



**THE READING TO LEARN PEDAGOGY IN SOUTH AFRICAN
INCLUSIVE ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE
CLASSROOMS: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES**

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of:

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BY

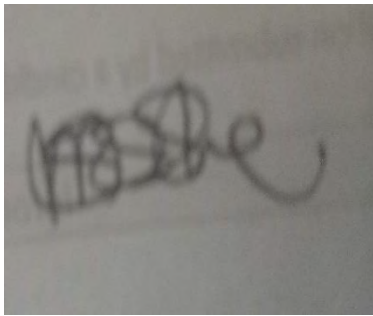
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February 2024

Declaration of Originality

I SHERON MOYO, student number (15M0035), hereby declare that this thesis entitled “**The Reading to Learn Pedagogy in South African Inclusive English First Additional Language classrooms: Successes and Challenges**” is my work and a product of my research. It has not been submitted in any form to another institution. Where I have drawn on the ideas of people from other publications or other sources, I have fully acknowledged these by Rhodes University, Education Department reference guide.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in dark ink on a light-colored surface. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Sheron Moyo'.

Signature:

Date: 28 February 2024

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents, Clifford Moyo and Susan Annacletah Dube. I appreciate that you have instilled in all of your children the value of working extra hard. It is thanks to your lessons that I am who I am. This is for my cheerleader, my late aunt Sikhathele Faith Dube, who took over the role of mother to me after my mother passed away and who always encouraged me in all of my decisions (unfortunately, you left before you could read the thesis as you had hoped).

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I AM because you are!

Abstract

Reading to Learn (RtL) has been frequently suggested for students not meeting grade-appropriate reading standards. However, its achievements and shortcomings have not been examined in inclusive education. In light of this, the main goal of this study was to explore the successes and challenges of this methodology in grade 9 English First Additional Language (FAL) inclusive classrooms across four schools in the Northern Cape Province's John Taolo Gaetsewe District. In light of the grave concerns about literacy development in South African schools, this methodology was created to fulfil the literacy needs of students from underprivileged groups in Australia. This qualitative study was grounded in social constructivist theory and an interpretative paradigm. The research used an exploratory case study comprising four participants who were purposively recruited and empowered with RtL between 2016 and 2022. The data-gathering methods used were semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and classroom observations to get insights into the achievements and shortcomings of the RtL pedagogy in inclusive classrooms. The qualitative data in this study was analysed using thematic analysis. The study's findings revealed that the RtL pedagogy gave students who faced reading obstacles in inclusive classes the skills needed to read, read with meaning, and improve as readers and writers through its six-step scaffolding interactive cycle. There were challenges in employing the RtL pedagogy in inclusive classes, such as it is time-consuming and makes it difficult for teachers to adhere to the time frame stipulated by the annual teaching plan. Nevertheless, the study's findings showed that the advantages of the RtL pedagogy outweigh the challenges.

Keywords: Reading, reading barriers, inclusive education, Reading to Learn pedagogy.

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List of Acronyms

ANA	Annual National Assessment
ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CEA	Centre for Evaluation and Assessment
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
ESL	English as a Second Language
FAL	First Additional Language
FET	Further Education Training
JTG	John Taolo Gaetsewe District
MKO	More Knowledgeable Other
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading and Literacy Studies
RtL	Reading to Learn
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
UNESCO	United Nations Science and Cultural Organization
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This study explored the successes and challenges of the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy in grade 9 English First Additional Language (FAL) inclusive classes in four schools. This study explores the successes and challenges of the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy in grade 9 English First Additional Language (FAL) inclusive classes in four schools located in the Northern Cape Province's John Taolo Gaetsewe District. The background section of the chapter covers the significance of literacy, the reading difficulties encountered in South African classrooms, and some of the contributing factors such as the implementation of inclusive education. This is followed by a summary of the research questions and objectives that acted as the study's compass. The study's significance, theoretical framework, data analysis, and methodology are all summarised. Finally, a succinct synopsis of the thesis framework and the study's limitations are given. These are offered as a foretaste of the topics that will be covered in each chapter.

1.2 Background of the Research Study

According to Lount et al. (2017), reading is the most crucial component of a high-quality education. Access to reading is crucial for students to gain knowledge about various aspects of life, including social, cultural, political, and health issues, as well as opportunities for enjoyable and enriching activities. Without this fundamental skill, students are at a disadvantage and may face difficulties in navigating the world around them. It is essential that we provide all students with the tools they need to succeed, and reading is undoubtedly one of the most important. According to Snow et al. (2016), there is a direct link between academic failure and reading proficiency – reading comprehension is a prerequisite for success in school. The ability to read and comprehend is a crucial skill for students to succeed in their academic journey, both in school and at the university level. Unfortunately, a growing concern is that many students lack the necessary reading skills to meet these demands (Hugo et al., 2005). We must recognize this issue and take necessary steps to address it, for the benefit of our students and their future success as

stated by The South African Constitution that having the ability to read and write is a right, not a privilege (Department of Education, 2002).

