte: Sometimes. Okay yes

Elizabeth: Alright, now can you tell me what type of strategies have you been using to assist such kind of learners in the class?

Ms Mwinte: Okay, yes, uhm, like in class you encourage all the learners to participate when it comes to reading task, you will be giving them chance to participate even though it a is a problems because class mates might be laughing at them when they see them stammering or doing whatever. We encourage them to read in class and outside the

class. Also to listen to ... the news, read newspapers or magazines. Those are ways of maybe improving their skills. [(1) **Encouragement/counseling, (2) encourage them to listen to news, (3) encourage them to read different resources is used as a strategy to teach struggling adolescent readers**].

Elizabeth: Okay you say you encourage them to read

Ms Mwinte: Uhm,

Elizabeth: in class

Ms Mwinte: yes

Elizabeth: what do you do if they fail to read in class even if you encourage them?

Ms Mwinte: Uhm... failing is, what happens is they would be able to read out some of the words in the sentence and they fail to read out other words, so we... we cannot say they totally fail but they try. It is not very difficult to help them because you might ask other learners to identify the problems they will see these learners are failing to read. And they identify the words in a may be in a task given or a text given to read so we help them: the teachers and the learners, classmates. **[READING PROBLEMS AND TEACHING STRATEGIES USED: Secondary learners may fail to decode a few words. To assist them teachers use peers to assist the weaker ones. Teachers also assist by identifying difficult words in a given text]**.

Elizabeth: Okay, so you also encourage the classmates to encourage them to read or to assist them instead of laughing at them?

Ms Mwinte: Yes, instead of laughing at them yes.

Elizabeth: And is this working – have you seen this working that they stop laughing and the carry on ... assisting them?

Ms Mwinte: Yes it works

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Mwinte: Yes it works because what I realised is that when classmates are laughing that particular learner will stop at that point

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Mwinte: but if you caution them to stop laughing and listen carefully to what is happening, the learner can continue reading even though he or she has a with other words. So we identify the words and help the learner to call out the names or read out the names, the words.

- Elizabeth: Alright, okay, now you told me you spoke about eh... that sometimes, in class you encourage them to use magazines. What other resources do you encourage them to read and why?
- Ms Mwinte: Uhm...magazines, newspapers and even taking story books from the library. This I think will help them because when they are alone they will try to practice, try to read out on their own without interfere[nce] from anybody. So that is why we ask them to do so, borrow books from the library and even listen to the news. Maybe that is one other way of helping them. **[RESOURCES: Apart from story books and textbooks, teachers also use authentic materials like magazines and newspapers to teach struggling readers].**
- Elizabeth: How does listening to the news assist the struggling reader?
- Ms Mwinte: Eh... it will help even though it is a problem because the...the learner will be listening to words without looking at the spelling of the words. The problem is eh... vocabulary, but when they listen it is like they are encouraged somewhere somehow to also express themselves. When they are able to express themselves, may be they will get that interest of one day wanting to read the news on the television or over the radio. **[TEACHING STRATEGY: Boosting struggling readers' interest is said to be used as a strategy for teaching them].**
- Elizabeth: Okay, so you encourage them to use the TV eh... to listen to the news so that eh... their interest is going to be eh... boasted?
- Ms Mwinte: Yes
- Elizabeth: I see. How is interested, interest relevant to reading? In which sense is interest is relevant to reading, interest or motivation, how is it relevant to reading – especially when it comes to struggling readers?
- Ms Mwinte: Yes, like I mentioned,
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Ms Mwinte: if they have interest like in eh...like in presenters when people are presenting especially news readers – if they are interested in the, the way they read, the way they do whatever their thing on television, it means they might also be motivated to do the same; try hard to read so that may be one day this learner can become a news reader if that is the line he or she wants to take. **[MODELS: Struggling readers are encouraged to imitate their reading role models].**
- Elizabeth: Okay so they see the news readers as their models?
- Ms Mwinte: Models, yes.
- Elizabeth: I see

Ms Mwinte: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Thank you very much. Let's come to another question: eh... have you come across the term remedial or compensatory teaching and if so, where did you hear about this word?

Ms Mwinte: Yes, we... hear this like in everyday life. At colleges when you are trained you are told may be if there is a problem you can use remedial teaching , meaning you give these learners extra classes when you have time. **[REMEDIAL AND ITS MEANING: for teachers in Namibia, it means giving learners extra classes where possible].**

Elizabeth: Uhm, so you learnt about remedial teaching at the college, when you were still at the college?

Ms Mwinte: Yes,

Elizabeth: I see, what does remedial really entails about eh..., in those extra classes, what does it mean?

Ms Mwinte: to me it is like you are helping those learners who are struggling, you have time with them because in class you are looking at the ... big number but if you identify learners with the problem and you decide to use remedial teaching it means you are going to concentrate on the a few number. Like you noticed in our presentation in class we only have may be three learners who are struggling in class. So if they are three and you attend to them it is better they will get more attention from you rather when you are teaching the whole class. **[REMEDIAL: it means dealing with a few numbers of learners]**

Elizabeth: Okay so it is the number of the learners that also counts.

Ms Mwinte: Yes

Elizabeth: So if the number is small then you will give more attention to each one of those?

Ms Mwinte: Yes

Elizabeth: What about... concerning the materials that you use at that time and the methods that you use at during those remedial teaching?

Ms Mwinte: Material?

Elizabeth: The resources?

Ms Mwinte: Okay, when you talk of resources

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Mwinte: you know you are a language teacher also eh... we all know in language we are not eh... confined to one or a textbook given that you are going to use this for the rest of the year but you use different things. Like when you are handling these learners, struggling learners you can bring in magazines where there are nice stories or articles where they can read and arouse their interest in reading. We don't only follow the textbook, the prescribed textbook. No, we use a lot of things newspapers, magazines wherever there is something interesting, just to arouse their interest also. **[SELECTION OF RESOURCES USED: authentic materials are used; interest plays a role in selection].**

Elizabeth: Thank you very much. Eh... what about eh... in the class, I saw the in the... way your class was organised during the presentation. How does classroom organisation eh...assist with the ... struggling readers?

Ms Mwinte: Can you be specific madam?

Elizabeth: Eh... for example you in class the learners, in your own I saw that the learners were in groups and sometimes you encourage them to be in pairs. How does this classroom organisation, do you think let me phrase it this way: do you think classroom o... organisation has got an effect on a struggling reader, if yes, how?

Ms Mwinte: Yes, eh...the way I see it is when they are sitted [sitting] in the way they were sitted [they sat] in our presentations they are grouped in such a way that you cannot find, they were in different groups, we mentioned about three struggling learners in that class, and they were in different groups. So we had good readers in the group who can help them. That is why they are put in such groups. **[CLASSROOM ORGANISATION AS A STRATEGY: mixed ability groups are used as a strategy to support and teach struggling readers].**

Elizabeth: So, okay, so in other words you have combined the weaker readers with the good readers?

Ms Mwinte: Yes

Elizabeth: Okay, I would like you when we discuss about this to think of other struggling readers, other methods and strategies that you have used. May be it was last year may be it was a year before that when you encountered these struggling readers because I, I tend, I don't know, may be you might have a class that had more struggling readers tan the one you have now.

Ms Mwinte: I did not get the question.

Elizabeth: Eh... I mean I was saying that if we talk of struggling readers I ... I hope you are going to think of other time that you might have had struggling readers that are more than three in your class and the way you assisted them.

Mwinte: Okay

Elizabeth: Eh... I mean I was saying that if we talk of struggling readers eh...I hope you are going to think of other time, when you might have had struggling readers that are more than three in your class and the way you assisted them. Eh ... your answer sho... shouldn't eh eh... just rely to what we... we observed in the class at the moment.

Ms Mwinte: Okay

Elizabeth: Alright. Because I want you, I want you to give me the experience that you have used during all the teaching that you have come across struggling readers.

Ms Mwinte: Okay

Elizabeth: Yes, please, okay. So we were talking about the classroom organisation and you said at the moment when you have got these three eh...eh... struggling readers in your class, you have grouped them in such a way they are together with the stronger readers or those who are advanced in reading. How does this organisation assist those who are weak when they are grouped like that?

Ms Mwinte: Like I mentioned earlier ...

Elizabeth: eh?

Ms Mwinte: I see ... when they are in those groups, ehm... the stronger readers are going to help the weaker ones,

Elizabeth: How?

Ms Mwinte: Yes, when they are given a task to read, or because in reading it is not always to read aloud. Sometimes they read and answer the questions given. They read silently. When they are reading as a group, they eh... the weaker reader may be encounters a problems he or she going to ask those group members to help; may be with pronunciation of the words or any other problem. **[HOW: advanced readers assist struggling readers with pronunciation or any other reading problem in groups].**

Elizabeth: Okay, ehm. Eh... can you tell me, even though you have hinted at some of this. What do you do when you realise that you have got a big class and you have got eh... struggling readers who are many in your class and your resources are few. What do you do in such a case? At the moment what are you doing?

- Ms Mwinte: Okay, like I mentioned we are not eh... tied to eh... specific book or whatever. If there is a problem with resources we can use newspapers and magazines; bring along or ask them to bring their own material from home then come with them. **[SCARCE RESOURCES: learners are encouraged to bring whatever is found at home].**
- Elizabeth: Uhm, so have they been bringing materials from their home and what kind of materials have they brought to class?
- Ms Mwinte: They normally bring magazines, newspapers and may be even Bible story books.
- Elizabeth: Okay, so they bring those.
- Ms Mwinte: Uhm.
- Elizabeth: Uhm, and how does this encouragement of them bringing in these resources from their home; how do you see it helping the struggling readers?
- Ms Mwinte: Okay what we do like if they are sent to bring their own material, I ask them to pick eh... topic, they read and come and tell the class. **[BOOK REVIEW is used as a teaching strategy].**
- Elizabeth: Uhm, okay. Uhm. So they select a story for themselves?
- Ms Mwinte: Yes
- Elizabeth: And they come and use it in class?
- Ms Mwinte: Uhm.
- Elizabeth: I see. What about the ... the school, from the side of the school how does the school assist you to assist the struggling readers or how does the , the school, on the other hand assist struggling readers in your class?
- Ms Mwinte: With the school, may be what I can say is, because the problem is between the teacher and the learners in that particular class. When you have a problem you ask the school may be to make if they are copies that are needed that is the way they help. **[SUPPORT FROM SCHOOL: is given through provision of photocopies and library books].**
- Elizabeth: Okay, eh... what do you think is the cause of these learners reaching grade 9 with reading problems?
- Ms Mwinte: I think the problem might be their lower grades, comes from their lower grades. **[ORIGIN OF READING PROBLEMS: primary teachers are blamed for reading problems of secondary learners].**
- Elizabeth: Eh; in which way?

Ms Mwinte: I don't know whether I am right but may be they have a problem because it is not the problem of the teacher, actually it might be the problem of the learner. We have slow learners, whether we like it or not they would be there. So the teacher can do whatever he or she does but if this particular learner is slow, he will remain slow just like that. But we need to take their pace also. **[ORIGIN OF READING PROBLEMS: learners are slow and teachers do not take their pace in class, so they are left behind].**

Elizabeth: Uhm, Okay, uhm. Let me come back to another question. Eh... these learners, you said you have got, currently you have got three learners who struggling in Grade 9 class that we have observed. Eh... are these learners just struggling in English or do they also struggle in their mother tongue?

Ms Mwinte: Not really, yes.

Elizabeth: Have you tried to find out about that?

Ms Mwinte: Aangh, I did not try that one.

Elizabeth: Okay, uhm. So even in the years in the past years you were not aware whether the learners who struggle in the English class can read fluently in their first Language?

Ms Mwinte: Yes. **[CONSULTATION OF EACH OTHER AS A STRATEGY: Teachers do not consult one another to find out if learners have similar problems in other subjects].**

Elizabeth: You haven't really done it. Okay, what about the other teachers and the other subjects, if they struggle in your English language class, do they also struggle in other subjects apart from. Eh... Silozi?

Ms Mwinte: Okay, being a class teacher you know you will always receive reports about your learners. If somebody is failing to read that is in your English class, it means they are also failing in other class because English is the medium of instruction. And for them to do well and perform well they are supposed to read and understand instructions. So it is a problem across the board. **[MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION: since learners struggle in English used as a medium of instruction, they may also struggle to read in other subjects].**

Elizabeth: It is a problem across the curriculum.

Ms Mwinte: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Now, how do the... these other teachers assist in this regard?

Ms Mwinte: Eh... like we always talk when there is a problem like that one, we ask other le... eh...other teachers to help by may be what I normally suggest for teachers to do is to give these learners more work. Like they give them tasks they do not read or

explain the ... instructions to them. Ask them to read out the instructions and may be explain the instructions to the class, if it is the question, give this learner to read out the question and explain to other learners. Because during examinations we won't be there, we won't be able to be reading out the questions. They are supposed to read on their own. That is why they fail because we read, explain the questions but when it comes to examinations they do it on their own so they are unable to follow instructions because they are spoon-fed throughout the year. **[STRATEGY: teachers are encouraged not to interpret instructions for the learners as they don't do so in exams. In the class, learners should be trained to read and interpret the instructions].**

Elizabeth: Okay, so your suggestions to these teachers, I didn't get it very well.

Ms Mwinte: My suggestion is that teachers must give these learners more work. The tasks, they give them tasks to conduct; whether it is a project, they just give them instructions and the questions and everything. Then give them they go and them on their own without the help of the teacher. The help I am talking about is reading out the instructions to them; let them read out the instructions if possible give them time to explain to the class what the instructions ask them to do. **[STRATEGY: teachers are encouraged not to interpret instructions for the learners as they don't do so in exams. In the class, learners should be trained to read and interpret the instructions].**

Elizabeth: Okay, as you mentioned that these learners are shy do you think that these struggling readers will be able to do that in class?

Ms Mwinte: When they are used to, and like I mentioned cautioning other students not to laugh at them, I think as time goes on they are able to do so.

Elizabeth: Uhm, what about the parents, how do the parents assist like I saw you are teaching in eh... a semi-urban place, you are in a town. How do the parents assist with the reading, with the struggling readers?

Ms Mwinte: In my case, I have never involved parents, may be that is my weakness also, yes. **[INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS: some teachers seem not to involve parents in their children's reading problems].**

Elizabeth: You have never involved parents?

Ms Mwinte: Yes

Elizabeth: I see. What about the school, did the school try to involve parents in the reading problems of their learners?

Ms Mwinte: Not really. **[INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS: schools also seem not to involve parents]**.

Elizabeth: Okay, alright. Eh... Ms Mwinte, are you ... unless you have got some more/other strategies that you use to help the struggling readers that you thought about, that we haven't yet discussed ...

Ms Mwinte: I think everything was mentioned.

Elizabeth: Everything was mentioned?

Ms Mwinte: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Alright, thank you very much Ms Mwinte, I think we have come to ...the end of our interview and I am really very, very grateful for this assistance. Thank you very much.

Ms Mwinte: Pleasure.

THE END

[This was the end of this interview, however, the cassette carries on as the interviewer and the interviewee checks the technicalities to ascertain that what was discussed was indeed now recorded before they cut off everything].

APPENDIX 3c: Mr MUUSA's

**TRANSCRIPTION OF THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH
Mr MUUSA OF NANVWI SECONDARY SCHOOL IN THE OTJOZONDJUPA REGION**

DATE: 28 MAY 2008
VENUE: Staff room – Nanvwi Secondary School
TIME: 14:00 – 15:30

NB: Names used for the teacher and the school are pseudo names.

Elizabeth: Good Afternoon Mr Muusa

Mr Muusa: Good Afternoon.

Elizabeth: Thank you very much for allowing me to come and eh... conduct my research with you. At the moment, I hope you don't mind my using eh... the video camera, not the video camera, I mean the tape recorder to record our discussions.

Mr Muusa: I don't think it is a problem, madam.

Elizabeth: Okay. Thank you very much sir. To start with, let me just quickly start with eh... the questions that you answered here on your profile. [A questionnaire for teachers' profile was firstly given to him to answer in writing. This minimises the time we spend during the interview]. It shows here that your professional qualifications are BETD and HED. Could you just quickly tell me where eh... you obtained these eh... these courses and when was it [when it was].

Mr Muusa: Eh... I obtained my Basic Education Diploma from Windhoek College of Education in 1996 and afterwards I came back to start working and I enrolled myself for part-time course with the university of Potchefstroom. It's where I obtained my HE Diploma in 2002. [QUALIFICATIONS]

Elizabeth: Okay, 2000 and?

Mr Muusa: and 2.

Elizabeth: And 2. Thank you very much. Which were your major subjects were ... in your courses?

Mr Muusa: My major subjects were History and Geography in BETD, meaning Grades 8-10. And for HED my major subjects were History and English, Grades 8-12.

Elizabeth: Okay, uhm, thank you very much. The first question; may be I should just explain here that my main eh area of interest is at the secondary school, in English, who are having reading difficulties.

What do you understand by learners with reading difficulties at the secondary level?

Mr Muusa: Eh... reading difficulties, madam, is experienced from grade 8, grade 9 and 10 up to grade 12 even. Grade 9 at this current moment learners are struggling to read. The reading tempo is too ... pronunciation is a problem and this problem is a major problem even in the prom..., performances of the learners because they cannot read and understand and write [and] understand versions or give[n] versions from reading passages. So reading problems is a problem we are all crying of [about]. And eh... as, as it is now we started, my subject head started with extra classes [in the] afternoon, inviting learners to stay behind to try to help them to read, simply to read short story books, lower level so that they can get used to certain requirements of the, the language as such. But reading is a problem. [SARs ARE MANY, ARE INVITED TO COME BACK TO SCHOOL IN THE AFTERNNON, SIMPLE STORY BOOKS ARE USED]

Elizabeth: Okay, thank you very much. You are saying reading is a problem experienced from grade 8-12. Alright, eh... in your own case, in your classroom, is this the first time you have experienced learners with reading difficulties or not?

Mr Muusa: Is not, this is not the first time – last year even when I started teaching I realised that many learners are lacking basic reading competencies. And eh... last year even I started with remedial classes simply to help them. This year also we are planning to start, that why we started eh... started with the programme whereby we invite certain learners that we identify as problems, learners having problems in reading to come to school [in the afternoons] so that we can help them in drilling, drilling and drilling and so fourth. **[STRUGGLING ADOLESCENT READERS ARE ASSISTED BY USING THE AFTERNOON SLOT – TEACHERS MAY COME BACK AND ASSIST THE LEARNERS].**

Elizabeth: Thank you. How do you identify these learners with reading problems?

Mr Muusa: As it is now madam

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Muusa: I am using a programme I call it is the prepared speaking [a skill prescribed in the syllabus for speaking]. I simply ask the learners to look for a book, to read, read the book to the class. Before telling me the story about the book, I ask them to tell me

about the book, I ask them to read for me paragraph, two or three paragraphs – just to see and as it is now I already saw that eh... not to my surprise but [I] realised that many learners really need help in Namibia. **[READING ALOUD, COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS AND SUMMARISING ARE USED AS DIAGNOSING STRATEGIES TO DETECT LEARNERS WITH READING PROBLEMS].**

Elizabeth: Okay, is this the only way by asking them to go and read the book, they come and read in front of you, is this the only way you identify your learners with reading problems?

Mr Muusa: No, there is also eh... there is what I think integrating in my lessons. There is [are] periods that I use as reading – meaning that I bring different materials. This is unprepared stuff whereby I ask the learners from any type of book just read for me the paragraph. And then you will see that sometimes even learners are just standing there quietly without saying anything. So, that is just the reading techniques that I am trying to use to really find out eh... trying to iron out of the bottom of these reading problems. Reading problem is there definitely.

Elizabeth: You also mentioned that learners read but they don't understand, how do you realise that your learners read something but they didn't understand?

Mr Muusa: Eh...m, I am **just sending** a technique a paragraph, a very short paragraph.

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Muusa: Let them read a paragraph

Elizabeth: Eh?

M Muusa: Give them only too simple questions and they will, you will see that they will give you a different answer. But the answer is supposed to there in the paragraph. It tells me either the learner is reading but not understanding what she/he is reading or the learner is not reading at all. so those are two conclusions that I can draw. But this is simple exercises that I am trying to apply in the class to see, to capture the, the problems, learners' reading problems. So there is simple test that you are trying to do and also is the other thing also is that give them a simple passage for five to ten minutes and let them cover the, the passage. And just give them simple spelling ... **[SIMPLE MATERIALS AND SIMPLE TASKS ARE USED FOR BOTH DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF READING DIFFICULTIES].**

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Muusa: and you see, spelling, they are out, out dated so these are some of the activities that I'm normally using.

Elizabeth: I see.

Mr Muusa: Ja

Elizabeth: Okay, you also mentioned something on remedial, that you offer remedial to these, to these learners. Who really gives that remedial teaching?

Mr Muusa: Remedial teaching is to be honest is not functioning as the wish of the ministry. But what we are doing is that we, I combine with Ms Kariva [pseudo name used] that is responsible, she is the one responsible [with] programme of remedial, that is why I sort of consult the library and try to get those books: very, very low level reading books and try to ... [inaccessible] slowly but surely those learners that I am **reviving** just to read and after ask them some questions to see if they understanding [understand] what they are reading. Sometimes the learner is sitting eh...as it is as the learner is reading but at the end of the day you will see or you are giving them the reading passage in the class to complete you will see that, that learner is answering things that is , is not existing in the reading passage. So really I am trying different techniques to find those learners with reading difficulties because end of the day, it is hampering the progress, the results even of the examinations.
[REMEDIAL TEACHING IS NOT CONDUCTED ACCORDING TO THE POLICY].

Elizabeth: Thank you sir. Where do you think do these reading problems come from – where do they originate?

Mr Muusa: Madam to be honest, reading eh... you know grade let say grade 1, grade 2 those are, I regard as them as the foundation. **[ACCORDING TO SECONDARY TEACHERS, THE LACK OF A STRONG READING FOUNDATION CAUSES READING PROBLEMS].**

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Muusa: up to grade 3, is the foundation and if the focus is not addressed on reading in those beginning stages, that learner will suffer. So I think eh... the emphasis must be put on primary schools – grade 1 and grade 2, to put to, to put down or lay down a very strong foundation. When it comes to simple pronunciations; put two words together, make sounds – these things are starting there. So, it is difficult for me in grade 8 and 9 to go back to the basics, eh... I will just proceed because, assuming that learners are supposed to go through these basics. So I think the focus must be the primary schools, the primary classes – grade 1 and 2 the foundation must be there. **[IT IS DIFFICULT FOR A SECONDARY TEACHER TO TEACH READING DUE TO LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT IS DONE AND THE WRONG**

ASSUMPTIONS AND IMPRESSIONS THAT LEARNERS SHOULD BE READING ALREADY AND IT IS NOT THEIR CONCERN AS SECONDARY TEACHERS].

Elizabeth: You say for you at the secondary level as a secondary teacher it is very difficult for you to, to teach the learners how to read. Why is it like that?

Mr Muusa: You know eh... eh...madam to be honest with you is that sometimes in the secondary school we are not with basics. What we are trying to do is we assume that it has been dealt on [with] already. We start with grade 8 to grades upwards. So it will be difficult from grade 8 again to go back to grade 1. And the other thing is that we are working with the syllabi, certain work must be covered. So that is why we are just proceeding with the constituency.

Elizabeth: With the content?

Mr Muusa: With the content. Probably this is probably the way we putting more harm to the learners. Instead probably to sacrifice more time even in grade 8 more to say and, and try to anchor more you know foundation in grade 8. We fail also as secondary teachers by just continuing with the content. So the other thing probably madam is that we should work hand in hand with the primary school teacher that is teaching English in grade 7 for instance must link up with the teacher that is teaching grade 8, just, just you know to narrow the gape knowing exactly what is happening in grade 7 and try to build on what is built on in grade 7. But what we are doing is leaves a gap, learner is passing from grade 7 but in grade 8 I am starting with the content forwards. So I think we should narrow this gap even by working together grade 7 and grade 8 teachers. **[THERE IS NO LINKAGE BETWEEN WHAT IS TAKING PLACE AT THE PRIMARY WITH THE SECONDARY LEVEL – THERE IS A NEED FOR THIS].**

Elizabeth: Alright, now that is very interesting. You are saying the secondary teachers are concerned with the content subject only, with the content itself ...

Mr Muusa: That is right.

Elizabeth: Why do you think teachers at the secondary, apart from the fact that they are concerned with the syllabus, to complete the syllabus, why do you think they are so much concerned with the content only instead of helping the learners to read, to teach them to read?

Mr Muusa: Probably eh... madam there is a sort of assumption, we assume that whatever you know, proper foundation has been laid from grade 1 to grade 7. That is probably the

assumption that we have. Eh...mistakenly not thinking in terms of probably we mistaken to believe that. Eh... I think probably it is high time that we eh... secondary school teachers should realise that and try to move backwards and to you know try work with teachers in grade 7. And from there we will start in grade 8 already, you know the learner is having a reading problem in grade 7, probably the teacher was busy with remedial classes but if that learner comes into grade 8, it stops – meaning that I will just jump in and start with the content. So I think we should avoid this. That learner who was suffering with reading in grade 7, if that learner luckily is transferred to grade 8, me as a grade 8 teacher should also start there with remedial classes immediately there. It will be difficult if that learner progresses into grade 9 – what will happen then? Then it will be late for the learner and later on that is why you will see madam the, the, the failing in grade 10 is because of this. If we start addressing these things all along I don't think that we will have a failure rate in grade 10. **[SECONDARY ENGLISH TEACHERS DO NOT SEE THEMSELVES AS TEACHERS OF READING – THEY CONCENTRATE ONLY ON CONTENT AND EXAMINATIONS].**

Elizabeth: You are talking of remedial teaching, how did you come across this concept, were you trained through eh... by, at the college or to do remedial teaching?

Mr Muusa: That, that is the other problem. Remedial teaching, I came across it at the college, but it was not done in depth. And many of [us] teachers, we are lacking when it comes to remedial. It is a term that we are using. But what is exactly what are we doing in remedial classes? That is also lacking. **[TEACHERS HAVING A SHALLOW KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT REMEDIAL IS ALL ABOUT].**

Elizabeth: Uhm. You mentioned Ms Karivi...

Mr Muusa: Kariva.

Elizabeth: Eh... did she, you work hand in hand with her in connection with these learners with reading problems or the struggling adolescent readers. What is Ms Karivi, Kariva's function, is she the counsellor you are mentioning?

Mr Muusa: No she is not the counsellor; she is the English teacher [for] grade 11 and 12.

Elizabeth: Okay.

Mr Muusa: She is also the subject head.

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Muusa: Eh... what I normally do, I am strongly linking up with her we were even having a meeting as we are speaking up.

- Elizabeth: Okay
- Mr Muusa: I am coming from her class. You know what I am trying to do is that, she is teaching grade 10 and grade[s] 11 and 12 – and eh... what I am trying to do is that to know exactly how should I link up with her to help these learners, make them ready for grade 11, grade 10 and 11. That is what I am trying to do. So we are working hand in hand. **[TEACHER COLLABORATION AS A STRATEGY]**
- Elizabeth: Thank you.
- Mr Muusa: Ja.
- Elizabeth: Eh... your profile here indicates that you have been teaching English in grade 9 for fourteen months only.
- Mr Muusa: Yes
- Elizabeth: Eh... why...as an English teacher?
- Mr Muusa: I should say probably I was deprived of, of...because English is my major subject, one of my major subjects. But when I came back, eh... start teaching eh... I was only given Geography and History, and eh.... unfortunately or fortunately should I say, when I came here I was given English as a subject.
- Elizabeth: Uhm, alright, thank you. Eh... let me bring you back to reading without understanding – that the learners read but they don't understand. When you realise that your learners are eh... do not understand what they read. What strategies, what methods, let's start with the methods and strategies. What methods do you use, in the class, to assist them so that they will improve?
- Mr Muusa: What we decide, in our English medium is that, grade 8, 9 and eh... 10, eh... we realise that reading passages are the ones that are contained in the examination papers. Eh... many a times [many times] learners are lacking even to pick up the answer. So we try let's do it pieces, let's use pieces and try to teach learners where, how to come to the answer. And then what is, what is even important in the question, what is the question saying, what is the question looking for? That is also one thing that learners are lacking. Eh... we try to let them read the question and try to underline the main phrase, main part in the question and try to answer that main part by looking in the diagrams, in which paragraphs is this mentioned in, in the passage? So we are trying to drill them to come to a conclusion or come to a realisation [of] how to look for an answer. That is what we start of. **[TEACHING COMPREHENSION STRATEGY – UNFORTUNATELY THESE ARE NOT IDENTIFIED].**

Elizabeth: Okay, but then when you are doing that, this is the whole class. Say now you have identified learners A, B, C, these learners, the three learners in your class – Grade 9C class for example, are having these reading difficulties.

Mr Muusa: Eh?

Elizabeth: How do you teach them, those three learners, how do you assist them, apart from the fact that you do this – what you have explained now, you do it to the whole class. What about these specific learners?

Mr Muusa: Ja?

Elizabeth: What strategies do you use?

Mr Muusa: What we did actually is that eh... we use the, the, the mark sheets from the previous year and from the mark sheets, we really only try to concentrate on those who are performing under the average given. Meaning that we are separating them – we only try to concentrate on those that are really eh... trying difficulty, find difficulties to find answers. So we separate them actually; in the beginning we generalise try to generalise it but at the end we try to concentrate, focus on those that are struggling with reading ...

Elizabeth: Okay.

Mr Muusa: in looking for the answers and so on.

Elizabeth: Uhm. You say you separate them what do you mean by separating them?

Mr Muusa: Separate them is meaning that eh...I will be forced to do two exercises for that day – meaning I will give those in the advanced level so to say, a different activity ...

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Muusa: And then I will concentrate on those that having difficulties concerning looking for the answer, understanding the concepts and so on, so that is how I am separating them.

Elizabeth: Okay, in the same class ...?

Mr Muusa: In the same class.

Elizabeth: But then you separate them by activities?

Mr Muusa: Activities.

Elizabeth: Okay, how else?

Mr Muusa: No that is the only one ...

Elizabeth: That is the only method you use?

Mr Muusa: Ja, and the other thing that is makes us really [inaudible] big numbers of the classes – that is another problem. [Large classes are a contributing factor in teachers not assisting SARs].

- Elizabeth: Uhm, so you finding problems with assisting these learners who are in such a big number [large numbers of learners: +40 learners in a small classroom meant for 15-25 learners].
- Mr Muusa: Definitely.
- Elizabeth: Okay.
- Mr Muusa: Definitely.
- Elizabeth: Currently now, you said at the beginning that you have got, eh... you experience reading problems with learners from grade 8 up to grade 12.
- Mr Muusa: Uhm.
- Elizabeth: Say in your Grade 9 class, Grade 9C for example,
- Mr Muusa: Eh?
- Elizabeth: How many learners could you say are struggling in that class?
- Mr Muusa: No, no it is very rare in that class.
- Elizabeth: It is very rare?
- Mr Muusa: Ja, it is very rare.
- Elizabeth: Really?
- Mr Muusa: Ja,
- Elizabeth: Okay.
- Mr Muusa: It is very rare, because eh... they are, many of them are repeaters. [At the initial stage this researcher had a hunch that repeaters or learners who fail and then repeat, do so because they have reading problems and that is why, in the Caprivi region where repeaters are sometimes grouped in their own class, teachers were requested to point out their classes with SARs. Here, the teacher refutes this idea. Nonetheless, the PIRLS test they wrote to identify SARs seems to suggest that my premonition was correct. All four classes wrote the same test and on average and in comparison to the others, the Grade C performed poorly. However, it should be noted that reading is complex skill and that a learner might struggle with one part of reading than the other: decoding, fluency etc.].
- Elizabeth: In Grade 9C?
- Mr Muusa: Grade 9C, ja, many of them are repeaters. So it very rare with reading – I think 9D is the class where I have ten, nine up to ten learners [who are] struggling with reading. Eh... they cannot read fluently and also having problems with spelling are the 9D, mostly. [What the PIRLS test seems to suggest is that learners in Grade 9D might have spelling and fluency but not with comprehension problems and that

learners might find themselves repeating a grade due to other causes that are not related to reading].

Elizabeth: Okay.

Mr Muusa: Ja.

Elizabeth: Uhm, now you are saying the Grade 9C, most of them are repeaters but they don't have a reading problem. Why do you think they failed at the end of the year so that they find themselves repeating now?

Mr Muusa: I was teaching last year. And from the statistics they did well – English last year, they did well. Eh... if I roughly can mention there was three or two failed English from four classes. Eh... the major subjects that caused them to fail were [*two names of subjects were mentioned here but since it is not relevant to this research and for ethical reasons I decide to omit them here*] – those two subjects.

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Muusa: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Okay. So they might be having problems, reading problems in other subjects and not in English? Eh... it is so surprising. From the two classes that I have worked with, from that test that I have given them, the 9C seems to have, eh...having a lot of learners who couldn't answer the questions.

Mr Muusa: It is really embarrassing to hear that because I can even show you the ... show you the eh... the mark sheets. 9Cs are the learners

Elizabeth: Okay,

Mr Muusa: that performed even in examinations well.

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Muusa: To me it is surprising to see it is vice versa but that is so far according to my observations ...

Elizabeth: Uhm-uhm.

Mr Muusa: those are the, those class is the class that is performing well ...

Elizabeth: Alright.

Mr Muusa: Percentage wise they are the ones that did well in the examinations.

Elizabeth: Uhm. Alright, thank you. You are talking of assisting your learners in the class, what about on the part of the school – how does the school support learners with reading difficulties?

Mr Muusa: I am not aware in general how the school is, is involved in this but what we are doing as English teachers are probably for teachers of English: Grade 8 two, 9 [it is] me, Grade 10, 11 and 12 one teacher so we are four.

- Elizabeth: Uhm.
- Mr Muusa: So we are making up a team, a group whereby we addressing these issues together. We are eh... conducting meetings eh... meetings, even last week we had a meeting where we try to you know find out what are the problems [inaudible] and the problem number one was the reading problems. **[TEACHERS AS A DEPARTMENTY: WORKING TOGETHER TO DIAGNOSE THE CAUSES FOR LEARNERS' READING PROBLEMS, BUT NOT A SCHOOL].**
- Elizabeth: Uhm-uhm.
- Mr Muusa: And, and reading problems resulting learners not answering the questions [together] quite well.
- Elizabeth: the questions.
- Mr Muusa: And those is [are] the things that are also hampering the progress of the learners and the results as such. So we are working as English teachers, as a team that is what, how we address these problems.
- Elizabeth: Okay
- Mr Muusa: Uhm.
- Elizabeth: So the English teachers are trying to address it as a team?
- Mr Muusa: Yes
- Elizabeth: Why is it only the English teachers, what about the other teachers, have you tried to involve them?
- Mr Muusa: No.
- Elizabeth: Why?
- Mr Muusa: I don't know really the reason but we need to involve them really.
- Elizabeth: Okay.
- Mr Muusa: Eh... but eh... I think there was a team visiting us from the regional office last year on exactly remedial teaching...
- Elizabeth: Uhm.
- Mr Muusa: and we were even given copies after the eh... the mini workshop. Eh... and I think every teacher has a background what is remedial teaching we are talking about. I can even recall the principal was sort of encouraging us to all of us should, should try to help learners with these eh... not only reading difficulties but learning difficulties also. **[TEACHERS ARE HAVING A BACKGROUND OF WHAT REMEDIAL IS ALL ABOUT, BUT...]**
- Elizabeth: Uhm.

- Mr Muusa: Eh...so he was encouraging us and rightfully as you mention, probably as English teachers we should go back to the other teachers and encourage them and see how they also do these things in their classes.
- Elizabeth: Uhm.
- Mr Muusa: Ja.
- Elizabeth: Okay, now eh... the reading difficulties, you are saying they have got reading difficulties, they have learning difficulties. The medium of instruction that is being used currently now in the rest of Namibia in the government schools is English.
- Mr Muusa: Uhm.
- Elizabeth: Do you think there is a relationship between these reading difficulties and the medium of instruction that is being used?
- Mr Muusa: Madam that is one thing that I am wondering. That is also one thing that I am asking myself, you know when we were at school that time in, in colonial eras, were speaking English only in English periods. All the subjects were in Afrikaans, but were tried our best. We are not so professional or proficient in English but we try our best. But vice versa learners throughout the curriculum are having English in their subjects but hence there are difficulties. I am wondering where the problems is – or is it the problem with teachers – the way we transfer the knowledge to the learners? Probably this, this will need research to find out the cause. Probably it might be teachers, us causing, causing more harm to the learners and at the end of the day we are blaming the learners probably, I don't know. **[MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION: Teachers are not sure if it isn't the main cause for learners' failure to read].**
- Elizabeth: Uhm-uhm.
- Mr Muusa: But really madam, we need such eh... a research to find out what is the cause.
- Elizabeth: Uhm. What about the parents, are the parents somehow involved in assisting with these reading problems?
- Mr Muusa: Yes.
- Elizabeth: How do you involve the parents?
- Mr Muusa: Ja, we have a parent day.
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Mr Muusa: And parent day eh...well [is] organised by the parents and teachers. So meaning I will invite probably parents [whose learners] are experiencing reading problem or a problem in English. **[TEACHERS INVITING PARENTS WHOSE CHILDREN EXPERIENCE READING DIFFICULTIES ONLY]**

Elizabeth: Uhm-uhm?

Mr Muusa: whereby we sometimes have a dialogue with the parents, informing the parents, to hear the side from the parents and so on. That is what we are doing. Last year, I realised that we only invited eh... parents that we thought [have] learners [that] have problems. So the parents [whose children] we thought that learners are doing well, we didn't invite them last year. But this year we decided let's invite all the parents because the parents probably have got something positively to contribute towards the, the, the progress of the learners. So this year there is a parent's day coming whereby we invite parents, have a dialogue to find out, that is what we are trying.

Elizabeth: Okay, what do you really discuss when you are having a parent whose kid is struggling with reading?

Mr Muusa: Yes, you know what we are trying to do, what I also realised and experienced last year is that eh...sometimes parents were so honest to give us the background – the parent is not reading, the mother is not reading and father is not reading. And the child is coming from the environment whereby the reading is not known. That learners is not encouraged to read and, and those are the problems that are there. But there are parents that are so positive and helping their learners: asking them eh... certain activities; you know there are even parents who bought books for their learners [children] to constantly read to, to cultivate reading culture on their own. That is what we realised, so the parents are also bringing their sides, they are bringing their sides. **[ILLITERATE PARENTS FAIL TO ENCOURAGE THEIR CHILDREN, OTHER PARENTS EVEN ASSIST BY DONATING BOOKS]**

Elizabeth: Thank you. Let's come to your class, I have realised that in your class eh... even though the class is so eh... overcrowded, the learners sort of are, say, sitting in pairs so that we have got the two rows, the two rows and then we have got the three rows. Who organised the class in that way? And how do you think this organisation assist the learners who struggling ...?

Mr Muusa: I did, ja, I tried first of all to put them in groups. And I realised we cannot manage because of the crowdedness of the class and that is why I changed to that type of group. And that is the only sort of organisation that allows me to move between the desks; otherwise it is a difficulty issue. Sometimes if I arrange them in such a way I will be standing just where my table is ... **[CLASSROOM ORGANISATION: CLASS IS OVERCROWDED]**

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Muusa: do my work and I am finished, which is not good. So I have to move around to see, from one desk to the other to see and assist personally. So that is the only way.

Elizabeth: Okay.

Mr Muusa: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Eh... what about resources?

Mr Muusa: Resources is really a problem. I don't know, I didn't even visit National Institute for Educational Development [NIED] to find out what the resources [that they have] are. Eh... but I had a dialogue with the former teachers and there is [are] no solutions for me to get resources, enough resources. And I don't know what to do with this. Eh... I was even talking to the principal to get something from the school fund to try to acquire certain resources ... **[RESOURCES ARE A PROBLEM: teachers can't even use school fund to buy some necessary resources].**

Elizabeth: Uhm

Mr Muusa: it is also a taboo so I am stranded.

Elizabeth: Okay, so what do you usually do in such cases where the resources are scarce ...

Mr Muusa: Ja

Elizabeth: what strategies do you use?

Mr Muusa: The only strategy that I am using is making copies but making copies is also expensive because per week I supposed only to have certain, you know, booked certain photocopy papers' number, which is also hampering the progress. So I have to make copies – everyday I have to, morning time I have to make copies. Because tomorrow I will give them a sample of a letter, this one – because they do have their rough ones so that they can compare and come up with the final eh... writings [drafts] – so I have to make these copies – one hundred and seventy something minus [inaudible] which is, which is not good even. **[STRATEGY TO ALLEVIATE RESOURCE PROBLEMS: teachers photocopy to counteract the scarcity of resources. Even then, printing papers is also an obstacle].**

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Muusa: And the overhead projectors are not, here they are not functioning, because I was even suggesting that no, the classes, big classes like this you need to have an overhead projector because every time you have to move because you have different subjects even. Eh this period is English the next period is Geography so I have to erase, I have to rewrite so it is difficult. **[TEACHING MORE THAN ONE**

SUBJECT HINDERS TEACHERS FROM UTILISING EVEN THE CHALBOARD EFFECTIVELY].

Elizabeth: So the school doesn't have even an overhead projector?

Mr Muusa: I learnt the school is having, the only problem is that the bulbs are not there. That is what I learnt from the principal.

Elizabeth: Okay.

Mr Muusa: So they were planning to acquire bulbs and I will start using them.

Elizabeth: Uhm. Eh... what about, if we are talking about resources, now, what kind of resources are you referring to that are so scarce?

Mr Muusa: You know eh... resources like you know I have to have resources that I can use to as examples, samples in the class. For instance posters, I need posters you know, I need – they are different types of resources that you can use; acquired from Edmunds; you can paste it in the class just to stimulate the atmosphere in the class, which is what I want. But indicate this case, Geography even, you can see how the class looks like, you know – naked so to say. So I need, I need resources really.

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Muusa: I need resources.

Elizabeth: Let's come to the reading resources

Mr Muusa: Eh?

Elizabeth: How do you select the reading resources for struggling adolescent readers?

Mr Muusa: Ja, I am normally doing you know, eh... I do have a lot of books at home – simple reading English books. So what eh... I am doing is that I am sort of looking at the level. If I saw this book is you know at a very, very low level material, probably for Grade 1 or 2 levels that is the only materials I am using, simply just to help them you now. From there I develop, you know, a bit from that if I see that they are mastering then I will move then I am selecting a different material like that.

[READING MATERIALS USED: for SARs, they use simple materials meant for Grades 1 and 2; then increase the level of difficulty].

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Muusa: Ja

Elizabeth: Okay, then you give them?

Mr Muusa: Uhm.

- Elizabeth: Alright, have you found that these reading books when you give them these simple books they are helping, assisting?
- Mr Muusa: Yes of course. Eh...you know learners are used like eh... studying in the beginning they are struggling but with the time they are coming, influence is there, so just change the materials from this one if you see this will be okay then go to the other one like that. **[LEARNERS IMPROVE AS TIME GOES ON]**.
- Elizabeth: What problems do you have regarding eh... eh... say if you have got these learners who are struggling in your class, you have tried to give them some simple eh... texts but still they can't, do you have, have you come across such kind of learners?
- Mr Muusa: Yes
- Elizabeth: What do you do in that situation?
- Mr Muusa: Ja, eh.. you I ... even last week I think I ... there is a learner in grade 9 he is not present this morning.
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Mr Muusa: And eh... I have a discussion with the principal whereby I was asking the principal eh... to contact one of the teachers from the primary school to see, because those teachers are having more sort of skills than us when it comes to reading problems. So I suggest to meet one of the teachers to you know refer the boy, contact the parents, eh... invite the parents to school and tell them the problem, refer the boy after even arrange with the teacher rearrange so that he can attend certain classes. And there is also classes that I know even my, my young ones attending I [Name of the school within the area] a teacher giving this reading problem learners of English helping them. So there are teachers more you know equipped [experienced] than us sometimes, so that is the only solution that I can think of. **[WOULD REFER A SAR TO A PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR ASSISTANCE; ENCOURAGE MORE COLLABORATION WITH PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS]**
- Elizabeth: Okay.
- Mr Muusa: Ja, to rely on the Primary School Teachers.
- Elizabeth: Alright, why do you think Primary School Teachers eh... seem to be more equipped when it comes to reading problems than the secondary teachers – is there something that is lacking or and where is that thing lacking, how is it lacking?
- Mr Muusa: Ja, that is what I am saying is that I don't know, secondary school teachers, as I mentioned earlier is that we are more concerned with content based, continue or continuous work without not try to [be] focused on the basic problems on the ground. And that is exactly where we are different with the primary school teachers

and that is why I mentioned that it is probably high time for us teachers to go back to Primary School Teachers and see, even learn from them how they are doing things – even the way they drilling with learners in the classes that is lacking with us. We are not drilling in the classes; we are only requiring learners to know what to do...

[SECONDARY TEACHERS FOCUSING ON CONTENT AND NOT LEARNERS' PROBLEMS]

Elizabeth: Okay.

Mr Muusa: that is what we are doing.

Elizabeth: In other words you are saying us, as secondary teachers should initiate and learn somehow on how to do handle that one?

Mr Muusa: Definitely, definitely.

Elizabeth: What if someone will tell you that 'no I wasn't trained to do this'?

Mr Muusa: That is exactly the attitude sometimes we take in. I was not trained eh...for grade 8 and 9 or grade 10 English when I did that you know that English as my major subject. I was not told even to drive whatever, I did it and then it was done. So we need probably to initiate to learn more. That is, that is the best thing; we should learn more how to handle the situations. There are classes eh... at [a name of the school] that I know of whereby teachers, specific class with specific teacher with disabled learners drilling whatever, we don't do those things, we are lacking to be honest with you, we are lacking. So it is high time that we initiate probably to link up with those teachers even to learn from them – even attempt probably to sit in those classes and observe how they are dealing with these problems. That is what we are lacking and it is not too late for us to go back and do that with them in order for us to help these learners that are suffering in grade 9 and 10 – that is, that is a fact. **[TEACHERS NEED TO INITIATE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO ASSIST SARs]**

Elizabeth: Uhm-uhm. Alright, thank you very much. May be the last question is in connection with the counsellor. What is the function of the counsellor that you have at your school?

Mr Muusa: Eh... counsellor the function that we have you know sometimes if there is a problem at the school we only looking one side without not knowing what is [inaccessible] what image eh... you know the core of the problem. Probably the learner is having a problem at home, a family problem or any problem – we are not considering those problems. We only taking: learners is troubling in the class, learner is not focusing in the class; we want to handle that problem whereby we realised in most cases we

are losing. That is why we decided to bring in a school counsellor so that first before doing or hand out punishment let's find out, let's go down to the root of the problem. So that is, that is the function of the counsellor with us; to find out more from even to go back to the parents, the environment of the home to find out what is the problem because many a times I can assure you madam that learners that is, that is giving problems at school is not only at school is probably faced by the circumstances at home. That is why we think in terms of bringing a counsellor so that he can go into depth of the problems and come up with you know to give recommendations to us telling us that us handle this problem like this and like this – that is what we are doing. **[THE FUNCTION OF THE SCHOOL CONSELLOR AT THEIR SCHOOL].**

Elizabeth: Okay.

Mr Muusa: Ja

Elizabeth: So in other words he is here for behavioural problems...

Mr Muusa: behavioural ...

Elizabeth: not problems like reading?

Mr Muusa: No

Elizabeth: Okay.

Mr Muusa: No, mostly 99% is behavioural problems not ...

Elizabeth: Oh I see.

Mr Muusa: not learning problems.

Elizabeth: Uhm. Oh, Mr Muusa, thank you very much we have to the end of our eh... structured interview, eh...

Mr Muusa: [giggles] Okay

Elizabeth: during the course of the week if there is something that I will need to ask I hope you will give me a few minutes of your time so that I can ask.

Mr Muusa: I will do so.

Elizabeth: Ja,

Mr Muusa: I will

Elizabeth: Thank you very much sir.

Mr Muusa: Ja, because I, I, I see that as very important for us to link up like this because you are there knowing what is happening in schools because we only following the syllabus [inaccessible], you know what you expect from us so that I can link up with you to know more and if there is a problem I can go to you and ask how can I

address this problem. What should I do in this case and so on? So to me it, it, it is something beneficial.

Elizabeth: Thank you very much I am the one who grateful because I am learning very much from you.

Mr Muusa: Ja.

Elizabeth: Thank you.

Mr Muusa: It is pleasure.

THE END OF MR MUUSA'S SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

APPENDIX 3d: Ms ZIMA's

TRANSCRIPTION OF THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH
Ms ZIMA OF MATAKO SECONDARY SCHOOL

DATE: 10 JUNE 2008-11-03

TIME: 14 – 15:30 HOURS

VENUE: A COLLEAGUE'S HOUSE, OTJIWARONGO

Elizabeth: Good afternoon madam.

Ms Zima: Good afternoon.

Elizabeth: Eh... my name is Elizabeth Simanga, as I have already informed you in the morning. And I am very grateful that you have agreed to come and assist me with my research by answering a few questions.

Ms Zima: You are welcome [giggles]

Elizabeth: Thank you. Eh... I would like to find out, to start with, what you understand by a struggling secondary reader or adolescent reader.

Ms Zima: In my opinion,

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: I think a struggling secondary reader is eh...a learner who finds it difficult to read most of the words at his or her level of her education. **[DEFINITION OF SAR]**

Elizabeth: Okay. What kind of problems would such kind of learners have – reading problems?

Ms Zima: The learner might be struggling with may be pronunciation of the word, may be ...
[pause]

Elizabeth: Okay you say, pronunciation of the word which is, I think, the...they might see a word and it means that they can't recognise that word. Is that what you are trying to tell me?

Ms Zima: Not exactly ...

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: They might recognise the word, but that is may be if they try to read it, may be it doesn't come out right. **[PRONUNCIATION IS A PROBLEM]**

Elizabeth: Okay, uhm. Eh... I have seen on your profile that you have got just

five months of teaching experience in grade in Grade 9 but you have got more years in teaching English in other subjects, in other grades isn't it? **[TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE]**

Ms Zima: Yes, you may say so.

Elizabeth: So have you come across, during that period, come across learners who struggle to read.

Ms Zima: They might be one or two.

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: So how did you handle such kind of learners; how did you assist them, those learners?

Ms Zima: Ja, I would, sometimes use what is, is called remedial lessons whereby may be I get to meet them after hours... **[SHE USES REMEDIAL]**

Elizabeth: Okay.

Ms Zima: hours when all the other kids is gone, then I might ask them to come back **[AFTERNNOONS ARE USED FOR REMEDIAL]**

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: Then I would have to come down lower than their level *[What does the teacher mean by 'lower than their level'?)*

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: and may be trying to them the sound of words.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: Yes, you ask them to try and read the difficult words using the sounds of the alphabet. **[PHONICS IS USED]**

Elizabeth: Okay. Where did you come across the word remedial teaching?

Ms Zima: I find it in some of the textbook that I ... that I make use of.

Elizabeth: Okay. Do you mean to tell me that at the tertiary level where you were trained you were not trained how to conduct remedial teaching?

Ms Zima: I was trained to teach, to conduct remedial teaching

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: but not in the way may be that you are asking for. They would assume that all the learners can now read at Grade 9 level. They assume that they can read. **[CAME ACROSS THE TERM REMEDIAL AT THE TERTIARY INSTITUTE, BUT IS NOT QUITE SURE WHAT IT ENTAILS WHEN IT COMES TO READING].**
[What does the teacher understand by remedial?]

- Elizabeth: Who assume that they can read?
- Ms Zima: [Pause]
- Elizabeth: When you say they assume that they can read, to whom are you referring to here?
- Ms Zima: Ja it can be difficult, it is a difficult question; but may be is the people who set the standards, standards of the work that the learners are supposed to do to be given. May be they just assume that up to that, that level then all the learners can are able to read they must do Maths and English. **[TEACHERS SEEM TO SUGGEST THAT CURRICULUM DEVELOPERS AND EXAMINORS ASSUME THAT LEARNERS CAN READ BY SECONDARY PHASE]**
- Elizabeth: Uhm. Let's come to materials. You said sometimes when you recognise or you identify the learners who are struggling you call them during the afternoon to come back and then you go eh... a bit lower than their level. What kind of materials do you use at this time?
- Ms Zima: Eh... a it is a bit difficult question also but at times I will have to take books that are below their level and start from there. **[RESOURCES USED ARE BELOW LEARNERS' READING LEVEL]**
- Elizabeth: Okay.
- Ms Zima: And also may be I can ask them to, to read out aloud because even at this level, the Grade 9 level, you assume that learners mostly read when they are quite not out. Maybe try to make them read louder so that they also hear their voices when they are reading. **[READING ALOUD AS A STRATEGY]**
- Elizabeth: Eh... I am very much interested in these learners who struggle to read. Eh... have you recognised within them, within these learners; some form of characteristics, what characteristics do these, are struggling readers, learners who struggle to read at the secondary have?
- Ms Zima: [Giggles]. Usually they are a bit slow than the other learners. **[PROFILE OF SARs]**
- Elizabeth: What do you mean by slow?
- Ms Zima: Slow may be in catching up.
- Elizabeth: Okay
- Ms Zima: Yes
- Elizabeth: Uhm.
- Ms Zima: And I, sometimes think may be the, the problem that is behind the problem that they have, the problem that is behind the problem of, of reading ...
- Elizabeth: Uhm, like what?