Delgado (2020) estimates that 781 million people worldwide, or 12% of the total population, did not have enough reading comprehension in 2020. At least 250 million of the 650 million primary school-age children are not obtaining a basic education in reading and math, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2014). Hugo et al. (2005) found that 40% of youngsters in the United States had significant difficulties learning to read and that over 40% of fourth and eighth graders had difficulty reading at a level deemed fundamental for completing grade-level work. In 1996, 40% of fourth-grade students in the United States could not read at this fundamental level, even when guided by their teachers while they were reading narrative texts (Kim et al., 2017). The numbers for Black and Hispanic students were much worse, according to Tlale (2021), with 64% and 69% of these groups' fourth graders, respectively, unable to read at a basic level. The statements above categorically show that reading is challenging in many countries, including South Africa. Global evaluations of academic literacy skills show that over 75% of South African primary school students fall short of the minimal international "literacy" standards (Millin, 2016). Other benchmark studies conducted in the last few years have verified the aforementioned findings (Howie et al., 2012; Progress in International Reading Literacy Study [PIRLS], 2016; SACMEQ iii, 2011; UNESCO, 2011).

A "cognitive catastrophe" has been used to characterize the reading issue plaguing South Africa's educational system (Aitchison, 2018). Many post-secondary students in South Africa lack the reading skills necessary to meet the academic requirements of their programs (Tlale, 2021). The reading proficiency of 60 first-year University of the Orange Free State students was assessed as part of a research project. Thirteen of the pupils could only read at grade one and two levels, and not a single student could read at a level higher than grade 8 (Hugo et al., 2005). Pretorius (2000) revealed that first-year psychology and sociology students at UNISA were reading with 53% comprehension, while Webb (1999) also discovered that many English as a second language university students were reading at the grade 8 level. This is far lower than the frustration levels associated with reading comprehension of less than 60%, which frequently leads to students giving up on reading (Mataka, 2017).

The study's findings demonstrated that South African students are four years behind the grade level at every stage of the educational system (Pretorius, 2000). Despite efforts by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to solve the many inadequacies, South Africa's reading development achievement remains low when compared to other countries. Many academics have conducted studies to determine the degree to which reading comprehension deficits are linked to low academic achievement in South Africa in the areas of literacy and numeracy (Fleisch, 2007; Howie et al., 2007; Moloi & Strauss, 2005; Pretorius & Mampuru, 2007). Nearly all the research consistently shows a link between low reading proficiency and subpar academic performance (Mataka, 2017). Reading proficiency is a prerequisite for learning in school. Therefore, poor readers' lives, their families' lives, and the socioeconomic life of their communities can all suffer greatly from early and persistent reading failure (Hopkins et al., 2018). Hart (2015) claims that the cause of the reading problem is the systematic barriers that exist in the education system together with the ineffective teaching of reading in the schools, which result in learners' consequent inability to independently learn from reading across the curriculum. Akubuiloi et al. (2015) list several explanations for children's reading readiness deficiencies, including socioeconomic background, physical anomalies, mental imbalance, lack of motivation, and teachers' incapacity to assist students.

According to recent research, societal situations and educational procedures that may favor some students over others and exclude others are inextricably linked to low literacy performance in the classroom (Millin, 2016). Ineffective teaching strategies are one of the causes of low literacy and numeracy performance, according to the 2013 Diagnostic Report for Annual National Assessment (ANA) (DBE, 2013). Most conventional teaching techniques are insufficient to address the variety of demands found in classrooms when used alone (Schmidt et al., 2002). Traditional instructional techniques used in schools, such as rote learning, may cause students' weak reading and writing skills.

In South African schools, the implementation of inclusive education has also resulted in inadequate literacy proficiency. To reverse historical injustices, the DBE implemented an inclusive education system. The constitution gave All South Africans “an equal opportunity” for education, which allows inclusive education to be implemented in regular schools. The constitution's goal of allowing all students full participation, regardless of ability, was positively addressed by the choice

to create inclusive classrooms. But with little to no training, understanding, or expertise, South African educators have had to tackle inclusive education, embrace diversity, and adopt a new curriculum (Ladbrook, 2009). As a result, reading and writing performance in regular classes has declined precipitously.

Teaching reading has never been easy in South African classrooms, and the number of students experiencing learning difficulties in regular classrooms has increased the strain on language teachers to meet the objectives of their instruction. Teachers of English must deal with students who have difficulty reading for various reasons, including learning and undiagnosed learning barriers. According to Motshekga (DBE, 2012), numerous interventions have been implemented to help teachers generate students who are literate in reading, writing, and numeracy. Nonetheless, the lack of progress made by the students indicates a gap in the knowledge between the way teachers instruct and the student's reading and writing level.

More children with reading challenges are being taught in mainstream classrooms than in special education settings since the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Department of Education [DoE], 2011) was put into effect (Schmidt et al., 2002). For students with reading difficulties, reading is a difficult endeavor that requires comprehensive techniques (Vinoliaya & Ponniah, 2021). Schmidt et al. (2002) assert that teachers in inclusive classrooms do not always use effective reading interventions for students who face reading challenges. Lack of resources and teaching strategies that cater to the diverse student body at the class level frequently hinder the desire to support students with special educational needs, including those who have behavioral and language issues, in an inclusive setting (McLeskey & Waldron, 2011).

In inclusive environments, it is critical to create successful teaching practices that impact both students with and without impairments (Almumen, 2014). Reading is fundamental, and students will not learn to read effectively if explicit reading instruction is not given at all educational levels. Rather than having the opposite impact, education will continue to be a means of escalating social inequality (Hart, 2015). Numerous academics have developed various pedagogical techniques to aid in reducing the issues of illiteracy in the classroom. The phonics approach, the multisensory approach, the RtL technique, the Survey Question Read Recite Review (SQ3R), and reading comprehension help are some of these strategies. According to Mitchell and Sutherland (2020), it

is critical to determine which approaches are appropriate for addressing the various requirements of various people.

This study was interested in learning more about RtL pedagogy as it is one of the pedagogical strategies that successfully teach reading and writing in normal classrooms. Schools in Australia, Europe, Scotland, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa, Chile, and Japan are among those using RtL at an increasing number (Millin, 2016). It was developed as an intervention strategy to assist students with varying literacy levels in reading and writing more rapidly at age- and grade-appropriate levels (Tlali, 2021). It uses the top-down approach to academic literacy development, starting with text comprehension, then sentence analysis and finally ending with word analysis (Millin, 2011). Most studies have examined how effective pedagogy is when used to train pupils in traditional classroom settings. Damayanti (2016), Hardini et al. (2019), Emerson (2018), Millin (2016), Acevedo and Rose (2007) and Mawela (2018) are a few of these scholars. All this research supports the effectiveness of RtL in improving students' reading comprehension. However, they have not concluded how well this pedagogy works for students who have learning disabilities and struggle with reading in inclusive classrooms. To improve their pupils' writing and reading skills, JTG District in-service students were trained in the RtL approach. When I had to teach in an inclusive classroom, I considered this approach and wondered if it would help the literacy skills of my grade 9 English First Additional Language (FAL) learners. Since grade 9 classes act as a transitional phase between the senior and Further Education Training (FET) phases, reading is essential to assist students in enhancing their focus, memory, empathy, and communication skills. As students transition into their FET grades, reading becomes a core subject of study. That is why I specifically chose to focus my study on grade 9 English FAL-inclusive classrooms in four Northern Cape Province's JTG District schools. Through my research, I was able to identify both the successes and challenges of the pedagogy in these classrooms. By understanding these factors, we can work towards improving the teaching strategies to better equip our students for academic success.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Minister Angie Motshekga's Teaching and Learning for Early Learning and Inclusive Education Programme (DBE, 2016) has introduced a new era in South African education, with a focus on

Inclusion and Social Justice. However, this has presented a new challenge to teachers who are not adequately equipped to teach students with learning barriers. As a result, academic performance in reading and writing has suffered in normal classes. Despite the best efforts of schools to improve the academic reading and writing skills of learners with reading barriers, in-service educators lack the necessary resources and pedagogies to teach these students effectively. We must provide our educators with the necessary support and resources to enable them to help all learners succeed, regardless of their learning barriers. Reading is a fundamental skill that is essential for success in today's world. However, many students struggle with reading, which can hinder their academic progress and prospects. To address this issue, a literacy intervention program called "Reading to Learn" (RtL) was developed and adapted to suit the needs of grade 9 struggling readers in South Africa. The program's effectiveness was investigated in four schools in the JTG District of the Northern Cape, where inclusive English First Additional Language (FAL) classes were held. This research aimed to explore the successes and challenges of the program to help improve literacy outcomes for struggling readers. By investing in evidence-based literacy interventions like RtL, we can empower students to reach their full potential and succeed in their academic and professional pursuits.