Ms Zima: There is this learner at the school; the mother once came to me and said that she suffers from this disease, this scientific names they can be a problem.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: dyslexia or something. **[SOME LEARNER'S READING PROBLEMS HAD BEEN DIAGNOSED SCIENTIFICALLY]**

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: And she just told me that give her more attention

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: because she is a bit slow to catch up.

Elizabeth: Okay, in other words it seems it was recognised in this child, from the previous grades that she couldn't read she has a problem of reading?

Ms Zima: Yes.

Elizabeth: Okay, uhm. So how did you assist this, so far, when the mother came to you what have you done to assist that learner?

Ms Zima: I make sure I have more time with her. If I explain something to the learners, then I have to go back to her and I ask her if she has understood what we are doing or not. **[GIVES THE SAR MORE ATTENTION, DOUBLE CHECKING]**

Elizabeth: As an individual?

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: Okay.

Ms Zima: Yes as an individual.

Elizabeth: Uhm.

]Ms Zima: If she says she has not got it then I have to go all over everything once more. **[REPEATS HERSELF IN CLASS]**

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: This is inside the class?

Ms Zima: Yes it is inside the class.

Elizabeth: Okay, when everybody is busy?

Ms Zima: Yes.

Elizabeth: Okay. Now, eh...is this learner in the class that you have shown me?

Ms Zima: No, she is not in the class that I have shown you.

Elizabeth: Okay, but she is also in grade 9?

Ms Zima: Yes,

Elizabeth: I see.

Ms Zima: She is also in grade 9.

Elizabeth: Okay, why did you select the grade that you have given me; the one that we are going to use tomorrow?

Ms Zima: It is quite a disciplined class. Yes, with some other classes, they ... not very disciplined. **[THE GIVEN CLASS WAS CHOSEN ON BAISI OF DESCIPLINE]**

Elizabeth: I see.

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: I don't know whether it is their culture at home

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: They just want to talk and talk.

Elizabeth: I see.

Ms Zima: Yes, if you ask them to keep quiet sometimes it can be very difficult. **[THE TEACHER FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO DESCIPLINE THE LEARNERS, DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THEIR CULTURE]**

Elizabeth: Okay.

Ms Zima: Uhm.

Elizabeth: But does that class also have learners, who struggle, according to what you have observed, who struggle to read?

Ms Zima: [Pause]. Ja, they might struggle here and there. But it is not like they have a big problem of reading. Most of them can read, they might not be able to pronounce one word within the reading or sometimes we are reading in the classroom or may be they are slow in their reading. But there are no major problems or like a learner who cannot read.

Elizabeth: Okay.

Ms Zima: Yes.

Elizabeth: Uhm, that is so far observed from the...from the test that I have started marking

Ms Zima: Uhm.

Elizabeth: It seems they do read and understand what they read.

Ms Zima: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Let's come to ... eh... we have talked a little bit on the resources. You have told me you use resources that are below their level. Eh... the books that are below their

level. What else do you sometimes apart from the books? By books are you referring to the novels or what are you referring to?

Ms Zima: Ja, sometimes yes, novels. **[RESOURCES]**

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: that sums, may be textbooks.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: uhm.

Elizabeth: What other strategies do you use to assist learners who struggle to read apart from eh... you have given me two [three]: you call them during the afternoon;

Ms Zima: Uhm

Elizabeth: And then you give them some books that eh...a little bit below their level; their grade level and then you go to there, those learners individually you repeat the work – you ask them if they understood and then you repeat the work if they didn't understand. **[SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES USED]**

Ms Zima: Uhm.

Elizabeth: What other strategies do you use?

Ms Zima: [Long Pause]. Uhm...

Elizabeth: Nothing?

Ms Zima: Nothing.

Elizabeth: Okay, uhm. Eh...you mentioned one character that these kinds of learners have, that is, usually they have got a problem behind their being failing to read.

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: What other characters do they have apart from these?

Ms Zima: May be I could say they don't give themselves time to read. **[PROFILE OF SARs]**

Elizabeth: They don't read?

Ms Zima: May be,

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: Uhm; because you only get to widen one's vocabulary by reading more

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: So may be the fact that they don't give themselves time to read,

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: Uhm...they don't get to meet some of the words

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: ... that are difficult for them to pronounce

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: ... or even to spell.

Elizabeth: Uhm. Why do you think suck kind of learners eh... seem not to, to, to read a lot compared to those who can, who don't struggle

Ms Zima: Who read?

Elizabeth: Ja

Ms Zima: May be it all comes down to the home environment, may be

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: that is some of the environments that are at home are not so encouraging [**HOME ENVIRONMENT NOT ENCOURAGING**]

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: uhm, so the learners just do what they want with their time

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: without anybody monitoring. [**NO MONITORING AT SOME HOMES**]

Elizabeth: Okay, so how do you motivate these learners or encourage them to read if you find that these learners they seem not to, to read at all? How do you motivate them?

Ms Zima: As a teacher I just keep on telling them that it is good that they read, that they give themselves time to study at home [**MOTIVATION: verbal encouragement is used**]

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: And also to make use of the libraries, there is a library at the school.

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: And also there is another community library there. [**RESOURCES**]

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: And also in my cupboard I have books that they can come to borrow.

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: And go and read when they are finished they can always bring the books back.

Elizabeth: Okay. So you have told them this?

Ms Zima: Yes.

Elizabeth: Okay, after telling them that they need to a lot, they need to borrow books and you have given them the places where they can borrow those books;

Ms Zima: Uhm.

Elizabeth: have you seen learners coming to you to look at the books that are in your cupboard?

Ms Zima: Yes, there are a few learners who do that, it is not all of the learners come to borrow books [**FEW LEARNERS COME TO BORROW BOOKS TO READ**]

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: But there are some learners who come and you only get to realise that those who are good are the ones who **[GOOD READERS ARE THE ONES WHO BORROW BOOKS]**

Elizabeth: Who come to you?

Ms Zima: Yes.

Elizabeth: Okay, okay and those who are not good are not coming at all?

Ms Zima: No they don't come.

Elizabeth: So what do you do in that case, you just leave them or what?

Ms Zima: I don't just leave them

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: I keep on encouraging them

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: But since the books are very many, they are not many,

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: It is difficult for me to, to give each learner a book so I keep on encouraging them. Also I hold eh... what we call book reviews whereby I ask them the to go and read a book and then later on I can give them an essay to write a book review on what they have read – I give them a period of time to, to read a book **[ASSESSMENT AFTER BOOKS ARE BORROWED; SCARCITY OF RESOURCES]**

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: And then we hold book reviews, they write about the book,

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: if it is good book then I ask to also encourage others to read the book

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: And also we hold ... what you call the speeches – prepared speeches **[OTHER SKILLS: speaking and writing are used to assess if learners read the books they borrow, then asked to encourage others if the book is interesting].**

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: in the class

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: whereby each learner will have to come upfront and tell the other learners what he or she has read about

Elizabeth: And in that case, do these who struggle also participate?

Ms Zima: I, like force them to participate because I would tell them that I, you are going to do this for marks so I give them no choice.

Elizabeth: Uhm, alright. So when you sort of force them then they come and do, how do they eh... say when they sort of, they are forced, how do they come and behave, how do they participate, what, how do they show their reading, that they have read when they have been forced to come?

Ms Zima: Ja, it is a difficult to decide, because if you will, you will, it is not like I force them but I just tell them that this exercise is a compul ...compulsory one

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: Yes, that everybody has to participate, they come but you, I have also realised that they also don't do so well.

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: The ones that read more they come, they present the work in a good way but the ones who don't know how to read, they come and they just eh... do what they eh... what they have to do but you also find it is not so up to standard.

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: Yes.

Elizabeth: So let's come to the resources. How do you select, what criteria do you use to select the books that you use for the learners, especially when you call them – these who are struggling when you call them to you, what criteria; do you have a criteria you use, apart from the fact that it is below eh... their reading level?

Ms Zima: I ... what can I say, yes sometimes I choose books that are simple

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: Yes,

Elizabeth: uhm.

Ms Zima: that are easy to understand

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: that they can easily understand

Elizabeth: Uhm, why do you think it is important to select an easy book that they will understand?

Ms Zima: Because ... [giggle] maam, they have difficulties already

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: so if I have to give them a book that they do not understand it, it even makes them, the problem worse.

Elizabeth: Okay, it is going to discourage them even more

Ms Zima: Ja, even more, yes.

Elizabeth: Okay, that is very good. And eh... the other area that I would like us to discuss is the assessment. How do you assess eh... struggling adolescent readers? [Pause]. How do you assess them in class/

Ms Zima: Eh...in class we have comprehension passages

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: eh...we read, usually I ask for volunteers to read

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: but I also found out that if I am always asking for volunteers

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: then the ones who cannot read are always left behind

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: but they never put up their hands.

Elizabeth: What do you do then?

Ms Zima: At the school they also say not to force learners

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: to do the things

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: So it is also difficult for me

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: because if you ask a learner who is not willing to read it is also not right.

Elizabeth: Why do you think it is not right to ask a learner who is not willing to read?

Ms Zima: to read?

Elizabeth: in class for example?

Ms Zima: I don't know maam, but I have been told not to force learners

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: but myself I would think may be to force them to read or even to pick on someone whose hand is down so that they can learn how to read is also good. At the school, when I got there, I was told that I should not force learners to ...

Elizabeth: to participate?

Ms Zima: it is kind of difficult.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: I should not force learners to, yes you could say to participate or even to make, you could do, do role play in class, whereby you ask them to act out a situation, so only those who are willing to do it just come ...

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: uhm

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: so it is like always the learners who are not doing so well, they, they are left out

Elizabeth: uhm.

Ms Zima: Uhm and I really don't know how to go about it.

Elizabeth: Okay.

Ms Zima: uhm.

Elizabeth: uhm, these learners that you have identified to have reading problems, did you try to find out from the other eh... mother tongue teachers, are they also having eh... reading problems in their mother tongue?

Ms Zima: Eh...to be honest with you I haven't done so yet.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: But may be they might be doing well, when they use their mother tongue.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: Also at this school, I don't think all the mother tongues are there

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: I think it is one or two

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: of the languages ...

Elizabeth: Like which language?

Ms Zima: Afrikaans

Elizabeth: Eh

Ms Zima: and the other, I think the Damara>Nama, I am not so sure.

Elizabeth: I see

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: Okay, how do you get the other teachers involved to support the learners or get the parents to support the learners?

Ms Zima: Uhm, let me first start by getting the parents to support the learners.

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: At the school they hold at the beginning of each term,

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: just, say we opening

Elizabeth: uhm.

- Ms Zima: the next day,
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Ms Zima: they going to do it, they held this last time when we opened,
- Elizabeth: EH?
- Ms Zima: a parents' meeting
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Ms Zima: whereby they ask parents to come to the school and then the parents would get to talk to us teachers and then they would discuss their children. **But you will also find that the learners who do well their parents come to parents' meeting.**
- Elizabeth: In other words if eh... if a learner is performing well at school, when the parents are called, those parents whose learners are performing well are the ones who turn up – who come to the school?
- Ms Zima: Yes, **it is like they have a positive attitude towards learning.**
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Ms Zima: **And they support their children. They are the ones who also come for these meetings. The parents that we really need of the learners who are not doing so well – they don't turn up.**
- Elizabeth: So in that case what did you did you, do you do to in order to see that they also come?
- Ms Zima: I didn't do it
- Elizabeth: Okay
- Ms Zima: may be what I could do is to request for their phone numbers and then call them that they come to school, to the school.
- Elizabeth: Okay
- Ms Zima: But it also has been difficult thing in the past
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Ms Zima: Say a learner is not eh...behaving so well
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Ms Zima: and the parents are called, at times they also do not turn up. And I **have also come to realise that most learners they don't stay with their real parents.**
- Elizabeth: Uhm.
- Ms Zima: It is like the mother could be working in Otjo while and, while she is here staying with the brother or with the sister of the mother or an uncle.
- Elizabeth: Uhm. So have you really, eh... realised or have you identified that there is a connection between such kinds of learners who are not staying with their parents

with the problems or reading problems or what are trying to say here? Are they connected in other words?

Ms Zima: Ja, in one way they could be connected

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: But in this case now is not like there is a problem behind the problem with read

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: No, may be they just don't have someone to follow up on how they are doing.

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: It is like the other people ...

Elizabeth: don't have somebody to encourage them?

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: something like that

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: Because for you to, to be encouraged or to have a positive attitude towards learning, the environment is to be supportive.

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: Yes, even at home it has to be, you have to have somebody who encourages you

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: And these learners might not have that.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Uhm. What about at the side of the school, how does the school itself support these learners, these eh... struggling readers? Have you seen another way that the school is trying to support them?

Ms Zima: Eh... the struggling ones?

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: No, not at the moment.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: Yes, they, they eh... people at the school, the teachers the staff,

Elizabeth: EH?

Ms Zima: they just make sure that the learners have all the books, books that they need

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: And also that they can get books from eh...the school, school library.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: But eh... I don't think that they have, they actually select a book in English to try to help the group that is ...

Elizabeth: struggling?

Ms Zima: Ja, that is struggling.

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Zima: I am also not sure maam because I am still new at the school

Elizabeth: Yes, yes

Ms Zima: and I am learning

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: some of their ways

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Ms Zima: it takes time,

Elizabeth: Yes, yes

Ms Zima: really, there might be things that they, that are in place

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: that I don't know.

Elizabeth: That you are not yet aware of?

Ms Zima: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Uhm, okay, thank you very much. And may be the other question that I should have asked at the beginning is: how do you identify a struggling adolescent reader? How do you identify them?

Ms Zima: [Giggle, then a long pause]. When we read in class I can identify that this learner is not able, because there are some people, some learners who struggle to read and yet they also very much willing to, to read

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Zima: Yes, when you say can somebody read for the class, their hands are up. They read, some of the learners are laughing at them but they don't care they keep on reading.

Elizabeth: Okay.

Ms Zima: Uhm.

Elizabeth: It is interesting.

Ms Zima: Uhm

Elizabeth: Uhm, so when you ask these learners some questions do they seem to understand what they read – these who struggle to read?

Ms Zima: They might understand but not so deeply
Elizabeth: Uhm.
Ms Zima: Yes
Elizabeth: Okay
Ms Zima: Uhm.
Elizabeth: Well Ms Zima, I think we have come to the end of our interview. And I am really very grateful and I have learnt a lot from you even though you think you are still new and learning [laughs]; you seem to be experienced somehow. Thank you very much maam.
Ms Zima: You are welcome maam.
Elizabeth: Thank you.
Ms Zima: It has been a pleasure.
Elizabeth: Uhm.

[Then at a later stage, as we discuss, Ms Zima starts speaking about something she has just thought about and I then record it. This is what follows]:

Ms Zima: I don't know whether they have a problem or not, there are learners, who are nervous,
Elizabeth: Eh?
Ms Zima: yes, they really want to do something but it is like just what you have said, they could be self conscious
Elizabeth: Eh?
Ms Zima: and then that would limit them
Elizabeth: Uhm.
Ms Zima: Yes, they really want to read or come and act out something but because they have become nervous, then it is like the nervousness'
Elizabeth: Eh?
Ms Zima: stops them from doing exactly what they wanted to do.
Elizabeth: Uhm.
Ms Zima: I don't know whether it is a problem, a biological one or not,
Elizabeth: Okay
Ms Zima: Uhm
Elizabeth: I see.
Ms Zima: Stage fright.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: Yes.

Elizabeth: Uhm, or that you, you are saying it seems as if they become frightened?

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: They want to; they don't want to be open

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: to do something in front of everybody?

Ms Zima: Yes

Elizabeth: Okay, okay, in that case, I don't know, have you tried to call them, to talk to them so that you find out the reason behind; as individual learners may be away from the other learners?

Ms Zima: Eh... I haven't done that.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Zima: But may be they could definitely have problem that makes them, makes them so reserved may be.

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Zima: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Okay

THE END OF ZIMA'S

APPENDIX 3e: Ms MBULI's

**TRANSCRIPTION OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH MS MBULI FROM
NANDANVU SECONDARY SCHOOL – 12 JUNE 2008**

VENUE: AREA C IN OTJOZONDJUPA REGION

OBSERVATION:

Apart from the researcher's name, the teacher's name used is a pseudo name. This semi-structured Interview took place in the evening at ma residential place of a colleague.

Elizabeth: Eh...Good evening Madam?

Ms Mbuli: Good evening.

Elizabeth: Thank you very much that you have agreed to come and help me with my research.
I am really grateful since it was just eh... a short notice

Ms Mbuli: You are welcome.

Elizabeth: Yes, and I hope that during this interview you are going to feel free

Ms Mbuli: Uhm

Elizabeth: please see me as eh...just a student

Ms Mbuli: Yes

Elizabeth: who is learning from you

Ms Mbuli: Yes

Elizabeth: So you should be free and eh... be relaxed

Ms Mbuli: Uhm

Elizabeth: yes, because I am learning from you.

Ms Mbuli: Yes.

Elizabeth: To start with, eh... I would like to find out eh...about the reading abilities of your learners

Ms Mbuli: Eh?

Elizabeth: Do they have different reading abilities and how different are they?

Ms Mbuli: [Pause] Eh... what do you mean by eh...different....eh...I can't...

Elizabeth: Do they all read at the same level or not?

Ms Mbuli: Eh, they are not reading at the same level

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Mbuli: they differ; there are ...those who are ... fast in reading and there are the average group and there are there the poor readers, those who ...can't read properly.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Mbuli : you can divide them in three different categories

Elizabeth: Alright!

Ms Mbuli: in the way how they read.

Elizabeth: Uhm!

Ms Mbuli: Yes

Elizabeth: So, you say you have got the faster readers,

Ms Mbuli: Yes

Elizabeth: they can read fast,

Ms Mbuli: Uhm

Elizabeth: these faster readers, [Ms Mbuli coughs), if they read fast, do they also understand what they are reading?

Ms Mbuli: Sometimes you see that they do not understand,

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Mbuli: because some of them can read faster but they don't adhere to punctuation. Where there is eh...a question mark somebody just read it as a statement, it means that he won't be able to understand it because the way he put the sentence is ...is not how it supposed to, she is supposed to ask, but she reads it as a statement, so sometimes they don't understand.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Mbuli: so they really do understand.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Mbuli: Uhm..., then you can also learn from the way how they answer the questions

Elizabeth: Eh...?

Ms Mbuli: you give them something to read, finish quickly means that she is a faster reader, but at the end of the day what she answered, most of the questions, all the answers are just wrong.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Mbuli: So it means they don't understand, or no concentration, you don't know, because concentration and understanding go hand in hand, sometimes they...they understand but they don't concentrate.

Elizabeth: Uhm!

Ms Mbuli: You don't know if that is the case

Elizabeth: Okay.

- Elizabeth: Let's come to...you have already said that your learners arecan be divided into three groups
- Ms Mbuli: eh...
- Elizabeth: you have got are better, the middle ones and the poor learners
- Ms Mbuli: uh
- Elizabeth: let's come to the poor learner, or the poor readers
- Ms Mbuli: yes.
- Elizabeth: Eh...what do you understand by a learner who is poor in reading?
- Ms Mbuli: Eh...like what is the causes or...
- Elizabeth: Ja!
- Ms Mbuli: Eh...you really don't understand. There are many things that you can realise there. Because some of them, it is not that they are so poor, but they don't have self-confidence, they way, especially when it comes to reading aloud, they don't want others to listen to them, they, they don't feel free when they are reading and they...while others are listening to them, because sometimes you will see that they ask you Ms what if I come and read during the afternoon study, while the others are not there. So you see that sometimes the thing is the self-confidence, they can't just believe in themselves, so that...that is the problem sometimes that causes them to keep quiet.
- Elizabeth: Uhm!
- Ms Mbuli: and some of them you don't know, maybe, is because of transferred, they didn't catch up the work properly, the ones of the previous grade, when it comes to his grade, definitely they won't cope, because some of the...the others, passed by themselves, and he was only transferred, so he won't be at the same level as the others, because he is supposed to cover the previous work first before he come to this one.
- Elizabeth: Uhm!
- Ms Mbuli: so sometimes it causes the problem. Some people are just transferred from lower primary, one grade this year the other grade transferred, so he never passes by himself, so you see, you can go back to...grade three may be is the level of... that learner and you expect...are expecting him to read in grade 9, so that is...sometimes where the problem is
- Elizabeth: I see
- Ms Mbuli: Yes
- Elizabeth: Okay, you mentioned very interesting things.

- Ms Mbuli: Eh...
- Elizabeth: you mentioned eh...lack of self confidence
- Ms Mbuli: Yes
- Elizabeth: you also mentioned that the learners are being transferred
- Ms Mbuli: Yes
- Elizabeth: and therefore they reach secondary level while they read, they might be reading at a grade three level
- Ms Mbuli: Yes
- Elizabeth: So, let's take first of all, self-confidence
- Ms Mbuli: Uhm.
- Elizabeth: Why do you think these learners lack self-confidence?
- Ms Mbuli: I think sometimes, is from home, everything started at home, eh...learners needs to be motivated or to be encouraged at home; 'that you are something, you can make it', whether they make mistakes, not in reading because they are not reading at home, but whatever they do at home, the parents need to encourage them or to praise them. But sometimes they use to say, 'you are nothing, you wont make it' those type of things. And then when they come to school sometimes it also happens with teachers. **[PARENTS NOT ENCOURAGING NOR MOTIVATING THEIR CHILDREN; learners just gets degraded at home and at school]**
- Elizabeth: Uhm
- Ms Mbuli: some teachers are just like that
- Elizabeth: Uh!
- Ms Mbuli: They ...especially those teachers of lower primary because they learners are small they can't stand for themselves and say something, so they just talk anyhow to those learners: 'you...you are nothing you, I know you are not going to make it, this learner, you are just going to be in grade 1 till...'those type of things, and then they just lack eh...self-confidence, they do not where they are, they do not how, whether they are going to make it in life because whatever they hear is...is from home: 'you are nothing'; come to school. **[NO SUPPORT FROM BOTH PARENTS AND TEACHERS]**
- Elizabeth: Uhm!
- Ms Mbuli: 'you won't make it in life'
- Elizabeth: Uhm!
- Ms Mbuli: so they just give up
- Elizabeth: Uhm!

Ms Mbuli: not try, the motivation from the side of the teachers is very important.

[TEACHERS NEED TO MOTIVATE SARs]

Elizabeth: Uhm!

Elizabeth: So have really experienced, seen, observed teachers who put learners down

Ms Mbuli: Yes

Elizabeth: okay?

Ms Mbuli: Yes

Elizabeth: uh....So, the learners who are reading below grade level, performing below grade level

Ms Mbuli: Yes

Elizabeth: have you come across such kind of learners?

Ms Mbuli: They are a lot.

Elizabeth: They are a lot?

Ms Mbuli: Uhm...they are a lot, yes.

Elizabeth: Thank you very much. [Teacher scratches her throat]. How do you, have you been trying say, how... how have you been trying to support and assist such kind of learners, say what strategies do you usually use, what methods do you usually use and why?

Ms Mbuli: Eh...the method that I am using...really because we...we also don't know how to...to cope with those learners who can't read in grade 9...at grade 9 level, [scratches her throat], it is difficult because we were never trained, you just try by yourself because you see these pupils need assistance, and the only person that is there is me. So sometimes you call them for eh...remedial classes and then give them something to read, something short and then ask them to explain in their own words the way they understand it, just to because ah...ah...what I believe in is that practicing reading is the only thing that will help people to become...to upgrade their reading skills, nothing else. So I use to encourage them also to go to the library because we do have a library at school, and when they come there they have start with easy stories, they have to be clear to the librarian that 'I can't read properly' because, luckily the librarian is also a...an English Teacher, she is teaching grade 8. So I u...she knows the problems and 'everything'. So I use to tell them, most of the learners, those who come in grade 9, they are also coming from her, so she knows them. I used to tell them, please when you come there you have to be honest with yourself. Tell the librarian that 'you are not good in reading', above all you are not interested because sometimes you don't understand the

language, so, you are looking for easier stories. So, and then some of them also used to come to me, 'Ms, I have read...two books now but I can see that I have enjoyed it and I will continue'. So, you see, not all of them, but at least it is something, because you see eh... improvement among those who tried. **[TEACHERS NOT KNOWING WHAT TO DO TO ASSIST SARs, RESOURCES USED; STRATEGIES USED]**

Elizabeth: Uhm!

Ms Mbuli: some of them [it] is not a matter that they do improve, they don't even try. You ask them whether you visited a library yes once, but the library was closed, just like that. May be the reason is that they don't understand what they are reading; they loose interest, some of them don't even go there. But for those who go with you hand in hand, assisting them during the afternoon when you have remedial classes, go to the library read; you see improvement, this or there. But the thing is, it is something that we [are] just trying, we never had workshops, on how to assist those learners, and you know when you teach grade 9 you were supposed to teach pupils [that are] up to standard. So somebody who is just there [pointing down] low, you don't know, you just try, you really don't know how to upgrade their reading skill.

[SECONDARY TEACHERS EXPECTING TO RECEIVE LEARNERS WHO CAN READ BY THE TIME THEY REACH THIS PHASE]

Elizabeth: Uhm! So when you say, you were not trained

Ms Mbuli: Eh?

Elizabeth: are you...what are you referring to? You have got your own course that you were trained, but you are saying you were not trained to handle these learners. What are you referring to here?

Ms Mbuli: Like those learners eh...they...eh they are learners with special needs

Elizabeth: Uh

Ms Mbuli: It is not just normal learners. A grade 9 learner, because if somebody cannot be able to ... just to read a...a sentence and to understand what is going on, he or she is not up to standard at all, but for someone you know that he is up to standard you know how to handle that person. But those below average, you really...it is just a pity to them.

Elizabeth: Uh

Ms Mbuli: You just want to take them back to grade 6 (laughs)

Elizabeth: Okay

Elizabeth: Alright

Ms Mbuli: Uhm

Elizabeth: So you mentioned...something interesting as well, you mentioned about interest, that the lowest interest.

Ms Mbuli: Uh

Elizabeth: Is interest, how important is interest and motivation with regards reading?