1.4 Research Objectives

The following were the goals of the study:

- To determine whether the BEd English Language (in-service) teachers have been able to implement the RtL pedagogy in their classrooms and provide an explanation for their decisions to stick with or depart from it.
- Gain valuable insight into the teaching methodology by understanding how teachers articulate their successes and challenges.
- To determine to what extent the learners with barriers improved their reading abilities and academic performances when comprehensively engaged in reading complemented with the RtL pedagogy.
- To determine the effectiveness of teaching reading in inclusive grade 9 English as a First Additional Language classes using an RtL approach.

1.5 Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. In what way have the B.Ed. English Language teaching (in-service) educators have been able to apply the RtL pedagogy in their classroom practices after graduation?
2. How do the teachers describe their successes and challenges in applying the pedagogy?
3. To what extent have the learners with reading barriers improved their reading abilities and academic performances when comprehensively engaged in reading complemented with the RtL pedagogy?
4. How effective would RtL pedagogy be in teaching reading to grade 9 English FAL inclusive classes?

1.6 Research Methodology

This study was an exploratory case study, based on the social constructivist theory. This study's primary epistemological pillar was the interpretive paradigm. The interpretivism paradigm, which is ingrained in the idea that realities are numerous and socially produced, is also referred to as the "constructivist paradigm". Schwandt (1994) states that interpretivism maintains that there is only one reality and that knowledge and the world are socially constructed. According to Maree (2016), interpretivists believe that reality is socially constructed, and for this reason, studying people in their social contexts or natural environments provides a greater opportunity to understand their perceptions of their activities. Therefore, the onus of the researcher in the interpretive paradigm is to comprehend, articulate, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants (Cohen et al., 2011). Four educators who were exposed to the RtL pedagogy between 2016 and 2022 were the subject of the case study used in this study. Four English FAL educators from different JTG schools who taught in inclusive classrooms participated in this study. The selected educators are teaching in the same district as the researcher and they are my colleagues.

By conducting semi-structured interviews, I obtained detailed information from a group of chosen educators. These interviews helped me identify the themes that surfaced from their comments. The educators were candid about their experiences and I was able to gather a great deal of information about their successes and struggles in implementing the RtL pedagogy in their classrooms. Their willingness to share their feelings allowed me to gain valuable insights into the English Language

teaching (in-service) educators' experiences and how they characterized the pedagogy's triumphs and difficulties. This information will be invaluable for anyone interested in implementing the RtL pedagogy in their classroom.

To fully comprehend the effectiveness of the RtL pedagogy, it was crucial to see if the selected participants were still utilizing it in their inclusive classrooms. To achieve this, I conducted an observation of their teaching sessions, recording four lessons to determine the extent to which the B.Ed. English language teaching (in-service) educators were implementing the RtL pedagogy in their classroom practices. Observations provide valuable first-hand information to researchers (Muhembo, 2017). By carefully studying the recorded lessons, I was able to determine if the participants were still incorporating the RtL pedagogy during their reading and writing lessons. This information is critical in understanding the effectiveness of the pedagogy and its potential to improve teaching practices.

Employing focus group interviews is an effective research strategy. As per Maree (2017), this technique assumes that group interaction can broaden the range of responses, activate forgotten details of experience, and alleviate inhibitions that might otherwise prevent participants from sharing valuable information. Focus group interviews can provide us with deep insights into the target audience's thoughts, feelings, and ideas, making it an invaluable tool for any researcher.

1.7 Data Analysis

For my data analysis, I adopted a thematic analytic approach for the qualitative data generated from interviews. Thematic analysis is defined by Braun and Clark (2006) as a method of identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within the data. I chose the thematic analytic approach because it allowed me a lot of flexibility in interpreting my data and allowed me to approach large data sets more easily by sorting them into broader themes.

1.8 Significance of the Research

The research was conducted in semi-rural quintile one schools in South Africa where a significant number of students have limited or no access to reading resources, both at home and in school. The purpose of this study was to ascertain the viability of the RtL program in inclusive English

language schools. If the research findings validate the efficacy of the pedagogy, it could bring about a significant transformation in the way reading is taught to students struggling with reading difficulties. Furthermore, this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge, providing valuable insights for individuals interested in pursuing related research.