Ms Mbuli: It is, it is important, because when you are motivating the learners from the little that he can do or what she can do, if you keep on motivating him or her, really, she is going to have that interest in him and she, she will know that 'I can do it' because you keep on telling him that next time you are going to read a paragraph and then after reading you are going to praise him and say 'OH! I can see an improvement and that is really good, that is only because you are practicing reading' so then he will that the more I read, the more I ah...ah I am going to become eh...eh a good reader or better in reading. So definitely he will have that interest of reading, always, because you motivate him and you encourage him to read and read. Like one eh...once I was teaching in grade 8, and then the year after, eh...I was shifted to grade 9. **[MOTIVATION AND INTEREST]**

Elizabeth: Uhm!

Ms Mbuli: So one learner was in grade 8 and that learner was a poor reader, he was not reading at all

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: So I just used to...to encourage him, 'just read, read what you like', when he has to read a paragraph I just ask him to read those words that he can, 'leave the others out, just read those that you can', and then he just does like that. At the end of the day he can read eh...just a paragraph by, by his own. So that year he was also promoted to grade 9, we go together. I become a grade 9 English teacher as well. So we there starting just where we stopped in grade 8, encouraging him, praising him. And then when he comes to grade 10, I also become the teacher of grade 10. **[STRATEGY USED TO ENCOURAGE SARs]**

Elizabeth: Wow!

Ms Mbuli: we were just moving together. So that, because most of the learners they are always in the same class and they know each other. By the time when he comes in grade 10, I give him something to read as well. And then really the way he was reading, I asked the others 'what do you see in him or what is going on with his reading?' 'Oh Ms, he is reading very well, he is reading very well'. The way he used to read when

we were in grade 8, he really improved. So we applaud them we encourage them together with the others. And that learner, he passes by himself with 23 points in grade 10. So really I, I...I see it as something in my life, because when you keep on encouraging learners, talking to them, they are going to get that interest and then they, they will know that at least Ms is, I [pause] eh... she wants me to become something or... or...'she cares', 'uh she cares'. **[SHOWING LEARNERS THAT YOU CARE can encourage them to try harder]**

Elizabeth: Uh

Ms Mbuli: So that is the thing. So that is one style and you know that when you carry on like that with learners it helps

Elizabeth: It helps?

Ms Mbuli: It helps

Elizabeth: Uhm. [There is a long pause as I write down something]. Thank you very much. [I give a deep thigh]. Okay, now, we have discussed about some strategies that you use, you encourage them, and you tell them that they can only improve by reading

Ms Mbuli: uhm

Elizabeth: Let's come to the strategies that you use within the class. Mostly these strategies that you are giving, if I can sum them up, it seems they are for themselves to do when they are outside,

Ms Mbuli: Yes

Elizabeth: what about in the reading classes, what strategies do you use during school hours in reading classes, reading periods?

Ms Mbuli: Eh...in reading periods sometimes you let them sit in groups and then you give them something to read [pause] eh...so you allow learners to help each other. So, like for example they read a story and then they have to discuss the questions and answer them together. So you ask them while sitting there, because I used to tell them that everything starts at a class level. So, it is, 'it might be difficult for you to go and read in front of the class if you can't read among the group of four people. So, I used just to, to move around and ask them to read so that I can listen and also ask the others to assist wherever they can. Because the learners eh...when they know that this one is poor in reading, sometimes they don't even give him or her chance to try. If somebody wants just to pronounce the word, they catch; they, they come in, just like that. So I use to tell them: 'no, give her chance, just let her just try' and then I encourage them to read the word the way the ...because sometimes they just see the word 'this word it is a long word' and then they don't want to go in the word, so I

use to tell them, no just read just start from the beginning. 'Sometimes when you start with the first letter, you can see you are through with the word. So I just to move from one desk to the other and try to encourage them. [**CLASSROOM ORGANISATION; VERBAL ENCOURAGEMENT**]

Elizabeth: Uhm. Thank you very much. Okay, alright, so you use the groups to help one another?

Ms Mbuli: Yes.

Elizabeth: So, is there another way that you use, apart from that one? [Pause] apart from peer assistance?

Ms Mbuli: Eh...in class?

Elizabeth: In class.

Ms Mbuli: Eh...that is the one I am using.

Elizabeth: Okay, so, even when you bring a new text, this is the new text. Here are the learners, learner A doesn't know how to read, may be they can't read a word or they read they don't understand. So the method that you are going to use in class is to, for them to assist one another?

Ms Mbuli: Oh, sometimes, you look at the text and then you eh...you take all those new words from the text and then you first write them on the chalkboard, eh...let them drill, it is something that eh...sound find funny for them because they think they are grown up, when you ask them to read together they just laugh, but you say 'no, come on read, you need to drill'. So you read before them and then they read after you, and then you also ask the meanings of the words from them, and then at the end of the day you write the right meanings of those words or sometimes you write them, [pause] if the story happens to, to be photocopied on the paper, then at the bottom there, that is where you write new words with their meanings. So you read them first, and then after you with their meanings, and then definitely when it comes to reading the text there, they understand better. [**VOCABULARY, CHANTING, LEADING LEARNERS TO READ**]

Elizabeth: Uhm

Ms Mbuli: because now they are familiar with the new words in the text.

Elizabeth: Uhm, thank you. Alright, eh...you mentioned the word, remedial. But you said you were not trained to handle these learners with reading problems. How have you come across the term 'remedial or compensatory teaching'?

- Ms Mbuli: It is just that eh...you know, definitely you need to assist these learners, there is no other way, most of the learners, they have reading problems and these problem does not only affect them in...in English because they are being taught, all the subjects are also being taught in ...in English. **[MEDIUM OF TEACHING IS ALSO A PROBLEM]**
- Elizabeth: Uh
- Ms Mbuli: So you know when someone is poor in reading English this is going to affect him in other subjects as well. So you think definitely, if you as an English teacher or language teacher you don't do anything then this learner might end up having problems and most of them and they are going to fail all the subjects. So that is why we just think of helping them. We are also being encouraged by our principal to...to have that extra time, to look at those learners who can't cope during a lesson, may be during a lesson you are fast, you don't want to waste the time of the others and then you decide in order for me to have enough time with this group, I can call them afterwards so that I can have enough time to pay [cough], to give them attention and them to know me better as well, because there among the group the whole class they wont be able to know you and to come up with their problems. But when you are ...after school you are just a small group they ...they start to ensure and to know their teachers better. So that is why. It is mostly to have enough time and not...to do what...umm? [Pause]. **[TEACHERS BEING ENCOURAGED BY THE MANAGEMENT, THEY USE AFTERNOONS TO ASSIST SARs, normal teaching of SARs only to give them the attention they need].**
- Elizabeth: Okay, so you are saying, you...they come up, in small groups. So do you usually see them in small groups when they come out, when you give them this extra attention in the afternoon or how do you ...what do you mean by uh...
- Ms Mbuli: yes
- Elizabeth: by small groups?
- Ms Mbuli: Yes, they come in small groups because most of those poor readers they are not so many
- Elizabeth: okay
- Ms Mbuli: they are not so many
- Elizabeth: uhm
- Ms Mbuli: The others you just try to encourage them and give to them, like sometimes I ask them, for those above average
- Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: or average there

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: 'please if you feel like coming during the afternoon', I...I used to stay here

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: 'so you can just come when you have...come across an interesting story and you want to read it to someone, you can just come, and say Ms can I read for you this story' so those type of things then 'you can read and I ung-u [denial exclamation] they haven't

Elizabeth: they haven't yet...?

Ms Mbuli: Okay, they don't come. But I used to tell them I have time with you because you know during the afternoon they always there till 16 o'clock it is for all those type of things, 'you just feel free, let us become friends'

Elizabeth: okay

Ms Mbuli: but those people... they...and then on the other hand you have other work to do, if they didn't turn up you just continue with marking and so on.

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: But those poor readers they are not so many

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: just call them in that small group and you can manage to have something with them.

Elizabeth: Okay, may be this one, I should have asked it from the beginning. You were talking about...that there are so many learners with reading problems say either in the schools

Ms Mbuli: uh

Elizabeth: and even you ...you have come across them. How do you recognize, how do you diagnose specific reading problems that learners have?

Ms Mbuli: Uhm... [Pause] it is like during uh...the lessons, especially if when we do literature

Elizabeth: uh

Ms Mbuli: we don't have enough books. So you just make enough copies and then they read during class time. So you everybody is...you give a chance to everyone to read that is when one is having time to read. So that is where you do the observation. They way how they are reading and then you can sometimes...you don't ask them to volunteer themselves, you just let everybody have a chance to read something and then from there you can see that 'Oh!-some people can't read properly. So you don't allow them to ...to read a paragraph with the same length as the others, because otherwise they are going to be discouraged as well. But from there you

could know that okay, it is like learner what, it is learner what and most of the time when you have something or whatever I write on the chalkboard or anything when it comes to reading I say, 'Now, when it comes to reading you it is you. Who is going to read this? You always see all those, the good readers they are the only one who respond. And then sometimes you say please John let hear...let us listen from you today and then you can see how he struggles. So it is just like that and then you see how they read and sometimes it is also from... because we also from our question papers [cough] there is also reading and directed writing, they have to read and write. They way they answer the questions you see that 'ungu', this is problem, this learner A, B, C is having problems with reading just from the way they are answering the questions. Sometimes most of the questions are not covered are just leave open it is because of the type because the speed of reading is so low they, can't be able to finish so, the marks also help you to...to know that this learner can read and this one can't read. **[DIAGNOSING: reading aloud, comprehension questions]**

Elizabeth: The marks?

Ms Mbuli: The marks they obtain especially in the reading and directed writing

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: Because there they are a lot to read, sometimes they use to say 'Ms ...time is not enough.' I use to tell them that it is not time it is you, you need to upgrade your reading skill, you need to upgrade your speed then definitely you are going to match the time.

Elizabeth: Okay, uhm. Thank you. The other part that I would like to find out is concerning the classroom organization. I saw from the way they are arranged, they seem to be in groups.

Ms Mbuli: yes

Elizabeth: How is classroom organization relevant to reading, especially when you think of struggling readers?

Ms Mbuli: I think that grouping is good or is better, because definitely the learners have to learn from each other. They can't only learn from the teacher. You are there but they can also still ...learn from each other because that is where they can [cough] they...they feel free when their mates are assisting or they discussing things with their classmates. So I also used to encourage them that o...it is good whatever you do it is better to start at a class level because one of the days you might stand in front of

the school or say in front of the class and then in front of the school or you might eh... be invited to present a speech somewhere so to have that self confidence at the class level is a starting that is good. So they help each other. **[CLASSROOM ORGANISATION]**

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: [Pause] when it comes to pronunciation of the words or when he pronounce a...a certain word wrongly then it is only among the four people not among the whole class

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: and they can be able to assist him or her just immediately.

Elizabeth: Okay. You also mentioned some resources. Do you have enough resources, reading resources at your school? If not what do you? How do you solve the problems of resources if they are not there?

Ms Mbuli: We don't have. So resources like...?

Elizabeth: Reading materials: novels, newspapers anything

Ms Mbuli: Okay

Elizabeth: anything that they can read?

Ms Mbuli: Okay, we don't have enough, because most of the times when we need to order books like for literature those novels and short story books, they are not enough, from the budget they are enough for the whole school. So it happens that you have even to make copies, or to let them read during lessons and it also takes long. Like if you could have enough books you just give them a weekend to go and read by themselves, come explain and then you have literature task or test. But because of these eh... lack of resources, you have to let them read maybe for two periods sometimes move till the third period because of the poor readers you can't exclude them, they should also read. So you read from period to period and then it holds you back. So we just try to make copies from the few that we have and then sometimes we also let them read in the class, so it means today you ... the same books, maybe you have only 30, so the 9 ... 9As read, they come, they read and go you have to take the books in for the 9Bs to read. **[RESOURCES ARE APROBLEM]**

Elizabeth: uh

Ms Mbuli: just like that. So really it disturbs a lot. Sometimes we have also newspapers like New Era. We used to have them weekly but they are also not enough. So you just get some, you give them to read but they are not enough. Sometimes if they are...you just take for a week, although they differ and give them to the learners to

go read, eh... anyone just to look for an interesting story, to go read and then later on to come and explain or retell the others what the story is about. We also used to do it but the thing is that newspapers are not enough for all of them. Imagine we have the grade 9s and have also the grade 10s

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: Sometimes you end up just giving a page, page here which is not good because the person should select for himself or herself a story, an interesting story. So resources are ... is really a problem to us, we are struggling a lot. **[IMPORTANT THAT LEARNERS CHOOSE MATERIALS THEY WANT TO READ]**

Elizabeth: Why is self-selection so important?

Ms Mbuli: Self-selection when it comes to learners?

Elizabeth: Yes, you are saying

Ms Mbuli: uh-uhm

Elizabeth: sometimes it is not good to choose for the learners

Ms Mbuli: uh

Elizabeth: it is better that they choose for themselves

Ms Mbuli: yes

Elizabeth: Why is it important, say either they choose a novel that they want to read or that they choose a passage from the newspaper?

Ms Mbuli: It is good because learners' interest, eh... it differ from one person to another. Some people, especially boys they are interested in sport. When it comes to soccer, they are always, sometimes they say 'No Ms, I don't do [smiles], I don't want this newspaper because there is no soccer. So if you have to select for them, you might do the wrong selection. So, because people [']s interest differ so therefore [it] is good for them just to go for, for whatever they want to do their ...the selection themselves. **[INTEREST is used to select what they read].**

Elizabeth: uhm, alright, thank you very much

Ms Mbuli: Welcome.

Elizabeth: So, you are ...saying the books are not enough does this refer, also include the textbook?

Ms Mbuli: Yes

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: Eh... because the problem is the ...the eh... this new syllabi, that was [pause], we, we got it last year 2007, it comes with new topics and we used to, to have the *in*

context, *English in Context*, and we also that same year we ordered because each year we just add some until we have enough for the, the, the whole grade. So by the time we, we see that we are now okay with the ... *in context* we ordered enough for our grade 10s the s...eh what, the syllabus change, the one of last year 2007

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: then the topics in the *in context* differ totally from the...the syllabus, we have to reorder other text again. Like last year I ordered *English for All for Namibia*. We didn't know the content, but we just order because we...we knew that this is new textbooks, it might eh...have the same topics as the one in the syllabus. So we just order but, luckily, the topics appear in the ...that textbooks, the new textbook *English for All for Namibia* is the same as the one in the syllabus. But the thing is that it's just few

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: most of the budget, you are not going to [inaccessible] only, to, the, the, eh...English grade...

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: whatever,

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: we have to order

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: grade 8, 9 and 10. So, we just order a number of one class

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: so they have to use them ...

Elizabeth: to share?

Ms Mbuli: to share with other classes. Textbook is also a problem. And that one also cause [causes] a big delay, because when they have to do comprehension test, you just explain and then they start writing. They don't finish in that period and they can't be able to take the textbooks and do the... complete the work during the, the afternoon study or during study, it means that the next period they have to continue with the same comprehension test and then sometimes that class, the other day they don't come those type of things. **[SCARCITY OF ESOURCES CAUSES DELAY]**

Elizabeth: uh

Ms Mbuli: It causes a big delay. We also do have a big problem with textbooks

Elizabeth: uhm

- Ms Mbuli: so it means that this year we have to add few, the other year and then [laughs] the way you add this one because they are being shared by all the grades they just get out...
- Elizabeth: they worn out?
- Ms Mbuli: uh, so it is a big problem
- Elizabeth: Okay, uhm. Eh... you might have mentioned the answer to the question that I am going to ask you
- Ms Mbuli: uh?
- Elizabeth: But I am going to ask it. How do you select reading resources; for you to use with the struggling adolescent readers? For these learners at the secondary who struggle; how do you select reading texts?
- Ms Mbuli: [Pause] eh...those learners, I just treat them, to be honest, equally like the others. Because you can't just select something special for them; you just give them, especially when it comes to marks; something that you have to asses, to take for, for continuous assessment. **[SELECTION OF MATERIALS, learners are treated equally, no special attention to SARs]**
- Elizabeth: uhm
- Ms Mbuli: you can't give them something different from the others. But if you have to do remedial and those type[s] of things
- Elizabeth: uh
- Ms Mbuli: you can assist them uh...looking for ... I, I also ask some ...uhmm...materials, I have aah... my sister who is teaching grade two in Windhoek, so some materials that can fit to assist those who are poor readers, but you see that is what they need but the thing is it at grade two level. So sometimes you just try to use those resources and then when it comes to assessment, they have just to do the same thing as the...as the others, there is no other way.
- Elizabeth: Uhm, you have even answered the question I wanted to ask on assessment [laugh]. Uhm ... okay. Uhm!! Alright, do you have any other thing, any other strategies ... any other means that you can, you...that you might have left that you can add to what you have already said, apart, if not then may be you could ... eh explain how the school and the other teachers support these struggling readers? [Pause...]. What support does the school give to these struggling readers?
- Ms Mbuli: The school itself eh... uhhh, I can't remember anything from the school side ... **[APART FROM THE MANEGEMNT ENCOURAGING TEACHERS, the school doesn't seem to be doing anything]**

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: but like from other teachers, because they use to ... to refer to the English teachers always, when it comes to poor spelling or poor readers they say 'You English teachers [together] do something to these learners' **[OTHER TEACHERS SEE READING TO BE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS]**

Elizabeth: 'You English teachers...' Okay, in other words they see the reading to be the function, to be the job of...

Ms Mbuli: so ... of the English teacher, yes

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: But we used to tell them that 'No, your subjects are also being taught in English, so when it comes to reading, in order for that learner to answer your question paper, he or she must be good in reading. So this, we need all of us to, to assist each other

Elizabeth: uhm-uhm

Ms Mbuli: because it is not only us, so sometimes you hear some of the teachers or those who are teaching content subjects, Business Management and so on, they also give them summaries to read, read eh...like they open a chapter whatever, they give them, everybody is going to be given chance to read something, a line or two in the class. So they also use to do it

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: and I think it... it's something because they have to know that reading is for all the subjects not only for English

Elizabeth: okay

Ms Mbuli: uhm.

Elizabeth: Uhm... Thank you very much. What about the parents, you mentioned something concerning that some parents discourage the learners even more

Ms Mbuli: yes?

Elizabeth: Have you come across parents who support their learners and how do they support their learners, especially if their learners are struggling to read?

Ms Mbuli: Uhm ... the problem is most of our learners are boarders

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: they are not staying with their parents

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: so parents ... our parents ...we don't know how to put it

Elizabeth: uhm

Ms Mbuli: but they are just ignorant

- Elizabeth: Okay
- Ms Mbuli: call them to parent meetings, they never turn up. So you really don't know what is the relationship, may be during the holiday; and I also didn't ask them, because what I used to tell them is that 'when you go home don't and sit there without even doing anything, even an outdated newspaper, anything, you just read. Don't wait until the school reopens then you start reading for the first time after two weeks because reading need practice, you have to read whatever'. But I didn't ask them how their parents assist them. **[PARENTS WHOSE KIDS STRUGGLE TO READ, DO NOT ATTENDING MEETINGS]**
- Elizabeth: uh
- Ms Mbuli: so I really don't know
- Elizabeth: okay
- Ms Mbuli: Because we and our parents
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Ms Mbuli: we don't communicate
- Elizabeth: okay
- Ms Mbuli: because it's our learners, with us here, and they, there [pointing, all laugh] so they [laughter] they really don't contribute. **[PARENTS SEEING SUPPORTING LEARNERS AS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHERS]**
- Elizabeth: Okay, uhm! Alright madam, I am really very grateful
- Ms Mbuli: yes
- Elizabeth: we have come to the end of our ... interview
- Ms Mbuli: uhm
- Elizabeth: and ... let me take this opportunity to thank you very much. You have really, really made my day [laughter]. You have helped me ... a lot
- Ms Mbuli: yes
- Elizabeth: So thank you very much.
- Ms Mbuli: Welcome.

THE END OF MBULI'S

APPENDIX 4
STIMULATED RECALL

APPENDIX 4a: Mr RHINO's

**TRANSCRIPTION OF A STIMULATED RECALL BETWEEN MS
SIMANGA AND MR. RHINO OF JABA SCHOOL**

DATE: 19 March 2008

VENUE: Katima Mulilo

TIME: 14:30 – 16:30

NB: [Mr Rhino gave me this pseudo name to be used in this research. It is only the two of us who know who he really is].

Elizabeth: Good afternoon Mr Rhino?

Mr Rhino: Good afternoon maam.

Elizabeth: I will start by introducing myself again; my name is Elizabeth Simanga, a part time student at Rhodes University doing MEd, which is Masters in Education in English Language Teaching MEd (ELT). Eh...we have just observed what we recorded on the video concerning your lessons. First of all I would like you to introduce yourself and if possible explain to me about your initial training in language teaching or English language teaching in relation to our topic of the day. Firstly let me remind you about our topic of the day, the topic as you saw in the letter I wrote to you is '*Teaching struggling adolescent readers in the semi rural Namibian schools: A case study*'.

So the first question is if you could please introduce yourself and explain about your initial training?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much eh...Ms Simanga. My name is Mr Rhino. Eh... I did my teaching training at one of the educational institutions in our region, which is eh...Caprivi College of Education for three years majoring in English language teaching. Eh...during my training I ...did all the skills, all the language skills namely, reading skills, speaking, listening, writing and grammar/usage skills.

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Rhino: Eh...also I have been teaching for 15 years and 10 of the 15 years I was teaching as a language teacher that is focusing on the Grades 8 to 10. **[NUMBER OF YEARS: teaching experience in the target subject and grade].**

Elizabeth: Uhm. Eh... the next question, I just want you to explain to me about the way you selected the grade that we observed for this research?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Eh... looking at your, at the title or a topic of your research that triggered me to pick up eh... this class because this is where eh... quite a number of learners are struggling in terms of reading abilities.

Elizabeth: I see. Eh...I also observed that as you can see from... even though it doesn't is isn't visible in the video but I observed that your learners were arranged in the U-shape style, why did you arrange your learners in this style in which they are sited and if you could maybe answer this with regards how it helps the struggling learners and so on?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much eh... first of all; I think eh... classroom organization plays a major role in teaching. The way a class is set up would indicate to who-ever comes as to what type of learners are being dealt with. Again first and foremost the U-shape was eh... initiated for eye contact purposes, that is very, very important because I can see all learners and they can all see me, so that is very important eye contact. Also if you observed very closely these learners are paired meaning the, they work in twos or threes. **[THE IMPORTANCE OF CLASSROOM ORGANISATION: a strategy that provides eye contact between learners and the teacher; and in pairs].**

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Rhino: So between the two learners one is eh...better-off than the other. So the one who is struggling would rely on the better-off, you know for support in terms of reading exercise.

Elizabeth: How do you think they will support each other?

Mr Rhino: Eh... say [scratches his throat] this child who has a problem, who cannot read would always relay on the friend; ask the friend to assist – say for example maybe it is a problem of pronunciations,

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Rhino: the friend who is better-off will always indicate to the struggling friend this is how we do it, this is how we pronounce the word, this is how it must be done, so that is

why you see the learners are paired and the reason for that is support. **[THE IMPORTANCE OF CLASSROOM ORGANISATION: Pairing a struggling reader with a competent reader provides support to the one struggling].**

Elizabeth: I see. Throughout my observations I observed that you had vocabulary terms written either on the board or chart and requested learners to do either of the following: eh... they could be requested to read the questions first discuss them then reread the text again or you could ask learners some questions based on the previous lessons or you could ask learners to define the terms and the answered; wrote their answers as they were giving their answers you wrote their answers on the board. Why did you follow these strategies and how does it assist those who are struggling to read?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Ehm... a reading lesson has three parts or three stages and these stages are very important in terms of eh... reading abilities. First and foremost you find that you have the pre-reading stage. This is where you prepare learners for the actual reading that is why you realise that you could either start with a vocab exercise just to prepare the learners you know to get to know what they are about to do. So that is very, very important you warm them up at eh... you know, in the first place. Secondly, we have the actual reading now, after they have mastered may be the new vocab or the seemingly difficult words, then we come to the actual reading. This is where now they do the actual reading now. It's, it's either silent reading you know, reading for detail or intensive reading. This is where now they can eh... read aloud, eh...this is where they can read for you know comprehension or read to answer comprehension questions; this is now [the] actual [reading]. Ehm... the last stage is post, this is where now learners are assessed to see if the competencies set have been attained and this is where a teacher would either ask or questions or give learners a written comprehension questions or ask them to retell the story or summarise the story. **[THE PURPOSE OF THE THREE STAGES OF A READING LESSON: the Pre-, the while or guided- and the post-reading and the functions of vocabulary].**

Elizabeth: Thank you. What is the other function of vocabulary apart from preparing the learner for what they will hear, what do you think is the function of vocabulary?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much, eh... in a language life vocabulary is part of our weapons when we speak we need a lot of vocab so learners need to have as, as, as much as possible or as many as possible you know vocab eh... repertoires that will help them for speeches that would also help them for examination purposes. They will not

struggle because they, they will come across some of the words that they have learned. Also eh... it improves their writings skills you know, learners will not suffer vocab disease because they have a lot of words to use in their writings. So these are some of eh... you know basic reasons why vocabulary expansion is important. **[THE PURPOSE OF THE THREE STAGES OF A READING LESSON: the Pre-, the while or guided- and the post-reading and the functions of vocabulary].**

Elizabeth: Is this why I realise that even in listening, in writing lessons you had, you made sure that the learners started with the definitions of the terminologies that they might come across?

Mr Rhino: Yes that is why, you know all the time be it eh... a listening lesson, be it a writing lesson, vocabulary is part of our daily business so we do that to help them to acquire as many vocabularies as possible. **[THE IMPORTANCE OF THE THREE STAGES OF ANY READING LESSON: the Pre-, the while or guided- and the post-reading and the functions of vocabulary].**

Elizabeth: Uhm. I also realized that you sometimes asked learners to read either individually, in pairs or in groups. And sometimes, you yourself read aloud for them. What was the purpose for doing this?

Mr Rhino: Okay. Individually that is very important you know to promote eh...learners' self esteem. Learners must know that they are in school for themselves, on their own, so there are times that they are given individual work eh... to help them learn on their own. When it comes to team work or collaborative activities it is also important because when they work in pairs they are able to share ideas and learn from you know each other. Also I come in as a teacher to give them examples, better example so that they can copy from me. They eh...the monitor or the facilitator; it is my duty also to, to give them examples especially when, when they are stuck it's important that I come in to give them clues, to give them guidelines so that they can follow you know appropriately. **[THE PURPOSE FOR INDIVIDUAL, PAIR OR GROUP WORK IN TEACHING READING AND THE READING LED BY THE TEACHER: to help them become self-sufficient, share ideas with others and so learn from them and to provide learners with better examples of the pronunciation].**

- Elizabeth: Thank you, you referred in your answer just now to eh... learners developing self confidence, now how does group work or reading in pairs eh... how do you think does it improve the self esteem or self confidence of the learners?
- Mr Rhino: Thank you very much eh... group work, proper group work you realise that every member in each group has a task so the, there is nothing like hiding you know at the back of your friend because you know you have a task – either reporting what the group is discussing or eh... minute taking, you be a secretary or you either chair you know. So they share the responsibilities so that will definitely eh... create some sense of self confidence in them.
- Elizabeth: Uhm. Eh...the other thing that I saw was that after discussing the vocabulary/terminology you requested the learners to write them down, then they should go home and then write those words in sentences so that they use them to express their meaning. Why do you think this is necessary?
- Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. One of the competencies in our English language syllabus eh... second language is that learners should acquire a lot of vocabulary and not just mastering it but they should be able to use it either in speech or in writing and that I have to do otherwise I would not you know eh... attain my basic competencies. So I follow syllabus guideline that is why I do that.
- Elizabeth: Eh... the other thing I realised was during the lesson where, lesson 2 where you came with the beautiful drawings that you drew and these were showing some animals. You did a lot of activities on these using the chat in one lesson. You started with the picture themselves the learners where requested to eh...study the picture then describe the animals in the pictures. And as they were generating the ideas you kept on writing the ideas down, whether the ideas given by learners correct or wrong you just put them on the board. Then you led some general terms to language usage. The other thing you did was to write and define new vocabulary from the passage with the learners that you identified yourself as a teacher. Then you led learners into prediction. So they are almost 4 to 5 activities that you did which was a listening lesson but these was just before they could come to the listening activities itself. Can you describe to me the importance of such a situation?
- Mr Rhino: Thank you very much, eh... I think eh...we are blessed with the new syllabus eh... nowadays we talk of eh...integration of skills. So it does not matter whether in your main eh... you main skill is listening or writing eh... a teacher has a freedom to integrate skills that's why you could see that eh... we covered quite a number of items although it was a listening lesson but we have to cover eh... grammar piece,

we have to cover quite a number of items in one lesson before we you know we went to the actual listening eh... part of a lesson so that was infect interpreting the skills. **[SKILLS INTEGRATION USED AS A STRATEGY: it saves time and allows the teacher to cover a lot of work].**

Elizabeth: So this is some of the strategy that you use?

Mr Rhino: Yes these are some of the strategies that I use. You will find that instead of covering one skill, main skill in a lesson I would cover about two or three which is an advantage to me eh... with my scheme of work you know - its paired up so it is an advantage to the teacher and also an advantage to the learners. You cover many items in one lesson and there are mastered. **[POLICY: NEW SYLLABUS: in which skills are integrated makes teachers' work much easier].**

Elizabeth: Thank you. A learner was asked to read out in lesson one. It was clearly visible that he was struggling to read aloud for example, he couldn't pronounce the word 'electronically'. However you allowed him to read up to the end of the paragraph, why?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Disturbing or interrupting a learner who is reading is a crime. That child would either eh... faint or start crying, so better not disturb a child who is reading, wait until this person has finished, then you can only do that or correct his/her mistakes during a correction slot eh... stage. This is where you come in now with the general problems discovered or identified in lesson now you sum up everything. Because if you disturb that child you develop some kind of fear 'Ok, now I'm spotted to be eh... the useless child in this class. Every time I try to read the teacher stops me'. So that child will be traumatised. Whenever it comes to reading there will be no participation from that particular child. So to avoid that don't disturb or interrupt a child who is busy. **[INTERRUPTION: needs to be avoided at all cost as it discourages or de-motivates learners; it puts them on spot. It is better to have a stage for general error correction].**

Elizabeth: I see. So in other words you think if you interrupt a child, that child will lose the self esteem and become de-motivated. Is self-esteem and motivation is important with regard to struggling adolescent readers especially?

Mr Rhino: That is very, very important you know a 'thank you' can do a lot. So if this child is de-motivated that will be for life if it's not changed. So it is better that you motivate this child no matter how you know, how she/he struggles

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Rhino: Give in a thank you, thank you for that keep it up then that child will feel that 'Ok, I'm part of the class, I'm also a normal human being so I must keep on trying' that is very important. Motivation plays a major role in education. **[MOTIVATION AND APPRECIATION OF LEARNERS' CONTRIBUTIONS: is very important so as to encourage and not traumatise learners].**

Elizabeth: Okay. How does describing or learning to read the pictures, to describe the pictures for example assist with the struggling adolescent learners?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much eh...a picture is eh... some sort eh... of stimuli. It invokes curiosity even the dullest child in this world if ever there is, that picture will force him/her to even you know to, to, to even utter a single word. That child will try because the picture will force him/her to say something – 'Ok I see may be a duck, or I see a lion'; at least that child will be able to do something in the class. So a picture is some sought of stimuli just to invoke your know curiosity in learners. **[TEACHING MEDIA: are used as a form of stimuli to provoke the learners' interest].**

Elizabeth: Another eh...strategy that I observed was for you as a teacher or the facilitator to assist learners to take some guesses or same predictions is this a helpful strategy or not?

Mr Rhino: It is quite helpful, because eh...predictions are part of language learning. Eh... if they see a picture they can eh...you know, they can make up, they can make up or come up with a vision already. Eh...they can conclude what will happen at the end of the story just by studying the pictures. So prediction and guessing is part of language learning, they are very important tools, especial for facilitates. **[PREDICTION AND GUESSING AS A STRATEGY: when combined with teaching media they assist learners to have an image in their mind, and thus enhance understanding].**

Elizabeth: Eh...I also observed in one of the lessons even though unfortunately it is not visible from the video, eh... it seems the video recorder was pausing and cutting here and there and then the cut this part. You once asked the learners when you where discussing about the computer viruses. You asked a question and on realising that the learners couldn't answer you, you rephrased the question and brought the, the question that was abstract into there own situation by referring to them when you referred to the computer virus. You rephrased it and asked them that what is, after asking 'What is a computer virus?' and then you said 'What other viruses do you

remember'. Why do you think it is necessary to rephrase a question as well as to bring something that is abstract into a matter of, a concrete something they can relate to... the learners can relate to?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Eh... one important teaching strategy is eh... you know, for a facilitator if learners are stuck then you can bring them to what they already know, you know, from known to unknown. So that will help them to link the new situation to the already known situation. That is why I brought in you know the other viruses that they know and they, they came in with answers like you know the HI Virus and then from that they linked computer viruses to the HI Virus which attacks human beings and that already eh...gave them a crystal clear clue you know to come up with you know suggestions and guesses. So is very important that learners are given what they already know to link what they know to the unknown so that they can get to the answers. **[RELATING INFORMATION TO LEARNERS'LIFE: provides learners with necessary linkages and building blocks between the known to the unknown and thus assist with their engagement and build motivation]**

Elizabeth: You also sometimes gave learners same reasons for learning something, for example knowing when and how to use contractions. Why did you do it that way?

Mr Rhino: Eh... everything in this world happens for a reason.

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Rhino: A lesson does not just take place in a vacuum. So it is important that learners question as to why they do something eh... that is part of syllabus objectives and competencies. They need to know why they do something – the benefits involved. I mean it is no good that I keep quiet and by knowing why they are doing something that will also trigger participation, it trigger participation and they will participate fully as they know 'we are not doing this for fun, but we are doing this for future life'. **[LEARNERS NEED TO KNOW WHY THEY DO THINGS: this will make them see the importance of such activities and regard them seriously].**

Elizabeth: In other words they are going to see the importance of ...

Mr. Rhino: Yes.

Elizabeth: doing a certain thing ...

Mr Rhino: Yes, yes.

Elizabeth: Yes. Uhm, the other one was that you gave the learners a passage for example then asked them to prepare by reading the passage silently before the individually read it aloud. Why?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Eh... reading a passage silently is part of preparation for reading aloud. As they read silently they will come across stumbling blocks like may be new words they are seeing for first time. They will share ideas as they are silently reading. Then they get to know how to go about those words as they are reading silently and they will be fully prepared to read aloud after they have prepared themselves silently. That is why it is important that they first internalise, you know, the passage before they can read it aloud to their friends. So that's part of preparation and part of kicking away the fear, ok, so they get to know the passage first silently before they voice it out. **[SILENT READING: is used as a preparatory stage for reading aloud; struggling readers get assistance from peers during silent reading and therefore their confidence gets boosted up. Learners become active at the end and learn].**

Elizabeth: In lesson 5 you described a scenario. How helpful is this as far as struggling adolescent readers are concerned?

Mr Rhino: Eh...thank you very much. Scenarios are very important in the sense that they also invoke curiosity because as, as soon as you give a scenario learners will start to assimilate it and digest it and in the end they will be able to say what the scenario is all about. They will come up with answers. Never mind the answers are wrong but some of the learners will get the right answers in the end. So that also helps for motivation, I mean for participation purposes because after the scenario they will be eager to share with you what they think about thee situation. **[SCENARIOS: adds motivation that leads to active participation].**

Elizabeth: So it's as you said, it is going to also add to the, to their motivation?

Mr. Rhino: Yes.

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Rhino: ... it will for sure

Elizabeth: Uhm. Now we come to some general questions, general observations. I also observed that you were giving the learners some photocopies, you photocopied some pamphlets and then you gave them to use these in most of your lesson. Can you explain the reasons behind this? Is it because, may be you are not provided with some resources or what?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Eh... resources are one of the major hiccups you know in eh... in education especially in rural schools because we do not have well you know stocked library also we are very far from book eh...sellers. So the reason for me using copied activities or worksheets is that eh... we do not have sufficient

textbooks to use, so I rely on copied wor...worksheets. **[RESOURCES ARE SCARCE: especially in rural schools – libraries are not well stocked and there are no bookstores around].**

Elizabeth: You were referring to the fact that resources are a problem especially in the rural areas. Is the government not eh... supporting in this situation?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Eh... the ministry of education eh... in particular is trying its level best to stock the schools with required materials but unfortunately eh... we do not get eh... books that would match our syllabuses. So for example if you need eh...an exercise on eh... grammar piece, to be taught in a communicative approach then you have to adapt such an activity. Because we do not have books prepared to match the new syllabuses. And that is a bit of a problem when especially eh... with eh...inexperienced teachers, that would give them headache. But for experienced teacher that is not a problem because eh...one can improvise. Eh... a well trained teacher will not suffer wherever he find himself/herself. Because I have used the word improvise say for instance you have one worksheet and learners must read that text

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Rhino: eh... and they are no photocopying facilities, so a well trained teacher or a veteran teacher would first of all eh...write the passage on the board and ask, ask the learners to copy then all the learners will have the passage at one go. And eh...this lesson can be used maybe eh... after two days you have; you have the text or passage. So that is why I am saying the ministry is helping as much as it can but if you do not have the skills of improvising then you are likely to suffer. **[TEACHERS NEED TO BE CREATIVE AND KNOW HOW TO IMPROVISE: to counteract the scarcity and inadequacy of resources].**

Elizabeth: Thank you. Eh...you [are] reminding me of something that I almost forgot. You are talking of being trained to improvise, did you, you are referring to teachers that the teachers should improvise. Was your training in such a way that it assisted you so that if you kind, find yourself in such a situation you can improvise and may be to link this as well I will also bring you back to the first question of your training. We are talking about the struggling adolescent reader. Eh... did they also train you to handle adolescent readers?

Mr. Rhino: Thank you very much. I mean, the first question on improvisation eh... luckily we were blessed we, we had very good eh...trainers. Eh... I remember my educational

courses I did that eh... that eh... we will; we would be given eh...scenarios or problems to solve.

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Rhino: So for example you find yourself in a rural school where there are no rulers for example. What do you do, would you stare at the learners and say we are not going to measure today because there are no rulers? So we were taught how to make rulers using sticks or planks. You can use as a ruler making measurements and the like. The sum that, I mean the same would apply to language teaching if, if there are no stories for example and I am the only teacher will the story book then I have to improvise. I will ask my learners to copy chapter by chapter in their exercise books and we will have the story then so that is improvising. Eh... if you don't have to wait for the government to bring everything if you know how important, you know, eh... learning is; you definitely resort to improvisation or improvising.

[GOVERNMENT PROVIDES WHAT IT CAN BUT IT ISN'T ENOUGH. THE ANSWER IS TO IMPROVISE, BUT IT REQUIRES TRAINING: teachers who are trained to improvise will have skills to do so but not untrained ones].

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Rhino: And secondly coming to remedial teaching or giving support to struggling learners I did that partly – I did remedial teaching partly. Eh... remedial comes from the word remedy meaning making eh...a situation better.

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Rhino: So that we did luckily, for I think eh... a couple of months and I know what it means when it comes to remedial teaching. First of all you have to analyze the situation, you must know what the problems really are before you can come up with your remedy. So that would mean eh...finding out or identifying a problem would be the first stage and then analysing it. You must know what the causes are; the roots causes of the problem before you can you know give remedy. It is very important – the root causes. If you know why the child is struggling it is easy for you to give support and if you don't know then you will not be unable to help this child.

[REMEDIAL: training on how to conduct it and what it entails is important in order for one to assist the learners. This teacher was trained to do so].

Elizabeth: Uhm. So you mentioned something back, you have been teaching for almost 15 years and I take it during your teaching experience you might have been a subject head at one of the school or the other. So in such cases you might have observed

your own colleagues the teachers. How many could you think out of 5 teachers that you came across seem to have been taught how to do compensatory teaching?

Mr Rhino: Uhm, in my 15 years of eh...teaching I have never come across a teacher vested with eh... compensatory teaching. I can't recall but eh... luckily I were able to come in and give the support. [VERY FEW KNOW WHAT REMEDIAL OR COMPEATORY REALLY ENTAILS: the reasons for this is partly ignorance on the side of the teachers.].

Elizabeth: Yes

Mr Rhino: Yes.

Elizabeth: I think it is eh..., it might be, one of the reasons might be that the course that you underwent you might be the only one at the school who went through that course while the rest of them might have been trained somewhere else?

Mr Rhino: Not really, I think eh... it could be ignorance because some of the teachers that eh... came across went to the same eh... college

Elizabeth: Okay.

Mr Rhino: that I went to. So there is no reason why eh... they do not have the skills

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Rhino: I think it is a matter of ignorance. [VERY FEW KNOW WHAT REMEDIAL OR COMPEATORY REALLY ENTAILS: the reason for this is partly ignorance on the side of the teachers.].

Elizabeth: I see. I also observed that both the inside, inside your classroom for a example you left some posters that you used during the lessons even though they were not those which were ready-made. But the posters that creating yourselves, were left in the class. How important is leaving those posters in the class towards the stru... struggling adolescent readers?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Eh... I think reason for that is to sustain learning. Learners will be contact with the posters and they will support the learning – they will use them for reading, they will even eh... create the discussions, 'ok let's, let's go over the poster number 10 which the teacher has given us' and that you know invokes learning. It is very, very important other than a bare classroom.

Elizabeth: Uhm. The other thing that I would like to ask you concerns teaching reading at the secondary level. Other secondary teachers believe that teaching learners how to read is the duty of the Lower Primary Teachers. The learners as if they come to the

secondary, they should be well prepared that they can read on their own. What are your views of this?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Teaching learners how to read eh... is not the task of the Lower Primary people alone. It's the task of all the teachers from grade 1 to 12. Eh... I think what eh... what changes now is the level of the difficulties. You realise that the Grade 1 will have may be eh... one to two syllables to read and as they go further the level difficulty changes. So the issue of saying eh... this is the task of eh... the foundation group is I think that is very wrong because teaching how to read is the skill that doesn't come to an end. It does not come to an end, so from grade 5 to 7 they get into intensive reading skills. Now they are taught how to skim, how to scan, you name all these skills intensive reading. And eh...the grade 8 to 12 they also continue with these skills but now eh... what changes would be the level difficulty and may be approach that is what changes but is the task of all teachers. **[TEACHING READING: is the task of all the teachers. What changes is the level of difficulty].**

Elizabeth: Thank you very much. Eh... can you explain to me some of the strategies that you used to assist the struggling adolescent readers and why you use such strategies may be you have got some other strategies you did not mention earlier?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. I think eh... the first strategy is to eh... make sure that these learners are encouraged to read a lot that is very, very important. They are encouraged to read a lot. Eh... these learners especially the, the ones that I have, have all the freedom to see me whenever they are free you know for magazines, newspapers. I really make sure that I have plenty of stuff preserved for them to read. Also I, I have made an appointment with eh...the librarian and we got into an agreement that these learners must be supported by the librarian as much as he can. They must get a lot of materials from him. Eh...also these learners must be encouraged to read to their parents whenever they can – at home reading from the bible, a text from the bible or reading eh...letters to their parents, you know, some of the parents are illiterate and they use that opportunity to read to their parents. Also they can ask eh... their elderly brothers, elderly sisters to read to them and they listen and after listening they retell what they were listening to. So these are some of the strategies that I use and I can see that they are really helpful because every time you see them coming to my office 'Teacher I have finished reading this magazine I think I need a new one'. 'Ok, before I give you please can you tell me what you have read about?'

- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Mr Rhino: then eh... they will go into a reporting. 'Ok, I read a story about you know Nelson Mandela eh...'s birthday party and the like, you know, explain
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Mr Rhino: before I give him or her, a new magazine. I must make sure that this child has read. I can only know by asking
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Mr Rhino: ok, give me an oral report
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Mr Rhino: or after giving me an oral report I want you to go and write a summary on the one of the article that you read and bring to me for marking assessment. Those are some of the strategies that I use. **[ENCOURAGEMENT AS A STRATEGY: done verbally and for a purpose. Learners can be encouraged to read to illiterate people. They can also ask advanced siblings to read to them so that they listen then retell what they listened to. After borrowing a magazine, the teacher request for feedback to make sure they read. This can be done briefly and verbally].**
- Elizabeth: Thank you very much. Eh... before I come to the last three questions. What do you think are the causes of learners reaching the secondary level still struggling to read? For example when I was a school principal in one of the schools, I came across three brothers who were unable to read. The only thing they could read and write were their names. Why do you think were the causes of such kind of a situation?
- Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. I think eh... the first thing would be eh... the causes, the root causes would emanate from the teachers. Eh... teachers in the sense that if a teacher does not understand his syllabus that can be a clear factor because I don't think these learners were dull because if they could, if there were able to read their names then it means they eh... they had abilities to recognize letters. So the problem here could be eh...the way these learners were brought up meaning how they were handled by these teachers up to the secondary level.
- Elizabeth: Eh?
- Mr Rhino: So our approaches as teachers also are very detrimental [contributing?] to eh... you know learning problems. If we do not understand what we are doing then this will be the outcome. **[TEACHERS MAY BE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO LEARNERS' READING PROBLEMS TOO].**

Elizabeth: Thank you. You referred to the syllabus which brings me to the next question. Every country has got some policy documents like the *English Second Language Syllabus* that we are using. We also have the *Pilot Curriculum for Secondary Schools* which is being replaced or replaced very soon by *The Curriculum for Basic Education*. How useful are these documents to you as a teacher in other words; are they easy to understand and be able to implement?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. Our Second Language Syllabus that is for English eh... is very attainable, a language used is very clear and it is easy to *[NB: the cassette got full and has to be turned over to the other side here]*. The syllabus for English Second Language is attainable.

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Rhino: in the sense that eh... it is, it's quite comprehensive, easy to follow, eh...the language used in that document is simple. Eh... it is a matter of eh... studying the document seriously, eh... giving attention to it, then you will use it happily, it is not a problem. **[POLICY DOCUMENTS LIKE THE ENGLISH L2 2007 IS EASY TO IMPLIMENT].**

Elizabeth: Okay, thank you very much. Eh...Mr Rhino, eh... I would like to give you this chance to give me some more ideas if you have got, still have got any, with regards our topic for the day.

Mr Rhino: Eh... thank you very much. I think eh... in the first place, let me say that eh... handling struggling readers is not eh... a child's play. It's, it's quite complex because you are dealing with eh...human beings with emotions and that can be a problem. So if, if you identify struggling learners eh... in reading, the first thing is to make that they handled tenderly, meaning with tender care because if they happen to exposed negatively, then they will not be assisted. So the first thing is to make sure that these learners are cared for. Then secondly, once you get to know that okay, these learners are struggling, it is important that eh...you conduct a mini research – find out what the root causes are. **[HOW STRUGGLING READERS SHOULD BE HANDLED BY TEACHERS].**

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Rhino: Because this will lead you to eh... may be problems like: could be a natural, a natural problem, could be something that they have inherited from their parents, it could be a psychological problem and eh... for example, dyslexia, dyslexia is a serious reading problem in which learners read letters in reverse order, and that would need, you know, special, eh.... special people, specialists. **[TEACHERS**

**NEED TO DIAGNOS THE CAUSE OF THE READING PROBLEM – I
should have asked how teachers may do this if they don't have skills].**

Elizabeth: Eh?

Mr Rhino: So it's, it's important that we get to know what problems are

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Rhino: before we can assist.

Elizabeth: Okay.

Mr Rhino: but this is how we were trained

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Rhino: And if you cannot handle a situation yourself, then you refer, you refer your problem to specialists; they will come in and tell you how to go about the situations.

Elizabeth: I see.

Mr Rhino: So these are important, I mean strategies or ways of handling struggling learners. But more, more importantly is the fact that once they are identified and you know how to help, make sure that you have eh... an action plan; an action plan where you will have the activities and the target dates. And eh... the parents must know what is going on. That is very important, they must know because they must also assist wherever they can – monitor the progress of the learner's reading and also give feedback on how, on the progress of the learners at home. . **[HOW STRUGGLING READERS SHOULD BE HANDLED BY TEACHERS; parents need to know the action taken for them to monitor].**

Elizabeth: Thank you. You just mentioned that the parents are supposed to be involved and assist. Most of our parents in this region cannot read and write. How do you think they will be able to assist their struggling learners or children?

Mr Rhino: Thank you very much. I, I can remember, I can recall very well eh... I think twenty years ago, eh... my father never went to school. But eh... he made sure that whatever we learnt from school he monitors. He had a very good strategy, if he receives a letter from the local court, he would wait for us. He will not call any other person from [giggles]

Elizabeth: Uhm

Mr Rhino: nearby eh... village

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Rhino: He would wait for us just to test – first of all he would ask an elderly person who can read, to read for him privately. Then he wants to make sure whether we are going to read the same, you know, eh... read the same message or give the same

message to him. So he would test us like that: 'eh... you go and have your lunch please I want all of you to come here please, I have a problem that I want you to solve for me'. Then he would give me this letter 'eh... I received this letter from eh... a court so I don't know the content as you know I cannot read, that is why I sent you to school, so can you read for me?' . **[ILLITERATE PARENTS CAN STILL MONITOR THEIR CHILDREN'S WORK].**

Elizabeth: Uhm.

Mr Rhino: Then I would read. If the message does not concur with the first read then he would say there are problems. You see, you will see him going to the school to talk to the teachers. So parents can play a very important role regardless whether they are illiterate or what, they have a bigger role to play.

Elizabeth: I definitely agree with you on that one. I can also still remember my own, my own father. What he used to do is that when you come back is that he will also ask; try to find out, apart from reading the letters or trying to write the letters for him; which was the thing that I didn't like very much because I didn't, I, I didn't like listening to somebody's emotions and so on. But he will also find out whether you did a test that day and if you did a test, did you become the first one in the class or what, to the extent that he really encouraged me to concentrate very well eh...eh...whatever I was doing at school. He could also find that, he might even eh... buy something for you as a gift because you either obtained a 'D' those days which they thought it was a distinction when we changed from the ...Transvaal Education to Windhoek Education or the National education. So really it is true, its, I can agree with you that it is not really a problem that just because they don't know how to read – that encouragement, that support will make a lot or, or push the learner or show the learner that their parents really care. So, unless you still have something else, Mr Rhino I would like to take this opportunity to thank you very much for the work that you have done, eh...it was such a lot of work, especially since we had to re-record this lesson because of technology barriers and things like that. I really appreciate your work and you effort and energy you put into our project to make it comes to an end. Eh... this is the end of this part, but I still be in contact, I will try to make sure that when I have written this, eh... transcribed what we have written now and report on it send you if possible, I will try my level best to send you the report so that you can confirm or changed or indicate where you think I might have ina...ana... analysed your ideas wrongly or maybe you have got something that you think I left out. So thank you very much.

Mr Rhino: You are welcome, eh...Ms Simanga eh... I would like to wish you the best of luck
Elizabeth: Thank you.
Mr Rhino: in your studies
Elizabeth: Uhm, thank you, thank you very much.

THE END

**TRANSCRIPTION OF THE STIMULATED RECALL BETWEEN MS
SIMANGA AND MS MWINTE OF LUVUMA SECONDARY SCHOOL**

DATE: 15 March 2008

VENUE: Katima Mulilo

TIME: 14:00 – 16:00

[NB: Before the interview started, we agreed with the teacher on the pseudo name we would use for her. She thus also refers to herself in cassette by this name. She selected the name herself].

Elizabeth: Eh... good afternoon Ms Mwinte. My name is Elizabeth Simanga as we were already introduced. I'm a part time student at Rhodes University and I'm busy with my data collection. The topic of my research is '*Teaching struggling adolescent readers in the semi rural Namibian schools: A case study*'. My first question is that I would like you to introduce yourself and to be more specifically to explain to me about your initial training as English Second Language Teacher.

Ms Mwinte: Thank you. [She scratches her throat]. I'm Ms Mwinte as introduced [faint]. Yes I'm Ms Mwinte as already introduced and with regard to English language teaching, English as a second language teaching; I have about, I've gone three courses. Now I'm in my fourth course: two-year degree all based in English as a major subject. But I did it generally. I don't think I also have a specific knowledge on how to handle struggling learners but because I'm in such a situation I have to try and help where I can. **[TEACHING SARs: teachers have no know of how to teach such learners]**.

Elizabeth: Thank you Ms Mwinte eh... you are saying that you are currently not prepared, you feel you were not prepared by your initial training that you undergone as an English teacher to handle struggling adolescent readers. Nonetheless eh... I would like to find out whether you have got struggling reader, readers in your class and how do you handle them for example?

Ms Mwinte: Yes in every learning situation we will have such learners whether we like or not and as teachers we need to use some strategies to help them. Like in my case I'm trying to encourage my learners to read newspapers, magazine and ask from friends where they find difficulties – like if we have a reading aloud lesson, when it comes

then I have to ask them to read if the fail then their friends can help also.

[READING STRATEGY AND RESOURCES USED: (1) encouragement by teachers, encourage peers to assist them; use authentic materials to teach them].