1.9 Presentation Structure

To better understand inclusive education in South Africa, this research project looked at its evolution, history, and difficulties experienced by English language teachers. The notion of social constructivism serves as the theoretical foundation in Chapter Two. The research design, procedures, data collection instruments, sample strategies, and research perspective are all included in the comprehensive methodology. There is also a discussion of issues with data analysis, validity, and ethics in Chapter Three. Chapter Four provides an overview of the findings from focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and observation. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis and a summary of the results is provided in this chapter. Thematic analysis tools are used to examine the results. Chapter Five offers a review of the themes, conclusions, proposals for further research, and recommendations which serve as the study's conclusion. I offer a thorough grasp of inclusive education in South Africa while also reflecting on my experience conducting this research.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed to provide the reader with the background to the study, the purpose of the study, the rationale, identification, and definition of key terms, and formulating the primary research questions and the sub-questions. The motivation for the study and the research questions were fully discussed. In Chapter Two, I look at the literature relating to reading and RtL in inclusive classrooms.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to analyse relevant literature and identify the theoretical framework for the study. This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of RtL as a teaching tool for inclusive grade 9 English FAL instruction. It also sought to measure the extent to which students with reading difficulties enhanced their academic performance and reading skills through active participation in reading. Cohen (2011) asserts that a literature review serves the broader purpose of updating academics on existing discoveries in a certain field, thus preventing them from revisiting previously given information. The chapter commences by defining inclusive education and thereafter examines the history and evolution of the concept in South Africa. This chapter also addresses the significance of inclusive education and the obstacles encountered by English language educators in inclusive classroom settings. The foundation for this inquiry was deliberated and provided.

2.2 Inclusive Education

Landsberg (2019) defines inclusive education as a re-evaluation of ideas and principles that appreciate and accept diversity. Chauhan and Mantry (2018) define inclusion as an educational method where kids with special needs, including those with impairments, are educated alongside peers without disabilities in age-appropriate regular classroom environments in community schools. Furthermore, students are provided with direction and support to ensure their engagement with their peers, taking into account their preferences and strengths. Booth and Ainscow (2011) emphasize that implementing inclusive ideas and fostering inclusive communities and educational institutions are crucial components of inclusion. They emphasize the need to ensure universal access to success and participation in it. The concepts indicate that inclusive education fosters diversity, equity, and a sense of inclusion (Thomas & Loxley, 2001).

2.2.1 History of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education was first suggested in the 1960s, but the global premiere of education for all took place in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. For UNESCO (1990), the main commitments were to ensure that all children have access to elementary education and reduce the illiteracy rate by the year 2000. The Jomtien Conference aimed to create and execute a fresh perspective for fundamental education. The project received backing from the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program, the United Nations Population Fund, UNESCO, and UNICEF. In 1994, a second call was made in Salamanca, Spain, leading to the publication of the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). The commitment to providing education to everyone was confirmed in the statement. The statement also called on the government's important figures to ensure that the concept of inclusive education is adopted by every education department. The proclamation mandated the inclusion of all pupils in the educational system, irrespective of their intellectual, emotional, physical, or linguistic capabilities or societal and cultural origins.

The proclamation said that being included in regular classrooms was the most effective method to achieve integration. The Salamanca Statement highlighted the importance of stakeholders collaborating and working together in inclusive education, involving educators, parents, families, and professionals. UNESCO (1994) states that creating an inclusive environment relies on the commitment of entire communities. The Salamanca Statement mandated that each state develop an educational policy focused on attaining equal opportunity, integration, and equality. All the states that endorsed the Salamanca Statement convened in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000 to deliberate on the execution of inclusive learning and its advancement. New goals were set and linked to the inclusive education initiative. In 2005, six goals were established after a re-evaluation of the existing goals. Three goals had specific deadlines for 2105: achieving universal high-quality basic education for all children, increasing literacy rates by 50%, and attaining gender equity in education. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and its accords influenced South Africa's decision to adopt an inclusive education system.

2.2.2 Development of Inclusion in South Africa

South Africa's education system, initially centred on the medical model and classifying children according to their "special education needs" has been progressing towards inclusiveness since the

1960s. These individuals were often assigned to remedial classes or specialized schools, sometimes segregated by race. The end of Apartheid in South Africa led to a commitment to human rights and the values of inclusivity and equity, which initiated the country's shift towards inclusive education. During the period before independence, pupils were segregated in schools based on their race, colour, religion, and handicap by the Apartheid regime. Black adolescents with learning issues were either compelled to go to local schools with minimal support or, more commonly, did not attend school at all (Millin, 2016).

Walton (2011) states that the educators' training encompassed information that enabled teachers to work in both regular and special education environments. The government amended the Constitution and other policies to correct this historical injustice. The Republic of South Africa Act No. 18 of 1996 guarantees the right to fundamental education for all individuals (Churr, 2015). Schools are constitutionally prohibited from discriminating against any student, including those with impairments. The Equality Act of 2010 states that it is prohibited to discriminate against anyone based on race, gender, or handicap.

Wildavsky (1973) defines implementation as the ability to execute a law or policy. The third step of policy, policy implementation, involves putting the law into practice. Van Metre and Van Hon (2014) define operationalization as the transformation of material, monetary, and intellectual resources into facilities and services to provide services. It involves implementing the aims and objectives of a policy into a specific action plan. Implementing a policy involves enforcing the law by organizing processes, methods, strategies, and resources to accomplish the policy's goals.

Engelbrecht (2006) established a strong link between the global inclusive movement and discussions on inclusive education in South Africa. She stated that after 1994, the South African government implemented globally recognized education policies to establish an education system focused on justice, human rights, and human resource development. Since the inception of the inclusive education policy, educational institutions have been diligently working to integrate children with learning difficulties into regular classrooms.

The South African Constitution, as stated by DBE (2010b), supports inclusive education ideals such as equitable access to a unified education system, full participation and social integration of all citizens, and recognition of human rights and social justice. DBE (2010b) states that an

inclusive educational approach is essential for transformation in all South African schools, rather than being an additional procedure. Implementing these criteria enables all students, irrespective of their learning challenges, to attend their local school. Inclusive education, as described by Swart and Pettipher (2016), guarantees that all students, irrespective of disparities, can access, engage in, and excel in learning.

South Africa aims to advance its education system towards a more egalitarian society by providing equal educational opportunities to all individuals. Inclusive education, as defined by DBE (2011), acknowledges and appreciates variety. It involves developing learning environments, strategies, and tactics that support the learning of every student, recognizing that each learner has the capacity and entitlement to learn. The South African Department of Education supported the concept of inclusive education and implemented additional policies to facilitate the transition to inclusion. In South Africa, inclusive education is highly valued in mainstream schools due to the community's appreciation for diversity. Various literary works advocate for diversity, including case studies, ethnographies, and policy.

Inclusion is the state of being part of something. Education refers to the state of teaching and learning within educational institutions such as colleges, universities, or schools. Sebba (1996) defines inclusive education as the adaptation of curriculum, organization, and resources in educational institutions to cater to the particular requirements of each student in a diverse classroom. Thomas (1997) states that schools admit all pupils, irrespective of their learning disabilities. Inclusive education involves delivering top-notch teaching and support to every student in regular sessions, irrespective of their challenges. DBE (2010) states that full-service schools provide high-quality instruction to all students fairly, addressing various learning needs. The schools strive to promote social justice, equity, access, and quality in the classroom.

All pupils in the school's catchment region can attend normal schools, regardless of their learning needs. All children are urged to engage in comprehensive schools, irrespective of barriers or disabilities. As per DBE (2010), a full-service school is a distinguished institution with exceptional leadership that establishes itself as a frontrunner in educational reform by fostering diverse cultures, respecting individual differences, and emphasizing creativity and problem-solving through established rules and procedures. The regular school commits to establishing an inclusive

learning environment that encourages diverse viewpoints. Kauffman and Badar (2014) state, in Conway (2017), that inclusive education involves teaching students with special needs in a classroom setting that accommodates their requirements through different teaching tactics and assessment methods. Agreeing with DBE (2011), inclusive education involves acknowledging that children and young people are capable of learning and that every child requires assistance.

DBE (2011) agrees that inclusive education requires creating a diverse school culture, implementing certain policies and procedures, and valuing each student. Integrated Education (IE) is a method used to teach students with learning difficulties in normal classes and general education settings. According to Swart and Pettipher (2016), inclusive education requires schools to acknowledge each student as a unique individual and modify their learning environment to accommodate their specific needs and differences rather than expecting the student to conform. Inclusive education policy, as defined by Kozleski (2016), enables formerly excluded children who were educated in special programs to join regular classrooms in mainstream and full-service schools, provided that they receive enough instruction and support. It requires changes to rules, methods, guidelines, and, ultimately, the individuals involved. Inclusive learning means treating all students equally, regardless of their differences, including those who struggle academically or who have learning difficulties. According to DBE (2010a), inclusive education fosters a sense of community that increases the worth of each child, teacher, and family. All instructors must create a practical policy that covers general education for all children.

The 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities acknowledges the right of people with disabilities to receive education that is fair and free from discrimination. It states that individuals with disabilities should be provided with the necessary assistance inside the mainstream education system to support their learning effectively. Hynjeang (2014) states that schools aim to establish a welcoming classroom environment that encourages inclusive learning for all students, irrespective of their learning challenges. The comments suggest that the objective of inclusion in mainstream schools is to provide all children with access to learning opportunities, irrespective of the obstacles they may face.