Elizabeth: Okay thank you. Eh... you said you are not prepared in other words do you mean to tell me that you were not trained to do compensatory teaching and now you are just using your own initiatives?

Ms Mwinte: I would say that is the case, we were trained; I was trained generally to handle the English lesson. Eh...so when you come across a situation as such as a teacher you have to do something to help the situation, to correct the situation.

[REMEDIAL/COMPESATORY TEACHING: teachers trained as content teachers only].

Elizabeth: Can you please just tell me how many years have you taken teaching Grade 9?

Ms Mwinte: It's about 10 years or so.

Elizabeth: You are having 10 years of teaching experience in grade?

Ms Mwinte: Yes

Elizabeth: Alright, eh... as I can observe from your lessons even from day one to the last day of our lessons that we were observing, you can see the learners are in specific groups. Can you please explain to me firstly how you selected these group and secondly how you arrange these learners. Do they change positions or do they remain sited in the same groups and how important is the way they are grouped with regard eh... struggling adolescent readers?

Ms Mwinte: For the reason that in the class I was handling the (sign...inaccessible) way of saving. Eh... what happens is that is their class their normal class and I am their class teacher. And the way they are grouped and the numbers of learner with such a problem – I think as you have observed are a few. So the way they are sited I'm happy because they are those who can help them according to their groups. I did not decide on the grouping because I don't see any problem as they are, they have arranged themselves. **[CLASSROOM ORGANISATION AS A TEACHING STRATEGY: learners were allowed to arrange themselves and thus they are able to help and assist one another when reading problems arise].**

Elizabeth: Also in other words you have given them the opportunity to group themselves because I saw they were, they are two groups of eh... ladies only and then maybe 3 or 4 groups of boys only or I mean two or three groups of girls only and then the

other groups of three of boys only and only one group has got a mixture of boys and girls?

Ms Mwinte: Yes the, that was their situation I did not want to interrupt the, their arrangement they have decided to take because sometime when you interrupt it might mean that the person you are going to pull from that group putting her or him in that other group might not feel happy.

Elizabeth: Alright, at the beginning of the lesson, the first lesson as you can see and also in some other lesson that are following you wrote terms on the board and asked learners to read them aloud then you asked them, you wanted them to define them while the skill for the day was speaking, listening or writing. I have got three questions on this: how do you think such a strategy would support struggling adolescent readers? The second one, what was the purpose for asking individual learner to read aloud and define the terms. The third one, why was it necessary to have questions in written form as well as writing feedback on the board maybe we should start with the first one. How do you think such a strategy would support eh... struggling adolescent readers?

Ms Mwinte: Okay I decided to write like topics or few words on the chalkboard to help those who are unable to read like you have observed. I could ask one learner to read out the words and if he or she fails to read out the words or pronounce the word correctly, then I could ask the other one to help. I think in such a way those who are unable to read also could see oh 'that word is pronounced in this eh... in this way'. That is the first answer. **[WRITING WORDS ON THE BOARD AND READING ALOUD is used as a strategy; when an advances reader read the word aloud, those struggling learn from them].**

Elizabeth: The second one was: What was the purpose for asking individual learners to read aloud and define the term. I think you have already answered this one and the first question was that, how do you think such strategy would support the struggling adolescent readers?

Ms Mwinte: Yes like I mentioned I said this can help them – those who are unable to read or who does not know what the word is could, they pick it from their friends when they read out the word.

Elizabeth: Uhm, eh... sometimes you wrote questions and then you wrote the feedback that the learners gave, why?

Ms Mwinte: Whenever you are presenting eh... a lesson you have to write things on the board for the learners to assimilate and what happens like you asked why it was a speaking lesson but I wrote something on the board. The thing is that was the main skill and writing the answers or some words on the board it is eh... sub-skill; always we will have something to write whether we are just speaking or what there will be a main skill and the sub-skills will always come. **[FEEDBACK IS WRITTEN on the board to assist with understanding of the lesson's content].**

Elizabeth: Thank you, the first lesson eh...during the first lesson your theme was adult literacy and during the second lesson eh...you continued with the same skill. Can you explain to me why you decide to continue with the same skill?

Ms Mwinte: Point of correction. The topic was the same but the skills were different

Elizabeth: Oh... I mean, I sorry, I mean why did you carry on with the same topic, the same theme: the skill was reading the first one was speaking but you continued with the same topic or theme which is adult literacy?

Ms Mwinte: The topic was adult illiteracy point of correction again.

Elizabeth: Illiteracy not literacy

Ms Mwinte: Not literacy

Elizabeth: I see. Okay, thank.

Ms Mwinte: The reason why I continued, as English teacher I have to decide on what to do per day and I'm not compelled to do a specific task or what ever. The topic could be the same but so long the skill and the objective is different there is no problem. That is why I came up with, continuing with the same topic but as you observed it was handled in a different way. The first day we just talked and the second day we talked to introduce the lesson but in a different way again. Then the read to see whether maybe they are points when they are talking could come in the reading passage which came the following day.

Elizabeth: Eh...is a continuation of a theme eh...important with regards eh...struggling adolescent readers and if yes, how?

Ms Mwinte: Yes it could help, like I mentioned – if there is anything which other learners like what happened; maybe when were eh...speaking when we were covering the speaking skill, some of the learners had even some questions which they did not ask that day then they could come with those questions the following day. So long the skill like I mentioned the skill is different and the objectives will be always different **[THEMATIC TEACHING AS A STRATEGY: helps consolidate and improve**

understanding. However, teachers seem to fail to articulate the theories behind what they do in class].

Elizabeth: Thank you very much. I also realize that you liked asking learners to stand up during reporting or when giving feedback session and those who gave their responses were allowed to sit down. What is the purpose for doing this?

Ms Mwinte: Eh...I have the problem with my learners there are those who do not want to participate. So if I just leave them as they are they could just come and go without participating, so I want everyone to participate. So when they stand up they all want to sit down there will be fighting to give me answers so that they can sit down. **[STRATEGY FOR MOTIVATION: incentive as a form of motivation]**.

Elizabeth: So in other words you are using this strategy as a form of motivation?

Ms Mwinte: Yes.

Elizabeth: Okay, during the listening skill which was done on day three as you seen – you distributed same pamphlets; asked learners to study and read the writing below the cartoons for practice one. At the same time I realize that the question for practice one were not given to the learners instead you dictated the questions to the learners where you give the revise for practice two. Can you please explain yourself this one?

Ms Mwinte: Okay, what happens also in listening, as we are training these learners, this is a daily activity in our daily lives. They are, they will not just be listening to speeches that other people will be asking them things or directions whatever. So there is no problem so long they have the cartoon helped to answer the questions. I could have the cartoons maybe as the part of the listening part then I give them questions. So the reversal that is not a serious problem so long they could they were able to answer the question. I ask the question they answer. **[DICTATION is said in the literature that it helps with spelling – it is of the strategies to teach spelling but the teacher seems not to know this]**.

Elizabeth: Well we are going to carry on Ms Mwinte, eh...the fourth and last lesson was on idioms. One learner, a boy volunteered to read aloud but seems to struggle with reading aloud. It seems he was one of these learners who are struggling in your class. Then you interrupted him and asked someone else to read. Afterwards another girl had the similar problem. However you did not intervene nor did you stop fellow

learners who were trying to assist her. Can you explain why you handled these similar situations in a different ways?

Ms Mwinte: Eh...as a human being you know sometimes other things will just come then you have to react the way you react on that particular situation. I thought the first learner was really eh... struggling and I wanted others to help him. If I, I stopped him that the other person could help maybe while he is following because he had also the, the, the cartoon and the captions which they were reading. And with the other learner I thought she was struggling but a bit better compared to the first one. But I don't have the specific reason for interrupting the first one. But the, when presenting a reading lesson we are not, but eh... teachers are not allowed to interrupt even learners must know that they are not suppose to interrupt the person who is reading if there are any mistakes it is better for fellow friends to note them down – mistakes like pronouncing or whatever and the teacher also could note down them, then we talk after the person has finished reading but when a situation comes sometimes you are going to react differently for no reason.

Elizabeth: Alright. You are saying you are taught or it is thought of policy that you shouldn't intervene. What are your own views, why do you think the, it is necessary that we let the learners eh...go through whatever they are doing without our intervention?

Ms Mwinte: The reasons I think it is like when you interrupt you discourage the learner maybe the learner feels he/she also wants to try or likes to read but only that he/she is struggling. So it is better give her, him/her that chance to do so. **[ERROR CORRECTION DURING READING: a policy not to interrupt a struggling reader; but the teacher seems to know the reason behind it. However, when probed, the teacher comes with one of the reasons. it would seem that sometimes we don't just reflect on certain issues or that our education did not teach us to reflect as during colonial era blacks were not allowed to question anything. This led to many not becoming reflective].**

Elizabeth: I also observed that as you can see from your lessons you were using pamphlets in all your lessons. Is this your choice or were you forced somehow by some eh... circumstances?

Ms Mwinte: I think that one is an indication of a serious problem which schools face. We are not allowed also to make copies especially in textbooks or whatever according to the law but we are forced to do so because we don't have enough resources. That is the only reason why I decided to use handouts and as you realized at the end I could collect all the handouts because I needed to use them with the other classes. So the

problem is resources we don't have enough textbooks. **[PHOTOCOPIES ARE USED AS A STRATEGY TO LIMITED RESOURCES]**.

Elizabeth: Alright eh... you are saying you don't have enough resources. What is the government playing in such a situation are they doing their own part or is it left in the hands of the school to make sure they provide learners with resources like in your case it seems you, you have got a photocopier as the school?

Ms Mwinte: I think the government is trying also but, the, the problem which adds up to this is that our learners also are not eh...careful with the resources which they have. They know they have a few but the way the look after these resources is not very good because if you handout new books this year the following year some of the books might not be in the situation, in the condition to be used again because they are not taken care of them properly. **[LEARNERS ARE SOMEHOW TO BLAME FOR THE POOR CONDITIONS OF BOOKS THAT CONTRIBUTES TO SCHOOLS HAVING LIMITED RESOURCES]**

Ms Elizabeth: I see.

Ms Mwinte: but the government is helping.

Elizabeth: Is really trying its level best.

Ms Mwinte: its best yes.

Elizabeth: Okay, so what do you do as teachers in order to, to educate the learners to take care of their books?

Ms Mwinte: As the school or teachers when a learner like if he/she receives a new book and returns it in a bad condition then they are forced to pay for the book.

Elizabeth: Okay, so they are some precautions ...

Ms Mwinte: Yes.

Elizabeth: that are taken by the school? I observed that both the classroom and the outside walls of the school were without posters, that is which could create a print, which is creating a print poor environment. Even the charts you used in class were later removed form the class. Can you explain why the classroom and the school look so naked?

Ms Mwinte: I think the problem is, I don't know whether I should say it is with teachers or what but like in my situation as the English teacher – the posters which I used or charts which I used in class I could not leave them there because they were supposed to be used again with the next class. So after using these charts with this first class I have to remove them again for safe keeping. **[SHORTAGE OF RESOURCES CONTRIBUTES TO SCHOOL AND CLASSROOMS BEING PRINT-POOR]**.

- Elizabeth: Okay, what about the previous eh...days or months that I wasn't there does it mean that you didn't use any posters and if you did you still can't leave them in the class?
- Ms Mwinte: Yes for safety because like eh...in our situation we use this eh...classroom rotation. Learners are moving from one class to another so it is not safe at least when you have one particular class using that class then you tell them keep these papers safe you know when it is torn, you come and ask them. But if it is in this situation the rotation eh...rotation situa... a rotation system is a problem because you could paste something you come back it is no longer there; you ask, no one is going to admit it is me who did what.
- Elizabeth: Okay, are you telling me that eh... the learners who come to the class you said firstly, you mentioned that it was your, that class that we used was your ...your, you are the class teacher. I thought that learners that you are teaching come to you in that class?
- Ms Mwinte: Yes.
- Elizabeth: So if they come to you in that class all those that you are teaching, irrespective of different subjects that you offer. So how do they come to destroy these, how could they destroy these; the class is your own class learners do come in but they go back, while you remain as the class teacher in the class?
- Ms Mwinte: It is not the matter of remaining in the class what happens is there are times when I have to leave the class because I have an office like I'm eh...running the school library, so most of the time when I'm free and break time whenever I have to leave the classroom and go back to the library where I'm based.
- Elizabeth: I see, you are now telling me you are also a school library, librarian. As a school librarian how do you assist struggling adolescent readers when they visit the school library or you could first of all explain to me if you observe your struggling learners/ readers, struggling adolescent readers visiting your library or if not what are the strategies that you use to assist them?
- Ms Mwinte: All the learners at school are informed about a library they are supposed to be coming whether they are struggling or not but we cannot pinpoint them from the rest of the class if it is a class or group. Say you 5 you should come to the library you have to extend the invitation to everyone so that they can all come.
- Elizabeth: Okay when they come you as a teacher I think you know whom, who of your learners are struggling. What I would like to know is that do you or do you not

sometimes use some mechanism to assist those even though they are among the others since you know that learners A, B, C are struggling?

Ms Mwinte: Uhm...we thought in that case, what happens is all learners who come to the library the only way I could help you know as a teacher again I'm not given free time to attend to these learners but what happens is I I encourage everyone to come and read whether struggling or not. Take a book you read then when we have our BIS classes I could ask them to give a short summary of what they have read to just to see whether they are taking something from the books the read. **[FINDINGS: TEACHERS BEING OVER BURDENED; leaves no time to pay more attention to struggling readers]**

Elizabeth: So are they doing it, are they reading from what you have observed?

Ms Mwinte: Yes they do read.

Elizabeth: And what about the understanding of these books that they read?

Ms Mwinte: There is an indication of understanding that maybe the problem is with time. When you are presenting a lesson you are looking at time. When they take books to go home they do it on their own time. They will struggle but they will read and maybe understand a few things then they come and present to the whole class.

Elizabeth: Ms Mwinte, other secondary teachers believe that teaching learners how to read is the duty of the lower primary teachers. What are your views and beliefs on this issue?

Ms Mwinte: Living this to lower primary teachers won't help us because they will always come – those who are unable or who are struggling to read. When they are at secondary we need to care for them, help them to read also. I don't agree in the idea of maybe living all the blame on the lower primary teachers. It's not their fault that they are not able to read. **[IT IS NOT THE FAULT OF PRIMARY TEACHERS THAT LEARNERS REACH SECONDARY PHASE WITH READING PROBLEMS].**

Elizabeth: Uhm. Do you have other strategies that you use to assist adolescent readers which you may not have used, you may not have mentioned during our discussion?

Ms Mwinte: The only thing I, maybe I do to encourage my learners is to always read. It is not always reading the textbook whatever which can help but they are suppose to read magazine because they are interesting things there which could motivate them. They want to see, they are pictures maybe they want to know what is happening with these pictures. Like these days there is this new magazine "A Move", it is like everyone want to read to know what is happening in that magazine. So I encourage

them to read and to listen to other people like when news reporters are reading the news. That is the way I do it, I don't know whether it is helping but I'm encouraging them to read also.

Elizabeth: How do you think encouraging them to read say if they keep on reading how do you think that reading would assist them?

Ms Mwinte: The reading eh... like when I ask them to read magazines, newspapers or whatever it will help because during, especially during examination will be a problem because they won't have anyone to explain the questions to them. So when they struggle to read it is better that they have time and they know I have to understand this particular question for me to be able maybe to answer the question or to follow the instructions.

Elizabeth: Thank you; let's come to a general one. Every country has policy document like the syllabus, we have got the English Second Language Syllabus; we have got the policy document like the Pilot Curriculum for Secondary Education which is going to be replaced or is in the process to be replaced by The Curriculum for Basic Education. Eh...how useful are these documents to you as a teacher? In other words if you get the syllabus now the one that was implemented in 2006, could someone directly from the university or the college, the college be able to read it and implement it without problem? What are your views? **[POLICY DOCUMENTS DO NOT GIVE TEACHERS PROBLEMS].**

Ms Mwinte: I think like in case of the syllabus it is a very clear document eh... strait forward instructions or information. I think everyone could be able to understand what is happening. The only problem maybe with eh... new teachers or persons from poor performing school, universities and collages is that they are not aware of the...eh...a situation which is there today like, previously we were using eh... English had five periods, this time it is 4; then you have to combine some of the skills so that they are all covered because they are all important.

Elizabeth: Okay. Eh...Ms Mwinte, the last question I would like to ask you is about the causes. We know our learners go through 8 grades before they come to grade 9. What do you think are the causes for learners arriving in grade 9 still struggling to read?

[The first side of the cassette came to an end and had to be turned].

Ms Mwinte: Do I need to continue?

Elizabeth: Uhm, the question that I asked

Ms Mwinte: Yes.

Elizabeth: Eh... on the causes, from the previous uhm... part of the cassette recorder. I was trying to ask you if you have got some ideas on the causes of learners arriving at the secondary level or the secondary phase especially in grade 9, still being unable to read.

Ms Mwinte: Eh... what I think is the causes or the problems might be, may be that learners, as we know people come in different eh... may be I should use packages or whatever; there are those who can pick up things very quickly, others are, we have slow learners [scratches her throat], the reason is that it is not by choice that they, they did not pick up from the early ages, early grades.

Elizabeth: Eh?

Ms Mwinte: That is just about, they are slow.

Elizabeth: They are slow?

Ms Mwinte: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Okay, and what would you do as a teacher in such a situation or what do usually do if you realise that you have got slow learners – like now in your grade, in Grade 9, I realised that there was a transferred learner, how do you handle that child?

Ms Mwinte: Yes, I have about two transferred learners in that class, but the way I see it they are coping, they are trying very hard to, to be on par with the other learners.

Elizabeth: Okay

Ms Mwinte: Uhm.

Elizabeth: Thank you very much Ms Mwinte for the time that I have taken to [from] you. We really struggled to record this but nonetheless you still gave me the opportunity for us to come and do [conduct] our discussions. I am, I really appreciate what you have done for and I am really very, very grateful, thank you very much.

Ms Mwinte: My pleasure.

THE END OF MWINTE'S STIMULATED RECALL

APPENDIX 4c: Mr MUUSA's:

STIMULATED RECALL QUESTIONNAIRE AND ANSWERS

TEACHER: Mr MUUSA

SCHOOL: NAVWI SECONDARY SCHOOL

DATE: 03 JUNE 2008

After observations, I wrote a few questions that were given to Mr Muusa after the lesson observation for clarity. He then answered them in writing as well. What follows are the questions and their answers. Since his answers were not long I will present them in a tabular form to enhance easy accessibility:

QUESTION	ANSWER
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What was the purpose for reading aloud?	<i>To enhance the confidence in reading; also enhance/increase accuracy in pronunciation.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I realised that you interrupted learners who struggled to read aloud. Can you tell me why you did it that way?	<i>To simply ask them to restart, but bit loudly; again simply to boost their confidence.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I also realised that some paragraphs were read twice by different learners. What was the purpose for asking learners to repeat what was already read?	<i>It was just for better understanding.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Another strategy you used is the use of dictionaries. Do all the learners have dictionaries? Who provide these dictionaries? Do all the learners know how to use the dictionaries?	<i>Learners are supposed to provide themselves with pocket dictionaries and in grade there is a topic that deals with dictionaries.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What was the purpose for asking learners to underline the answers in the text?	<i>To avoid learners giving vague answers</i>

ADDITIONS YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD:

APPENDIX 5: READING ELEMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

Table 21: SECTION 1: What successful readers do in each reading component– Adopted and adapted from Boardman et al., (2008).

<i>Reading components</i> <i>Types of readers and instructional practice</i>	<i>Word study</i> <i>Boardman et al. (2008)</i> <i>(pages 5-7)</i>	<i>Fluency</i> <i>Boardman et al. (2008)</i> <i>(pages 9-12)</i>	<i>Vocabulary</i> <i>Boardman et al. (2008)</i> <i>(pages 13-19)</i>	<i>Comprehension</i> <i>Boardman et al. (2008)</i> <i>(pages 21-26)</i>	<i>Motivation</i> <i>Boardman et al. (2008)</i> <i>(pages 27-31)</i>
<i>Successful Readers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read multisyllabic words and use strategies to figure out unknown words. • Make connections between letter patterns and sounds and use this understanding to read words. • Break unknown words into syllables during reading. • Use word analysis strategies to break difficult or long words into meaningful parts such as inflectional endings, prefixes, suffixes, and roots. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read 100-160 words per minute (at the middle school level), depending on the nature and difficulty of the text. • Decode words accurately and automatically. • Group words into meaningful chunks and phrases. • Read with expression. • Combine multiple tasks while reading (e.g., decoding, phrasing, understanding, and interpreting). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are exposed to a breadth of vocabulary words in conversations and print at home and at school from a very early age. • Have word consciousness. • Understand most words when they are reading (at least 90%) and can make sense of unknown words to build their vocabulary knowledge. • Learn words incrementally, through multiple exposures to new words. • Have content-specific prior knowledge that helps them understand how words are used in a particular context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor reading for understanding. Consider the writing from the author’s view, interacting with text during and after reading. • Link content with their prior knowledge. • Use a variety of effective reading strategies before, during, and after reading. • Set a purpose for reading and adjust their rate and strategy use depending on the text and content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact with text in a motivated and strategic way. • Have improved comprehension and reading outcomes when engaged with text. • Read more and thus have more access to a variety of topics and text types. • Are interested and curious about topics and content in texts and read to find out more.

SECTION 2: WHAT STRUGGLING READERS IN EACH READING COMPONENT

Word study Boardman et al. (pages 5-7)	Fluency Boardman et al. (pages 9-12)	Vocabulary Boardman et al. (pages 13-19)	Comprehension Boardman et al. (pages 21-26)	Motivation Boardman et al. (pages 27-31)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May read single-syllable words effortlessly but have difficulty decoding longer multisyllabic words. • May lack knowledge of the ways in which sounds map to print. • Have difficulty breaking words into syllables. • Often do not use word analysis strategies to break words into syllables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read slowly and laboriously. • May continue to struggle with decoding or may decode correctly but slowly. • May not pause at punctuation or recognize phrases. • Often lack voice or articulation of emotion while reading. • May lack proficiency in individual skills that result in dysfluent reading and limit comprehension. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have limited exposure to new words. • May not enjoy reading, and therefore do not select reading as an independent activity. • May lack word consciousness, including an awareness of the complex and varied nature of words in written and oral language. • Are unable to comprehend consistently what they read or to learn new words from reading. • Lack the variety of experiences and exposures necessary to gain deep understanding of new words. • Often have limited content-specific prior knowledge that is insufficient to support word learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fail to use metacognitive strategies as they read. May not be aware when understanding breaks down. • Do not question or interact with the text during or after reading. • May lack subject-specific prior knowledge. • Do not readily make connections between what they are learning and what they already know. • Have limited knowledge and use of strategies for gaining information from text. • May fail to read with purpose or goals. • Often do not enjoy reading and lack understanding of the utility of reading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May engage in reading as a passive process without giving effortful attention to activating prior knowledge, using reading strategies, or employing other strategic thought processes. • Often have low comprehension of text. • Fail to access a variety of wide reading opportunities. Given the choice, prefer not to read. • May not be interested in or curious about exploring topics or content through reading.

Table 22: Reading components: Instructional Practices – Adopted and adapted (in a few areas) from Boardman et al., (2008)

<i>INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE AND STRATEGIES TEACHERS CAN USE TO TEACH SARs TO READ</i>
<p><i>WORD STUDY</i> (pages 5-7):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach students to identify and break words into syllable types. • Teach students when and how to read multisyllabic words by blending the parts together. • Teach students to recognize irregular words that do not follow predictable patterns. • Teach students the meanings of common prefixes, suffixes, inflectional endings, and roots. <p>Instruction should include ways in which words relate to each other (e.g., trans: transfer, translate, transform, transition).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach students how to break words into word parts and to combine word parts to create words based on their roots, bases, or other features. • Teach students how and when to use structural analysis to decode unknown words.
<p><i>FLUENCY</i> (pages 9-12):</p> <p>NB: More research is still needed on the function of fluency in general for older learners. However the following research based practices have been recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - either select passages that include “targeted” vocabulary that has been previously taught and practiced or choose text at the student’s independent reading level. • Non-repetitive wide reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select passages—that students are interested in reading—at their independent or instructional reading level. - Practice fluency with successive passages (as in a novel or text book) or a series of passages (short readings of similar difficulty). Do not have students re-read the same passage repeatedly. - As students improve, increase passage difficulty by selecting texts with new and challenging vocabulary and content.
<p><i>VOCABULARY</i> (pages 13-19):</p> <p>Instruction can be divided into three areas:</p> <p>1. Additive Vocabulary Instruction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break words into three tiers (Beck, McKeown, and Kucan 2002): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tier 1 words: words they will likely know - Tier 2 words: words that appear regularly in many contexts - Tier 3 words: words specific to subject content areas • Accommodate the pace at which vocabulary knowledge grows. ... It takes about 12 rich and varied exposures to a word to develop deep understanding (Beck, McKeown, Omanson, & Pople, 1985). • Teach multiple meanings of words to foster word consciousness. • Actively engage students in creating definitions and non-definitions, drawing pictures, and playing charades or other games that let them practice defining, using, and recognizing new vocabulary words. • Ensure that students understand the task they are expected to accomplish during vocabulary instruction. <p>2. Generative Vocabulary Instruction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage learners wide reading of texts at a variety of levels • allow learners to use new vocabulary words verbally in small or large groups about what they are reading or learning • connect new words to language usage or other reading texts and show and explain how they are used in other situations. • Make learners be aware of words by: talking about how authors use them, word games, and exploring playful uses of words such as idioms, palindromes, and oxymorons.

- Use key word strategies that provide phonetic or visual links to target words e.g. by associating a known word like *fear* to *ferocious* a person would fear a ferocious animal.
- Show students how to break words into parts and to use context clues, root words, prefixes, suffixes, and word families to identify their meaning.

3. Academic Vocabulary Instruction:

- Use content-area materials to identify important vocabulary
- Differences in depth of understanding are related to the number of times and the variety of contexts in which a word is encountered and used.
- Use assessment procedures to identify target words students know and words students need to learn.
- Use assessment procedures to identify target words students know and words students need to learn.
- Explicitly pre-teach vocabulary needed to understand a text by offering simple definitions prior to reading, generating examples and non-examples, or creating semantic maps that contain word families or list multiple uses of a target word.
- Use computer technology as one component of vocabulary development.

COMPREHENSION (pages 21-26):

There are 6 strategies:

1. Activate Prior Knowledge by previewing text before reading:

- Use specific strategies to activate prior knowledge, such as previewing headings or key concepts, or making a prediction and confirmation chart.
- Prepare and guide previewing activities to support and focus the connections students make.
- Avoid soliciting guesses from students without guidance or feedback.
- Keep it short. Previewing should not take longer than five minutes, especially if a teacher has limited time with students.
- Revisit after reading to assist in reviewing, confirming or refuting predictions, summarizing, and making connections.