2.2.3 Consequences of inclusive education for South African educators

Two consequences for educators arise from inclusion, according to Booth (1999) and Du Plessis (2013). Firstly, it reduces the number of students excluded from participating in learning support activities in the classroom, and secondly, it increases student engagement. Therefore, youngsters experience reduced discrimination and develop leadership and communication skills. Du Plessis (2013) argues that the primary objective of any educational system should be to offer students a high-quality education, regardless of their educational background. Every student should have access to top-notch education and training that prepares them for continuous learning and active participation in society as valuable members.

The adoption of the inclusive education system abolished the discriminatory practices of the apartheid era and fostered student equity in the classroom, irrespective of learning challenges. Due to the growing demand for inclusive practices in mainstream schools, Rix (2009) states that classroom teachers must now supervise each student's learning requirements. This has several consequences for teachers who instruct students with learning difficulties in standard classroom environments. Integrating inclusive education into a mainstream classroom is essential for teachers; however, teachers have struggled to address the diverse difficulties related to providing children with the support they deserve. Many teachers encounter language diversity, overcrowded classrooms, resource shortages, and various other challenges.

Elloff and Kwegte (2007) suggest that many individuals generate innovative solutions to assist students with diverse needs in typical classroom environments. Rogan (2007) concurs with Elloff and Kwegte that a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom has a substantial influence on the overall quality of education. Teachers have to deal with students' problems on their own, which takes a lot of work and support from the department. According to Hay (2002), this has a big impact on teachers' inherent strengths. The policies have been introduced and put into action; however, several teachers struggle to structure inclusive lessons due to a lack of requisite work experience or training.

Hannah (2015) claims that instructors require support to achieve inclusion. She also proposes that when requesting instructors to analyse how the policies are being put into practice, the new policies emphasize content rather than methodology. Forlin and Chambers (2011) state that instructors

experienced stress due to managing issues related to inclusion in classrooms. They felt less confident and lacked the necessary abilities to provide effective support while being knowledgeable about policies. Hannah (2015) asserts that crucial policies have to be established to implement inclusive education in South Africa. Teachers do not have sufficient resources to effectively enforce these requirements to support pupils with special needs in typical classroom environments.

Walton and Lloyd (2011) state that the Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) (DBE, 2001a) was first adopted as a permanent policy and acted as a guide for implementing the inclusion of all children. The EWP6 (DBE, 2001a) laid the groundwork for a national strategy to create an educational system that included all children with exceptional needs. However, there is a lack of support for students with diverse needs and the teachers who instruct them in standard classrooms. Research indicates that teachers in South African schools lack expertise and awareness of the policy. This implies that educators assisting children with learning challenges lack sufficient support and training, leading to a lack of consensus on inclusive learning practices.

Ntombela (2011) states that instructors could have conflicting emotions as a result of change and new requirements. According to Bansilal (2011), educators are responsible for addressing the diverse needs of all their pupils, irrespective of their personal experiences, attitudes, or perspectives. Thus, educators face challenges in creating an inclusive classroom due to a lack of knowledge, skills, and tools for teaching students with learning difficulties in a mainstream setting. The Department of Education must assist educators in obtaining the resources, skills, and expertise to effectively teach all students, regardless of their ability, as well as to fulfil their many other duties in the classroom.

2.3 Roles of Educators in Inclusive English Language Classrooms

Language is a tool for cognition and communication, according to the 2003 National Curriculum Statement (NCS). It allows learners to express themselves, their feelings, and their ideas, as well as to connect with others and control their reality. For most South African students, English is a second or even third language; hence, teachers of the language play a vital role in their education. There are a lot of pressures and issues that teachers encounter when trying to implement changes that are necessary for the teaching profession, which is complex, demanding, and difficult.

The ability of a school's educational system to meet the demands of its diverse student body is directly correlated to the calibre of its teaching staff. English teachers used to have things easy when it came to class preparation and delivery because pupils were either seen as "normal" or as having special needs. However, in today's mixed-ability classrooms, teachers must diversify their lessons to meet the needs of students who are academically brilliant as well as those who struggle with reading and other reading-related skills. Language educators are under increasing pressure to meet their pedagogical objectives as the number of students facing socioeconomic hurdles to learning continues to rise. A wide variety of literacies, including media, graphics, information, computer, cultural, and critical literacy, are now necessary for successful participation in society and the workplace in the global economy of the twenty-first century, according to the NCS (2003).