2. Use Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers are visual representations that help students identify, organize, and remember important ideas from what they read. Examples include story maps, framed outlines, concept maps, and Venn diagrams.

Graphic organizers can be effective tools to support comprehension for students with LD (Kim, Vaughn, Wanzek, & Wei, 2004).

Recommended instructional practices:

- Use graphic organizers before reading to introduce important information, to solicit prior knowledge from students, and to make predictions.
- Use graphic organizers during reading to represent and discuss connections, to confirm or refute predictions, and to record important information.
- Use graphic organizers after reading to write summaries, to review information, and to make connections.
- Adapt graphic organizers to text type. For example, while a compare-contrast format may work for certain social studies readings, a story plot diagram is better suited to a narrative text structure.

3. Teach Comprehension Monitoring Strategies

Comprehension monitoring strategies enable students to keep track of their understanding as they read and to implement “fix-up” strategies when understanding breaks down.

Recommended instructional practices:

- Teach students strategies that enable them to identify when understanding breaks down, such as noting confusing or difficult words and concepts, creating images, stopping after each paragraph to summarize, and generating questions.
- Teach specific “fix-up” strategies to repair misunderstanding, such as re-reading, re-stating, and

using context and decoding skills to figure out unknown words or ideas.

- Promote comprehension monitoring by:

- Asking questions before and during reading to guide and focus how students read;
- Reminding students to confirm, disconfirm, or extend predictions made prior to reading; and
- Encouraging students to actively engage in reading when they use reading comprehension strategies to grapple with the meaning of text. Continue to teach and provide time to practice using comprehension strategies until students are proficient (Pressley, 2000).

4. Teach Summarization Skills

Reading for meaning demands the ability to consolidate large amounts of information (several paragraphs or passages) into only the most important elements. By providing organizational steps, practice, and feedback, students are taught to focus their reading and re-reading to create summaries that contain the main ideas of what they have read.

Recommended instructional practices:

- Teach students to summarize small amounts of text such as a short paragraph before summarizing longer sections.
- Provide modeling, feedback, and many opportunities to practice summarization rules (NRP, 2000) such as:
 - Selecting a topic sentence or inventing a topic sentence if one is not explicitly stated;
 - Using one word to replace a list of related items;
 - Deleting trivial and redundant information; and
 - Re-reading to make sure your summary makes sense.
- Teach students how to use graphic organizers to write summaries.
- Provide examples and non-examples of summaries to help students recognize and produce summaries that contain only key ideas.

5. Teach Students to Ask and Answer Questions

Students can be taught strategies to generate questions about what they read and to answer teacher-generated questions effectively. Teaching students to ask questions before, during, and after reading support engagement and understanding. Although teacher questions are most commonly used as an assessment strategy, they can also be used as an effective comprehension practice when they teach students how and where to find answers.

Recommended instructional practices:

- Teach students to ask and answer specific types of questions, such as questions whose answers are explicitly stated in the text and those that require students to make inferences based on what they have read.
- Use question generation on its own or as part of multi-strategy instruction.
- Provide students with strategies to evaluate teacher-generated questions. For example, it is important to know if the answer will be found in the text or if it should be inferred.

6. Multi-Component Comprehension Strategy Instruction

Multi-component strategies combine several comprehension strategies into an organizational system, or plan, for reading. For example, over time teachers provide instruction in previewing, mental imagery, main idea, questioning, and summarizing.

Recommended instructional practices:

- Give students adequate instruction to become proficient in each strategy before combining strategies in a multi-component approach.
- Engage students actively in using multiple strategies through cooperative learning, group discussions, and other interactive modes.
- Support students in generalizing strategy use across contexts. The goal is for students to apply strategies independently and automatically whenever they are reading; they need support and practice to generalize skills.

- Teach students to self-regulate their use of strategies. They should know which strategy to use, when to use it, and why. To benefit from reading strategies, readers must be flexible so that they can shift their approach if one strategy or technique is not working.

MOTIVATION (pages 27-31):

In a summary of research on reading motivation, Guthrie and Humenick (2004) identified four critical instructional features that can improve students' motivation to read: 1) providing content goals for reading, 2) supporting student autonomy, 3) providing interesting texts, and 4) increasing social interactions among students related to reading:

1. Provide Content Goals for Reading

A content goal is a question or purpose for reading. Content goals emphasize the importance of and increase interest in learning from what we read (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004). Recommended instructional practices:

- Facilitate the use of relevant background knowledge to increase interest in gaining content mastery.
- Arrange hands-on experiences or other stimulating tasks that lead students to want to find out more by reading.
- Make content goals interesting and relevant by having students read a variety of materials to pursue a theme over a period of time, "publish" a brochure related to a historical event or geographical location, or learn about a topic in order to teach it to someone else.
- Model the behaviors of a curious reader who is rewarded with new knowledge about an interesting topic.
- Involve students in creating content goals and tracking their progress in meeting those goals.
- Give students feedback on their progress in meeting content goals.

2. Support Student Autonomy

When students choose what they read, what activities they engage in related to reading, and with whom they work, their motivation increases, as does the time they spend reading. Recommended instructional practices:

- Provide opportunities for students to choose which text they read by offering a list of appropriate readings. Students who can select their own reading material use more effective reading strategies and perform better on tests of comprehension.
- Give students control over some aspects of the task such as where to work in the classroom, what type of product to produce (e.g., essay or poster), and which subjects to pursue.
- Allow students to select partners, join groups, or work alone.

3. Use Interesting Texts

Students enjoy reading texts that they find interesting and choose to continue reading these texts during free time (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004). ...Several guidelines are helpful for selecting appropriate and interesting material, whether the teacher is choosing for the student or the student is choosing with teacher input:

- Choose texts on topics about which students possess background knowledge. Knowing something about a text's content makes it more interesting. Of course, school is about learning new things, and students will also have to read texts that present unfamiliar information. The recommendation is not to avoid introducing new material, but rather to be mindful of the importance of motivation and the effect that unfamiliar content can have on students' engagement. This underscores the importance of giving students ample background knowledge before asking them to read texts that present new information.
- Texts that are visually pleasing and appear readable (that is, texts that students perceive they will be successful at reading) are more interesting and motivating. Pay attention to illustrations, layouts, graphics, and text sizes that are appealing and support text comprehension. As always, texts should be high quality, regardless of their appearance or reading level.

- A text's relevance and interest is often an individual matter. While some texts are interesting to just about everyone, other texts are interesting only when they support a reader's content goals. Recall the student who wants to understand the information in the computer manual so that he can set up his computer. This text is relevant and important to him, but may not interest a student who does not share the same content goals.

- To generate interest, provide stimulating tasks related to reading topics prior to reading.

4. Increase opportunities for students to collaborate during reading

Adolescents are motivated by working together (e.g., Ivey, 1999; Nichols & Miller, 1994). When students can collaborate socially on reading and reading-related tasks, they find the work more motivating and often continue working even after completing the assigned task (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004). Collaboration increases the number of opportunities struggling readers have to respond, and when a struggling reader is grouped with a more capable peer, he is more likely to be successful in the learning task. Similar to the other features of motivation, social interaction not only increases motivation for reading, but also increases understanding of what is read.

Recommended instructional practices:

- Allow students to collaborate by reading together, sharing information, and explaining and presenting their knowledge to others during reading and reading-related tasks.
- Teach collaborative group work skills such as appropriate group work behavior, how to provide feedback to group members, and maintaining individual accountability so that students benefit from working together.
- Use collaboration to foster a sense of belonging to the classroom community (Anderman, 1999).

APPENDIX 6: RESEARCH TOOLS:

Appendix 6.1: Piloting Stage: Semi-structured questions used

Research Title: *Teaching struggling adolescent readers in Namibia: A case study*

Date of Piloting: 17 April 2008

Venue: DL 5 (English SL Office), NIED.

Time: 18: 15-19:15 (Namibian Time).

1. Teachers' understanding of Reading Comprehension (to be examined by asking the teachers to draw a concept map Reading Comprehension).

- What do you understand by 'Reading Comprehension? Can you please draw a concept map for it and then lead me into its discussion?
- How important is reading comprehension with regards grade 9 learners?
- Is reading aloud important? Why?
- **Follow-up questions**

2. Teachers' understanding of teaching reading at the secondary phase teachers' years of experience in teaching ESL in grade 9

- How many years have you been teaching?
- How many years have you been teaching ESL in Grade 9?
- Can you explain the type of struggling readers you have come across during your teaching experience?
- How did you identify them?
- What specific problems did such learners have?
- How did you and the school support them?
- How do you involve other teachers and parents? What about the illiterate parents? How did you involve them?
- What else can you tell me about teaching reading to Grade 9 struggling readers?

3. Problems learners they may read but do not understand what they read;

- What types of reading problems do your learners have?
- Follow-up?

4. Strategies/methods

- What strategies do you use to teach reading comprehension to SAR?

- Why do use such strategies?
- How do you use them?
- Could you give me some examples of such strategies?
- What problems do you have in relation to strategies?
- **Follow-up**

5. Remedial/compensatory teaching/intervention

- Are you familiar with the concept remedial/compensatory teaching?
- How did you come across this concept?
- Have you experienced the process and how did you experience it? If not, how are you implementing it? Why?
- Do you perceive yourself as a reading teacher and why?
- Which do you think is more effective for improving reading comprehension of the SARs: addressing individual reading component (e.g. vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension) or the multi-component or reading? Why?

6. School context

- How does the school and the community support struggling readers?
- **Follow-up**

7. The classroom organization

- How are you learners arranged in the classroom?
- Who arranged your learners in that way?
- For how long do they remain in such positions and why?
- How does this arrangement assist struggling readers?
- Is there another way you could have arranged them and why?
- **Follow-up**

8. Resources/Resourcefulness of teachers:

- What reading texts do you use?
- Why do you use such texts?
- How do you use them?
- Is there other resources you use?
- What problems do you have regarding reading resources?
- What do you do in such situations?
- What selecting strategies do you use to select resources/texts for reading with struggling adolescent learners?
- Where have you come across strategies you use in your selection?

- What do you do if there are no enough reading resources like reading materials; the class is too full for a reading corner?
9. How do you assess reading comprehension to your SARs?
- Follow-up questions

Appendix 6.2 Transcription of the answers from the teachers used during the Pilot

RESEARCH TITLE: *Teaching struggling adolescent readers in Namibia: A case study*

Elizabeth: Good afternoon Mr Tjituka, eh... My name is Elizabeth Simanga, as you have already know. I am very grateful that you have agreed to come and assist me conduct my research piloting. The topic of my research is: *Teaching struggling adolescent readers in Namibia*, which is going to be a case study. So, how are you sir?

Mr Situka: I am very fine, Mrs ...eh Simanga, eh... (Inaudible) I will enjoy it I hope

Elizabeth: Eh... thank you very much sir. To start with, my topic is going to be based on reading comprehension. I would like to find out what you understand by reading comprehension.

Mr Situka: Alright, according to my understanding reading comprehension means you read and then you understand what you read. That is as far as I understand it. Or you will be given a book to read, then you understand what is going on in your study or what it is all about or you are given a text or passage or a story and then you understand what you read about.

Elizabeth: Thank you. How important is reading comprehension with regards the grade 9 learners?

Mr Situka: That is it very much important that learners know how to read and at the same time understand what they read. I think that in any learning you are somehow dealing with reading and understanding. Whether it is not in a language class but perhaps History or whatever, eh... (Dingdong- dingdong; comes from his cell phone). What ever you read you need to understand therefore it is of the utmost importance that learners eh...should know how to read and understand what they are reading.

Elizabeth: Thank you. What about reading aloud, is reading aloud important and why?

Mr Situka: Eh... as an English teacher, I would say it is important. It is in some cases important because we need to know how learners are pronouncing the words because once

learners read silently, you may not know whether this learner does really know how to pronounce a certain word or not (okay).

Elizabeth: So you are saying in other words that reading aloud is important to find out or to test or see which areas the learners do noteh...eh.. are unable to pronounce. Is it reading aloud necessary just for pronunciation only?

Mr Situka: Eh..., it is not just necessary for pronunciation only, but...eh it is a way of expressing yourself it is like when you are talking as well, you need to get used to talking. Eh so now when you are reading aloud I don't think you just read on your own, you are reading to somebody that is why you read aloud. And that is one way of getting confidence in reading.

Elizabeth: Should you as an English teacher read aloud to the learners?

Mr Situka: I do, sometimes.

Elizabeth: Why?

Mr Situka: Eh...like for example if I am doing literature, let me say short stories, I normally eh ...I read the very first paragraph of the story to the kids and then they just listen silently following in their books. But then I will allow each learner to read the rest of the paragraphs and then they explain how they understood the paragraph, not necessarily the one who read, but anyone of the learners in the class. (Uh...) That is just to show them how to read (okay!) or that is what I think, probably (okay).

Elizabeth: Mr Tjituka, to come back to yourself, how many years have you been teaching?

Mr Situka: This is my tenth year, end of the year.

Elizabeth: This is your tenth year?

Mr Situka: Yes.

Elizabeth: In those ten years, how many years have you been teaching in grade 9, English in grade 9?

Mr Situka: Eh... (Laughs) I can't recall exactly. As you know at our school you don't just teach one grade, (eh from Elizabeth) we are rotating. (Okay, says Elizabeth) But approximately I would talk about plus minus 4 or 5 years.

Elizabeth: 5 years. So, (grant from him) since you started teaching in grade 9, have you come across learners who struggle to read?

Mr Situka: Very much. [Many learners struggle to read at the secondary]

Elizabeth: How do you eh...identify them?

Mr Situka: Eh..., as I said earlier on, (eh... accompanied by nodding of the head) when I am doing my literature, learners are reading and they explain what they have read, so now, because, it is like a class situation, the one who is reading does not read silently, he has, he or she has to read aloud for those others to also hear what he or she have been reading, even if they are following in their books and for them to respond to questions as well. Afterwards I will ask questions on a certain paragraph they have read. So therefore in that way I will be able to see that these are good and that these ones are not. **[Apart from comprehension questions, reading aloud is also used for diagnosing struggling readers by English teachers in Namibia].**

Elizabeth: Okay! So you will be able to know which learners struggle in reading (yes...), as you give them passages to read (to read)?

Mr Situka: Yes.

Elizabeth: Okay! What about eh learners who were automatically ah... transferred, have you come across learners who were automatically transferred who are in grade 9? Who came up to grade 9?

Mr Situka: Yes I did. (Eh...)

Elizabeth: So in that case you just identified them through their school reports or what?

Mr Situka: Eh...then you need to restructure your questions. I don't understand there because does this mean as soon as they just transferred to grade 9 I must just know whether they can't read or not or...how is the question anyway?

Elizabeth: Okey, I want to find out (scratches his throat) how you identify your learners in the grade 9 class who are struggling to read. Okay! You said one of the strategies is for you to give them some... a passage to read, as they read aloud you will be able to know who of those are struggling. So my... the other question is...how else do you identify them apart from giving them a passage to read?

Mr Situka: Eh... eh...frankly speaking, I don't think there is any I know other way unless they talk and I see that this one's English is...is of low standard, (uh...) then I may speculate that he or she (eh...) may not be good in reading as well (okay) ja... (Afrikaans word for yes) (okay...) so that will just be speculation I wont be so sure (uh...).[**Teachers not knowing another strategy to use for diagnosing struggling readers**].

Elizabeth: You know struggling readers, sometimes are in different ... are with different abilities or they might have different problems that makes them read, struggle to read eh...(uh) Can you explain the type of struggling readers you have come across during your teaching experience?

Mr Situka: Eh...I came across...eh...eh...the one who doesn't just know how to read the word or most of the words, but can read some words (okay...) but then eh...I am having those ones who don't read properly just because just because he or she is stammering (okay) ja... (uh...). [**Types of struggling adolescent readers**].

Elizabeth: So there are those...those ones who can identify a few words from the text (ja) but ...then there are those ...whose problem is to stammer (together) (ja, an ability to talk properly...) which is a natural problem (ja) okey. What about learner who might read but be unable to understand anything...they can read fluently, but they end up not understanding anything?

Mr Situka: They are a lot. (You come across such kind of learners?) Yes, I did, I did (okay)...ja... (uh...).

Elizabeth: So, those are some of the problems that your learners do have (yes) that you have come across (uh...). Eh...how does your school support such kind of learners?

Mr Situka: Eh...there is now in one ordinary way eh... there is eh... the school is having a library. So in that way they are supporting the kids...eh...on the enhancing reading in the school (uh...) because the library is there, (inaudible) okay books....and they read ...story books...eh... and other...books for other subject related issues (okay). [**A Library as one of the resources used to support struggling adolescent readers**].

Elizabeth: So, you have got Learner A, (scratches his throat) say, we have got Learner A in you class and you have realized that this learner cannot read at all, how does the school support that learner apart from the library?

Mr Situka: In my own way (uh...) as an English teacher eh... (uh...) eh...almost every term, especially when we start a month (eh...), I am giving them eh...what I call a book review (okay...), they read the book and they do a review on it (okay...) that is to prove that they understood what they read (uh...), and that they do it in their directed writing book eh...but then each learner, I will take the book and he tells what he wrote in his book (uh...) by so doing this one eh...is telling me exactly what is in the book so therefore he or she did her homework. That is the only way I can test it and verify that the homework is really done and it is not just for (inaudible) learners (inaudible) (okay...). [**Book review is used as a strategy for diagnosing struggling readers as well and for assessing understanding**].

Elizabeth: Sometimes you will find that learners who struggle to read in English might be struggling to read in other subjects. How do you involve other teachers to solve the problem of these learners? And how does (scratches his throat) the community also gets involved? In other words, how do their parents get involved?

Mr Situka: Alright, eh...there is something we call eh...‘Readathon week’ (uh...) so...it is just done come once a year that week eh..., there is eh...the time those ones reading eh...needed eh...eh...the classes are freezing, learners are not rotating, they just stay put, stay put in their classes, and then they just read, that week, certain hours in a day that week. But because of the very much work schools are having internal arrangements with the school...what have you...eh...it is not always that learners read

for the whole week, but in fact we give them more hours to read in a day to cover the work they could have read in a week. So that's is one way.

Elizabeth: Uh...so do you have another way?

Mr Situka: Eh...another way...as I said that is eh... I think the is way, the ways that I mentioned that initially, that was eh...book review, and then we have the...reading and comprehension of the prescribed reading, and then reading comprehension we are doing and then eh...I think...the library....eh...to mention but a few, may be I may have left out some.

Elizabeth: Okay! You mentioned that something that you have come across learners who are unable to read. What types of reading problems do your learners have apart from that, do they have other reading problems?

Mr Situka: Eh...what is this other problem, may be your question is too broad now? Eh...I cannot...eh...

Elizabeth: You say your learners eh...have got learners; you have come across learners who can just identify few words (uh...) ja... and then...

Mr Situka: Most of them can read a few words (uh...) and those who can read most of the words, eh...and those who can read only some of the words, not too many, only a few words as I said initially, and then those who having that eh... a natural problem as you mentioned, like those who are stammering. I think that is what I am familiar with.

Elizabeth: Okay! Let's come to the strategies, that is, the methods that you use in teaching. What methods do you use to teach reading comprehension in your class, especially when you think of the struggling adolescent readers? What method do you think you are using which can assist them?

Mr Situka: Eh...in my reading, it is the mainly Learner Centred, as, therefore a learner is reading and ...he or she may explain how far he or she understood the text or a paragraph, so eh...in my classes those learners whom I know they are poor readers, are the...are my

focus (okay) I let them read the most (uh...) than those whom I know they are fluent in reading as well but yet I still give them a task to read.

Elizabeth: Okay, you are saying you let them read the most? (yes..), what do you mean by this?

Mr Situka: So that means eh...when you are doing something like eh...literature, say something which is hard, because it depends on the length of the story, **so they do it repeatedly , may be today, tomorrow, you read about four or three days, (okay) so in that way I let them read the most, every day (uh..). Meaning that those who cannot read properly, they read it everyday, and then the other thing I use to do, I used tell them to take out the books, I call them, eh...I motivate them, eh...eh...I speak to them amicably, no anger, nothing.** I tell them, **look, you are not reading, so this is now up to yourself, take out the books from the library, read everyday, and then when you are finished, you can just come to me and explain what you have read or what was all about it and then sometimes I give them eh...supervision of fellow learners, those who are good in reading to assist them in their pronunciation and the rest because, surely, these people don't know how to...to look up for the pronunciation of the word from a dictionary, those phonetics writings in the dictionary they cannot read it, (okay...) ja. [(1) Repeated reading, (2) counseling, (3) and peer coaching are used as strategies to encourage and support struggling adolescent readers].**

Elizabeth: So, you said that you motivate them, you keep them read..., you make them read repeatedly and you also use fellow learners to assist them (uh...). Why do you use fellow learners to assist them? What is the importance of that?

Mr Situka: There's ... the importance there is that when learners takes out a book from the library and that a certain learner is not allowed to read that book in any class since they are there to do some other work related to that subject so therefore the only time or sufficient time they have is the time after school. And they are not spending the time with me; but most e their friends, so that's why (uh...). **[Learners spend more time with peers than teachers, so peers are used to support struggling adolescent readers].**

Elizabeth: Do you think there is another reason why a friend is more appropriate...can be more appropriate than you to assist a struggling learner?

Mr Situka: Yes, eh... eh... I mean, a ...a child is more likely to approach a friend easily than he or she approaches me, a teacher or a parent (uh...) ja... (okay). **[A struggling reader would find it easier to approach a peer learner than an adult person like a teacher or parent].**

Elizabeth: Thank you very much. Okay. The other thing that you mentioned is, to motivate them; you motivate them. Why do you think struggling learners need to be motivated?

Mr Situka: JA...that is one part they really need because these learners, since that they are aware of their weak points, they are very much shy (they are shy?) they are shy and demotivated (eh...) so they need to be encouraged to gain confidence, ja. **[Struggling readers need motivation and support because they are aware of their weak points].**

Elizabeth: How do you motivate them?

Mr Situka: I just tell them that you are just an ordinary learner like all the others (uh...), you can do what others are doing, it is just matter commitment, and the only commitment is only when you do what I am saying. If I say read a book, you read it you do not just say eh...yes and behind my back you are not doing it (okay) ja. **[Counseling is used as a strategy for motivating struggling readers to read].**

Elizabeth: So, when it comes to the teaching, you are now teaching, it is an English lesson, how do you motivate these learners, apart from talking to them, which is (eh...) also a very impor...?

Mr Situka: Apart from talking to them, (uh) eh... you see, I always eh...eh... ask them questions (uh), on the text we are reading so that encourages them to wait for the question anytime and that is **a depending something (inaudible)?** ...knowing that sir will ask me, (okay) because he is asking me now several times, (okay) so therefore that will force them to sort of getting attention to what we are reading, knowing that I will ask questions and they expect them any time. **[Questioning by the teachers is also used as a strategy for teaching and motivating].**

Elizabeth: When it comes to asking questions, are the learners supposed to wait for you to ask or are they also given chance to ask, (eh...), when it comes to adolescent readers?

Mr Situka: They are given the chance to ask as well but then mostly the learners who are poor in school work, especially if they have a certain weak area which they themselves know, especially when other peer learners or fellow learners are perhaps making remarks, then that is discourages them very much. Then even if they have a question they won't ask unless you come to them, they won't come to you (okay). [**Struggling readers don't ask questions because of self-consciousness and fear of being laughed at by peers in class**].

Elizabeth: Do you have other methods that you use, other strategies that you use that you might not have mentioned here?

Mr Situka: That we might have not eh...mentioned is a... we have reading corners (okay), in classes eh...books are there you know, normally we are not sponsored books by the government, eh...like in my case I tell my kids, all my learners I am teaching English, that eh...we do have reading corners and it has inadequate books, so now you must bring every book that you are not using from home; whether it is a club magazine, whether it is a **news programme**, whether it is a short story book, whether it is...it is a novel, just bring it. It is for you and don't ever think I have read that book because a book you have read, your friend may not have read it. So therefore it is old to you but it may be new to somebody who hasn't read that book. [**Learners are encouraged to bring reading materials from home to counteract the effect of shortages of reading resources**].

Elizabeth: In other words, they bring those books from home and then they are part of the reading corner (eh...), so they come and share with the others?

Mr Situka: We put the books and display them at the reading corner just eh...it is like two desks that I put together (uh), in one corner of my class (uh...), and the books are displayed there, I just put just there, so whoever wants to read the book just get my permission, I any take any book and read, especially during the time that I think that we are really not doing anything in the class, that is the time we use for reading as well.

Elizabeth: Thank you (I scratch my throat). Are you familiar with the concept remedial or compensatory teaching?

Mr Situka: Yes, very much.

Elizabeth: How did you come across this concept?

Mr Situka: Eh...(excuse me) remedial teaching I think that at our school that is the only one we are doing, that is by that eh...eh...book review, that is what I am doing with them, eh...then I do eh...what I told you about the books, which each learner must take and read (cough, cough), especially those who are not good in reading (uh), that is my way, I do with them (uh) ja.

Elizabeth: In your training, (scratches his throat) by the way, what training did you do (pardon?) What course did you eh...take?

Mr Situka: I did eh...BETD (Basic Education Teacher Diploma), (okay), then I did eh...BTECH, education management (uh), eh...ja, that is what I did (okay).

Elizabeth: In any of these courses that you took, have you been trained to teach remedial teaching?

Mr Situka: Eh...like in a degree that I am having, that eh...we were not eh...sort of trained because that was more in managerial eh...skills. **[Teachers not trained to do remedial teaching during their training sessions].**

Elizabeth: Okay, what about in BETD?

Mr Situka: In BETD eh...that eh...we were taught, like for example, eh...doing that eh...going back that extra mile, coming back to school giving learners the attention and so on (uh) ja (okay). **[Teachers don't know what exactly remedial or compensatory teaching entails].**

Elizabeth: What sort of attention do you think you are supposed to give to struggling readers when you come back to school or what sort of attention to you always give them, apart from talking encouraging them to read and read, what else?

Mr Situka: Eh... what other attention must I talk about? I talked about the eh... acquiring dictionaries (uh), eh... that unfortunately parents cannot afford dictionaries, schools cannot provide dictionaries, if they provide, it is only one may be for the teacher to use or perhaps to use that one or two learners, but we are encouraging to use that very much (okay) ja. **[Dictionary usage is used as a strategy for teaching struggling readers as well, to improve their vocabulary].**

Elizabeth: Do you regard yourself as a reading teacher (shifts in his seat), in other words, you will find that as secondary teacher (pause... sound of something falling) as secondary teachers sometimes we feel that learners must have known how to read by the time they reach the secondary. Do you see yourself as a teacher of reading?

Mr Situka: Ah... (he smiles), to tell the truth eh... in my first years of teaching I did not expect that I will find (smiles) the learner who cannot read at the secondary level, so I was surprised to see that some learners cannot really read. I was much surprised, truly. Even in grade 10, you find learners, who are yet, did not yet master reading. **[Secondary teachers do not see themselves as reading teachers. They assume learners arrive at this phase knowing how to read].**

Elizabeth: So how do you handle such kind (so, eh...) learners?

Mr Situka: I just handle it in the same way I told you initially (okay) because I have no other choice, I have to accept that the learner cannot read I cannot just take it for granted that he is supposed to read and I do nothing (uh), ja.

Elizabeth: I see (grants) (pause). Which one do you think is more effective for improving the reading comprehension of the struggling adolescent readers, say, is it when you teach the reading component as an individual; by reading components here I am referring to the vocabulary, reading fluency, reading comprehension, or is it the multi-components?

Mr Situka: Eh... by multi-components are you referring (in other words) to all of them together? (ja).

Elizabeth: Ja, which one do you think...

Mr Situka: I think all of them will be much better, will do.

Elizabeth: Why?

Mr Situka: Ja. Because you see these are now definite components as you say, (Why?). So now it depends which one (does) learner enjoy the most, so I cannot just stick to one is which perhaps not favourable to a certain child while the other one enjoys it.

Elizabeth: Okay. In other words it is because of the level eh...different levels in your class?

Mr Situka: Obviously.

Elizabeth: Uh. So...when it comes to the school context supports the learners using the library. Is there another way that the school contexts support the learners, eh...struggling readers?

Mr Situka: Eh...from the school side or let me say from the eh... management side, the same way we are encourage kids to read and try this and that for the kids to read, they are also encouraging teachers to really give attention to those who are not reading eh...in thei...in thei... eh...in their own respect, to see what they can do, for the kids to really improve reading (uh). **[Encouragement is used as a strategy for struggling readers]**.

Elizabeth: Let's come to the classroom organization with regards the struggling readers. How are your learners arranged in the classroom?

Mr Situka: My learners are arranged in groups of four, sometimes they are in pairs. But no learner is alone (Why)? Eh... there is eh... if we are doing like eh... group activities eh...then they can assist each other (uh).

Elizabeth: So how relevant is this to the struggling adolescent readers?

Mr Situka: Eh...I understand that eh...that eh... those who are struggling with reading, since that they are sitting with other learners, (uh) and now you are asking them to read as I said, they read and they explain themselves, I only facilitate where I see that they left certain important information, then I say NO, here the story says like this. So now, in that way since that each one has to read as an individual, that a child will feel comfortable having... sitting next to fellow when reading than just standing on

your own you though and on top of that you are not a good reader. And now are just isolated from the group you have to read on your own. It is, it is very much uncomfortable. It is discouraging. **[Classroom organization assists with classroom atmosphere for the struggling readers].**

Elizabeth: I see. So these groups, you say they are in groups of four or (together) in pairs (yes). Who selects those groups, who arranges them, do they select themselves or do you do it as a teacher and why?

Mr Situka: They do it themselves (okay, why?) they do it themselves (Why)? Unless, it is examination times where they have, they have to sit in alphabetical order (okay). **[Learners group themselves].**

Elizabeth: Why do you allow them to sit...to arrange themselves in groups?

Mr Situka: Eh...you see learners are having friends (okay) and ...I think as I said earlier on, one will feel comfortable eh...sitting with the person you prefer than sitting with eh...a person that you cannot even talk to (uh) ja. As friends they are more comfortable sitting with their friends and not just anyone. **[Learners group themselves to enhance comfort and the learning environment conducive for struggling readers].**

Elizabeth: Thank you very much. (Welcome). What reading text do you usually use (eh...the textbook?) eh...reading text, the text (oh reading text?) uh?

Mr Situka: Eh...do you mean like a story or (any, any reading text that you use) eh...I normally use short stories eh...novels I don't use them so much because they are taking so much time, sometimes you don't finish unless you give them to the kids to read, especially those ones I said I ask them to read on their own those ones I invite to take novels for a while but when it comes to prescribed reading, I take short stories, I take poems (uh), ja. (Pause; together) But sometimes (how do you...)...should think of... (Inaudible) (Okay).

Elizabeth: How do you select your reading texts or your reading resources (eh...), what criteria do you use?

Mr Situka: Eh...I just look at the story which I think they enjoy the most (okay). As learners I know they are young kids eh...for example they need to enjoy a story on...on... let me say for instance on...on fairy tales than the ones on these a...detective stories, so then I go for which I think is appropriate for their age (uh)... **[Learners' interest and appropriateness are used as strategies for selecting resources].**

Elizabeth: So their age is going to guide you?

Mr Situka: Their age, their interest (their interest?) yes.

Elizabeth: How do you know their interest?

Mr Situka: Eh...I am a parent (laughs), (okay), as as... kids I know what they will like the most (I see), and if like for instance a story like a...the...eh ...that story is just gone, *Goal keeper's event*, if you take like that story (uh), I once read it and you know learners, eh...young kids are mad about soccer, so having read the title *Goal keeper's event*, then you know they are keen to know, I mean, 'why did the goal keeper take revenge; what happened to the goal keeper' so as you are reading you will see that they really want to come to that episode where they get now the detail of what happened (uh) ja. **[Teachers rely on their intuition to identify materials learners will be interested in].**

Elizabeth: What do you do in situations where reading resources are scarce; say you might have one or two and you find that this is really a story or a text that I need to use for my learners?

Mr Situka: I just make copies, (okay), I take that text, make copies, eh...let's say because we have to save papers as well at school, not copies for every learners but at least copies for one class, then I just keep the copies. They read, they leave it there another class comes to read (uh) ja. **[Photocopying of texts is used as a strategy to counteract deficiencies of reading materials].**

Elizabeth: You are fortunate that you are having a photocopier at your school (very much – laughs). Well ... the last part is with assessment, assessing reading comprehension. How do you assess reading comprehension, especially with regards struggling adolescent readers?

Mr Situka: Eh... (one part of cassette comes to an end and is reversed, then the question is repeated). Ja, ja, let me just mention one or two (ja, I will be glad if you will mention as many as possible – laughs), ja...(laughs). But as I told you already that I was in a meeting (yes, laughs), ja, I am very much exhausted now. (Yes) But any way , eh... assessing eh...listening eh... reading comprehension; one way: (uh) when a kid reads loudly (uh), that will give you a chance to assess whether this one is reading good or reading poor whatever (uh) and that is what guides you as to whether that child is a struggling reader or not (uh). And then the other one eh...the kids are writing tests after every prescribed reading, (uh) and...and the results of or the outcome of the test will tell the ones who are doing good will know that eh...they may have understood something, and you cannot understand if you don't read (uh) yes. (Together – so you will know) Even though that one is not that much a proper assessment, the one of a test (uh) because it may also be that he or she doesn't read properly (uh) ja, but is one small way (uh) yes (okay). **[(1) Reading comprehension, (2) reading aloud and (3) testing are used for diagnosing and assessment of comprehension].**

Elizabeth: Now by reading, it seems you are referring to prescribed reading; do you just assess reading, use or teach reading through the prescribed reading books only?

Mr Situka: No (what else do you use?) Not only prescribed books; I am using other resources as well, because I normally, eh...I also use one book; I forgot the title of the book (uh). I just took it from the library. That one is not prescribed (okay) but I am using it (okay) ja (uh). And then the prescribed reading I only have so far is the...the '*Chewing the bones*' (uh) so far I have read stories with the kids from other books (uh).

Elizabeth: What about articles, news papers, magazines?

Mr Situka: News papers, articles, magazines, yes, I also use them.

Elizabeth: Do you use them to teach reading?

Mr Situka: I use them eh...like, I don't know whether to incorporate the two now. I use them also for lessons and that has nothing to do with reading (for listening?) ja, for listening as well (okay) ja. I just take only articles for listening because when it comes to reading, normally because our kids are struggling we use longer texts for them to get used to reading (I see) ja, not just articles (uh) for they short thing (uh)

ja. But we it for other things like small exercise (uh) ja. Because that one is really short (uh) ja.

Elizabeth: What about reading, teaching reading in other skills apart from the reading itself?

Mr Situka: (laughs) I think you have to elaborate on that one.

Elizabeth: Say may be you are teaching listening, the main focus of your lesson, the main focus of your lesson is the listening skill, or it might be the wring skill, do you ever use reading in those other skills?

Mr Situka: Eh...that eh... like you are mentioning listening (uh), if they are doing listening (uh) then the teacher is the one who is reading (okay) the text (uh) so I don't know in what way you can let them read there (uh), unless they read the questions you put on the blackboard for them or on the paper for them to answer (eh) and that is the only way in which they read during listening because it is a different skill; because you give them questions (it is still part of reading), it is still part of reading? (Uh, it is still part of it).

Elizabeth: May be the last component is with regards eh...vocabulary. How is vocabulary related to reading comprehension?

Mr Situka: Eh... there is interrelated (uh - laughs) as you just said it. The two are interrelated. They are interrelated in the sense that when you read, you need to understand what you are reading (uh). And understanding comes with vocabulary, so you need to know your vocabulary. So that is how...why I say they are interrelated. They are like one thing (uh), one cannot do without the other (uh) ja. [**Vocabulary is important for reading**].

Elizabeth: So how do you make sure that your learners have got enough vocabulary, how do you teach it?

Mr Situka: What I normally do is, I ...we do like, when we are reading (eh...) a certain text (eh...), ah...every period when we are finished (eh...) they need to jot down a few words which they don't understand (okay) and find the meaning (okay) to those words (uh). So every time we read a story, a poem or whatever, they just have to note down (okay) that few words they don't understand **and then something related to** that as home work that is home work now (uh). And then I will check to see whether they found the meanings. [**Identifying difficult words and writing**

them down then finding their meanings from the dictionaries is used as a strategy to assist struggling readers].

Elizabeth: So they note down the...the difficult words that they come across (uh) from the text (uh) and then they go and find out the meanings? (Ja). Where do they find these meanings?

Mr Situka: From the dictionaries (from the dictionaries?), I normally tell them that look up the word from the dictionaries at home; from your bigger brother, bigger sister and even then use your...your senior learners to help you as well. I do not restrict them to dictionaries only seeing that we don't have dictionaries (uh) it is very difficult to get hold of that. Even the school library it is only open for certain grades on certain days (uh) so if it is like I give them to look up for words today and it is not the day that the library is open (uh?) for grade 9, then I don't think they will go to the library. So I just encourage them to use the public library outside , eh...which they say it is too far since this library it in town (uh) ja. They complain (okay) but eh...one can see that they complain out of laziness (uh) ja (okay) because they always walking there, to town (smile) (thank you very much). **[Learners are encouraged to use dictionaries, peers and siblings to find meanings of difficult words. Resources like dictionaries are limited. Libraries are only open at certain periods and thus not very helpful].**

Elizabeth: Ah Mr Tjituku, (Tjituka), ah... is there anything that you can tell me may be that we left out from this teaching of reading comprehension to struggling readers?

Mr Situka: Eh...there is nothing because you had numerous questions (laughs- okay) it seems like you had time to compile all these questions (okay). So eh...I don't really think with lots questions obviously I am exhausted (laughs), (I see).

Elizabeth: Mr Tjituka, I am very, very grateful we have come to the end of our semi-structured interview. So thank you very much for taking..., giving me this opportunity to do my trial with you.

Mr Situka: You are very much welcome. (Thank you very much sir). I hope in the future you still come (please) because your questions were eye opener as well (okay); they

were inspirational in a way (I see) ja, because from the questions you are asking (uh), I am also learning something (okay). So if I was behind with certain things eh... that could have been eh...awakening (uh) ja. Thank you a lot (laughs).

Elizabeth: I am very pleased, thank you very much.

END OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW.

APPENDIX 6.3: Semi-structured Questions

The Semi-structured questions were adapted from the pilot questions and used during the research. These questions were accompanied by some questions on the teachers' profile, mostly covering question 1 below.

NB: After piloting, the research questions were adapted as following main areas: (For how they were specifically used with individual teachers, see Appendix 3).

Appendix 6.3A: Questions asked:

1. Teachers' profile and teaching experience

- How many years have you been teaching?
- How many years have you been teaching ESL in Grade 9?
- Can you explain the type of struggling readers you have come across during your teaching experience?
- How did you identify them?
- What specific problems did such learners have?
- How did you and the school support them?
- How do you involve other teachers and parents? What about the illiterate parents? How did you involve them?
- What else can you tell me about teaching reading to Grade 9 struggling readers?

2. Remedial/compensatory teaching/intervention

- Are you familiar with the concept remedial/compensatory teaching?
- How did you come across this concept?
- Have you experienced the process and how did you experience it? If not, how are you implementing it? Why?
- Do you perceive yourself as a reading teacher and why?
- Which do you think is more effective for improving reading comprehension of the SARs: addressing individual reading component (e.g. vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension) or the multi-component or reading? Why?

3. School context

- How does the school and the community support struggling readers?
- Follow-up

4. The classroom organization

- How are you learners arranged in the classroom?
- Who arranged your learners in that way?
- For how long do they remain in such positions and why?
- How does this arrangement assist struggling readers?
- Is there another way you could have arranged them and why?
- Follow-up

5. Resources/Resourcefulness of teachers:

- What reading texts do you use?
- Why do you use such texts?
- How do you use them?
- Are there other resources you use?
- What problems do you have regarding reading resources?
- What do you do in such situations?
- What selecting strategies do you use to select resources/texts for reading with struggling adolescent learners?
- Where have you come across strategies you use in your selection?
- What do you do if there are no enough reading resources like reading materials; the class is too full for a reading corner?

6. Assessment of SARs:

- Follow-up questions

Appendix 6.3B: The profile tool: teachers' and their schools' profile tool

Date of research: 27 May – 09 June 2008

Course: MEd (ELT)

Researcher: E.M. Simanga

To the grade 9 teachers: Please spare me some of your precious time and fill this for me in order to save time scheduled for the structured interview.

Name of the school: -----

1. Information on the teacher:

Your name (Take note that your original name will not be used in the research): -----

Gender: -----

Grade 9 (to be used): -----

Language used at home: -----

Your professional qualification: -----

Years of teaching experience: -----

Years of teaching English: -----

Years of teaching English in Grade 9: -----

Total of professional developmental workshops attended on how to teach reading: -----
----- Phase: -----

Other subject you have been teaching in Grade 9 -----

2. INFORMATION ON SCHOOL:

Total number of teachers at your school: -----

Total number of learners at your school: -----

The predominate language of learners: -----

The predominate language of teachers: -----

Does the school have a school councillor: -----

Does the school have a reading specialist teacher: -----

3. Information on Grade 9 class:

Total number of learners in Grade 9: -----

Total number of Grade 9 classes: -----

Total number of Grade 9 English classes you teach: -----

Total number of learners per Grade 9 class: -----

Number of girls (in the class to be used): -----

Number of boys: -----

Number of repeaters: Girls: ----- Boys: ----- Transferred: ----

APPENDIX 6.4: Observation Tools:

Appendix 6.4 A: A clean note book

NB: I designed no tool for this purpose. However, my intention is to go and write in my note book as much of what I observe as possible and taking the following into consideration:

- Strategies used to teach SARs to read
- Resources used
- Classroom organisation.

Emphasis will be to look specifically at:

1. What the teacher said and how (strategies used)
2. What the learners did or responded to:
 - the teacher and how
 - the other learners and how
3. The texts used by the teachers (with the purpose of finding out why)
4. Resources used by each of the following:
 - the teachers and
 - the learners
5. The classroom atmosphere and
6. The classroom organisations

Appendix 6.4B: Video recording: the video recorder is given the following instructions:

1. To record the lessons and what both the teachers and the learners are doing
2. At a later stage, develop the recording into a DVD (to be used, together with my notes, for transcription)

APPENDIX 6.5: Adaptations of PIRLS 2001 (used in the Otjozondjupa Region)

Test adapted from PIRLS 2001 used with Grade 9 English SL learners in the Otjozondjupa Region

Date: June 2008

Duration of the Test: 45 Minutes

PASSAGE 1: *Hare heralds the earthquake*

Read **Passage 1** and answer the following questions.

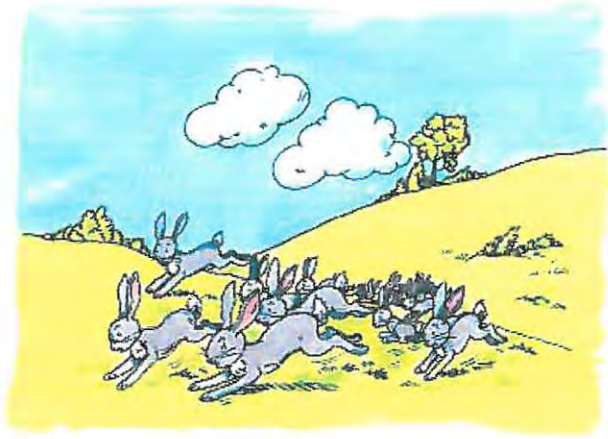
Instructions: Read the passage on *Hare heralds the earthquake* and then answer the questions by circling the most correct answer.

Hare Heralds the Earthquake by Rosalind Kerven

There was once a hare who was always worrying. "Oh dear," he muttered all day long, "oh deary, deary me." His greatest worry was that there might be an earthquake. "For if there was," he said to himself, "whatever would become of me?" He was feeling particularly anxious about this one morning, when suddenly an enormous fruit fell down from a nearby tree—*CRASH!*—making the whole earth shake. The hare leaped up. "Earthquake!" he cried. And with that he raced across the fields to warn his cousins.



"Earthquake! Run for your lives!" All the hares left the fields and madly followed him. They raced across the plains, through forests and rivers and into the hills warning more cousins as they went.



“Earthquake! Run for your lives!” All the hares left the rivers and plains, the hills and forests and madly followed. By the time they reached the mountains, ten thousand hares pounded like thunder up the slopes. Soon they reached the highest peak. The first hare gazed back to see if the earthquake was coming any closer, but all he could see was a great swarm of speeding hares. Then he looked in front but all he could see was more mountains and valleys and, far in the distance, the shining blue sea.





As he stood there panting, a lion appeared. “What’s happening?” he asked. “Earthquake, earthquake!” babbled all the hares. “An earthquake?” asked the lion. “Who has seen it? Who has heard it?” “Ask him, ask him!” cried all the hares, pointing to the first one. The lion turned to the hare. “Please Sir,” said the hare shyly, “I was sitting quietly at home when there was a terrible crash and the ground shook and I knew it must be a quake, Sir, so I ran as fast as I could to warn all the others to save their lives.” The lion looked at the hare from his deep, wise eyes.

“My brother, would you be brave enough to show me where this dreadful disaster happened?” The hare didn’t really feel brave enough at all, but he felt he could trust the lion. So, rather timidly, he led the lion back down the mountains and the hills, across the rivers, plains, forests and fields, until at last they were back at his home. “This is where I heard it, Sir.”

The lion gazed around—and very soon he spotted the enormous fruit which had fallen so noisily from its tree. He picked it up in his mouth, climbed onto a rock and dropped it back to the ground. CRASH!

The hare jumped. “Earthquake! Quickly—run away—it’s just happened again!” But suddenly he realised that the lion was laughing. And then he saw the fruit rocking gently by his feet.

“Oh,” he whispered, “it wasn’t really an earthquake after all, was it?”

“No,” said the lion, “it was not and you had no need to be afraid.”

“What a *silly* hare I’ve been!”

The lion smiled kindly. “Never mind, little brother. All of us—even I—sometimes fear things we cannot understand.” And with that he padded back to the ten thousand hares that were still waiting on top of the mountain, to tell them that it was now quite safe to go home.



Section A: Multiple Choice

- 1) What was the hare's greatest worry?
 - a) a lion
 - b) a crash
 - c) an earthquake
 - d) a falling fruit1

- 2) What made the whole earth shake?
 - a) an earthquake
 - b) an enormous fruit
 - c) the fleeing hares
 - d) a falling tree1

- 3) Why did the lion drop the fruit onto the ground?
 - a) to make the hare run away
 - b) to help the hare get the fruit
 - c) to show the hare what had happened
 - d) to make the hare laugh1

- 4) How did the hare feel after the lion dropped the fruit onto the ground?
 - a) angry

- b) disappointed
- c) foolish
- d) worried

1

- 5) What is the main message of this story?
- a) Run away from trouble.
 - b) Check the facts before panicking.
 - c) Even lions that seem kind cannot be trusted.
 - d) Hares are fast animals.

1

Section B: Answer by writing on the spaces provided

6) Things happened quickly after hare shouted "Earthquake!" Find and copy two words in the story that show this.

- a) -----
- b) ----- (2)

7) Where did the lion want the hare to take him?

 ----- (1)

8) Write two ways in which the lion tried to make the hare feel better at the end of the story.

- a) -----
- b) ----- (2)

9) Do you think the lion liked the hare? What happened in the story that shows this?

 ----- (1)

10) How did the hare's feelings change during the story?

- a) At the beginning of the story the hare felt-----

because -----

- b) At
the end of the story the hare felt-----

because ----- (2)

11) You learn what the lion and the hare are like from the things they do in the story. Describe how the lion and the hare are different from each other and what each does to show this?

----- (2)

END OF QUESTIONS ON PASSAGE 1

PASSAGE 2:

Follow the River Nord Trail (NB: the pages with the Trail was copied and given to the learners. However, the trail could not be copied into this document).



with Zippy

B i k e H i r e
Cycling is fun for everyone
& healthy too!

*Come and explore 7 miles of flat easy traffic-free cycle routes in beautiful countryside following the River Nord... **Whatever bike** you fancy, ZIPPY has the right one for you. Great choice...mountain bikes, tandems, children's bikes, trailers for kids and child seats. Trekking bikes for ladies and gents, soft comfortable seats and 21 easy gears.*

All ZIPPY bikes are replaced every year and regularly serviced. Cycle helmets, pumps, rucksacks and locks are free to all.

TRY before you BUY



For children under 7 we have bikes that attach to an adult bike—great for keeping children where they should be and helping them out on long rides. **For children under 5** we have comfortable child seats and trailers that attach to the adult's bike. For the more able young cyclist we have little bikes with or without stabilisers.

What does it cost to hire a bike?

(Prices in £)

BICYCLE HIRE	HALF DAY	FULL DAY	PER WEEK
Adults / Trailer	8	12	50
Children (under 16)	6	9	30
Child Seat	2	3	12

Instructions: Read **Passage 2** on “*River Trail*” and answer the questions that follow:

Section A: Multiple Choice (1 mark each except for Question 4)

- 1) What is the main purpose of this section called *The River Trail*? NB: A section showing the *River Trail* was cut and pasted next to this question on the hard copy before printing).
 - a) to describe what Gründorf Castle looks like
 - b) to explain about bikes
 - c) to display the bike hire prices
 - d) to give directions

- 2) What is the main purpose of this section of the leaflet? (NB: A section Zippy bikes was cut and pasted next to this question on the hard copy before printing).
 - a) to show you where the trail goes
 - b) to give you information about bikes you can hire
 - c) to describe what happens on the trail
 - d) to teach you about riding

- 3) Where does the River Trail start?
 - a) Banheim
 - b) Gründorf
 - c) Altenburg
 - d) Riverside Valley Park

- 4) Number these places in order you would see them on the River Trail from the beginning to the end. Number 1 has been done for you (1½).
 - a) ---- Gründorf Castle
 - b) ----Banheim
 - c) --1-- River Valley Park
 - d) ----- River Hotel

Section B: Answer by writing on the spaces provided

- 5) How much would it cost a 10-year old child to hire a bike for a full day?

----- (1)

- 6) Zippy Bike Hire rents out equipment for children. Write two things that are for children.

a) -----

b) ----- (2)

7) What information about Zippy bikes tells you that the bikes for hire are in good condition?

----- (1)

Questions 8 and 9 are about a family with two adults and two children, one 10 years old and one 3 years old. They are planning to spend a day circling along the River trail.

8) Which bike would the family need? Use what you have read in this leaflet to answer.

----- (1)

9) Which place on the River Trail could the family visit? Explain why they might like to go there.

----- (1)

END OF TEST

Appendix 6.6: MARK SCHEME: TEST ADAPTED FROM PIRLS 2001

Passage 1: *Hare heralds the earthquake*

Answers to Section A: Learners should encircle the following:

1. c
2. b
3. c
4. c
5. b

Answers to section B:

6. Any two of the following:

- Raced
- Run
- Madly
- Pounded
- Soon
- Speeding and
- Babbled

7. Any 1 of the following:

- To take him to where the 'earthquake' took place OR
- To take him to where the disaster took place OR
- To take him to the hare's house

8. Any 2 of the following:

- The lion smiled at the hare
- He told the hare not to worry – "never mind"
- He told the hare that he is sometimes afraid
- He showed him what made the 'earthquake'
- Told him not to be afraid
- Called him 'little brother'
- Tried not to make him feel silly
- He laughed
- The lion was calm

9. Yes, because he demonstrated to the hare that there was no 'earthquake'

10. (a) At the beginning of the story, hare was *anxious/worried/fearful* (any 1) because *he thought there was going to be an earthquake*.
- (b) At the end of the story the hare felt *silly/relieved* (any 1) because *he realised there was no earthquake*.
11. Any 1 of the following (½ a mark if only part of the answer was given):
- The hare is constantly worried while the lion is calm
 - The hare doesn't think. He ran off as soon as he heard the crashing sound without checking what caused it. The lion is thoughtful. He made the hare go back and see what made the noise.

Passage 2: The River Trail Nord

Answers to Section A: Learners should encircle the following:

- 1) D
- 2) B
- 3) C
- 4) To be arranged as follows (half a mark for each correct answer):
 - 4 Gründorf Castle
 - 2 Banheim
 - 1 River Valley park
 - 3 River Hotel
- 5) 9 OR N\$9.00
- 6) Any 2 of the following:
 - Children's bikes Or trailers
 - Child sets/comfortable seats
 - Seats that attach to adult bikes
 - Little bikes with stabilisers
 - Stabilisers
- 7) They are replaced every year (and would therefore be in good condition).
- 8) Any 1 of the following:
 - They will need two adult bikes, a child's bike and a child's seat
 - A mountain bike and a trailer
- 9) Sunset Cafe because after 2 miles they might be hungry and tired. (Half a mark for Any name on the train with no reason).

END OF MARK SCHEME