As the cultural importance of English has grown over the past few decades, so too needs new approaches to teaching the language. The task of English language educators is to teach not only the definition of English but also its usage and communication skills. Students in an inclusive classroom have a wide range of abilities, which might make it challenging for some to fully understand linguistic concepts. Frustration, demotivation, and a general disinterest in learning are common outcomes for learners when this happens.

An English language instructor has many hats to wear in the classroom if they want their students to reach their greatest potential in terms of learning. The early 20th century saw a strong correlation between a teacher's goodness and the quality of their instruction. These days, a great educator must have the capacity to significantly impact the lives of their students. Motivating, social engineering, imparting knowledge, mentoring, administering, and being supportive to both students and fellow teachers are just a few of the many tasks that educators have taken on since the advent of inclusive education to ensure that all students succeed.

2.3.1 Teacher as a Facilitator

Killen (2017) emphasizes that an educator's core role is to facilitate learners' understanding of concepts rather than simply passing information. Brophy and Good (1986) link teacher behaviour to learners' achievements, emphasizing that academic learning is influenced by time spent on activities. Teachers should organize the classroom, establish a supportive learning environment, and assess students' growth and performance. By documenting accomplishments, areas for

improvement, and difficulties, teachers can identify students with learning obstacles and design assignments and classes to help all students succeed.

2.3.2 Teacher as a Social Engineer

Social engineers, as defined by Radhakrishnan (2018), are responsible for bringing about societal changes through deliberate action. In inclusive education, teachers understand the challenges faced by students with economic, social, and familial challenges. They act as investigators, identifying obstacles and disabilities and devising teaching strategies to help students understand various subjects. They should support all students, regardless of learning styles, and provide various English language exercises that cater to their interests.

2.3.3 Teacher as a role model

Pieterse (2010), King (2002), and Ferdinand Chambers (2011) all stress the value of inclusive education in the classroom. The importance of teachers serving as role models is emphasized, as their actions have a big impact on pupils' personal development. According to King (2002), students who have a strong sense of self-worth exhibit confidence and a good self-concept. Pieterse (2010) draws attention to how classroom experiences affect a student's general well-being. English language teachers should foster a caring environment in the classroom and help students with any challenges they may be having, such as stress, anxiety, or poor self-esteem.

2.3.4 Teacher as a Learner Supporter

According to Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001), mainstream teachers are ill-prepared for inclusive education, and the DBE and its allies must assist. Chemicals (2004) highlights the value of tailored training and one-on-one assistance for students who are having difficulty in their studies. To address inclusive teaching and learning barriers and acknowledge students' potential for independence, Booth and Ainscow (2011) highlight the importance of learner support. The significance of teachers offering all pupils creative learning opportunities is emphasized by Husu and Tiri (2007). According to Radhakrishnan (2018), teachers must demonstrate respect and foster friendships in addition to adapting lessons to fit the needs of students with varying skills and learning styles. They should also alter assignments as needed.

2.4 Barriers to Learning in South Africa

Any educational system's main objective is to provide students with a top-notch education so they can reach their full potential and be able to actively participate in and contribute to society for the rest of their lives (EWP6, 2001). Numerous factors hinder learning rather than a single cause, which explains why there are so many learning barriers. A learning barrier is anything that keeps a child from learning in the right way. Donald (2010), citing Mash and Wolfe (2005), defined a learning barrier as anything that impedes the acquisition of new knowledge and alters the way individuals with average or above-average intelligence acquire, recall, and transmit information. Another part of learning is getting over any obstacles that can prevent a student from using the educational system or make a learning breakdown worse. A learner may encounter several obstacles when pursuing knowledge. According to Vlok (2016), learning barriers can appear in several ways and become apparent when the learning process breaks down and students are then expelled from the classroom. When the educational system is unable to meet every student's demand, regardless of their unique learning requirements, a learning breakdown typically results.

The Assessment Guidelines for Inclusion (DBE, 2002) identified three primary categories of learning impediments. The DBE (2002) identified the following groups as barriers resulting from differences in abilities:

- socioeconomic factors, such as underfunded special education schools;
- crowded classrooms or unsuitable facilities that hinder the promotion of inclusive practices;
- physical, neurological, sensory, or cognitive challenges;
- inflexible teaching methods;
- inappropriate forms of assessment; and
- insufficient funding for teacher support.

The DBE (2002) noted that, in addition to these issues, extreme poverty and absenteeism also contribute to learning difficulties, and these factors should be considered when developing an inclusion policy. Engelbrecht (2016) states that there are numerous obstacles to schooling in South

Africa, which may be man-made or natural. The below figure summarises the different learning barriers from intrinsic to extrinsic barriers.

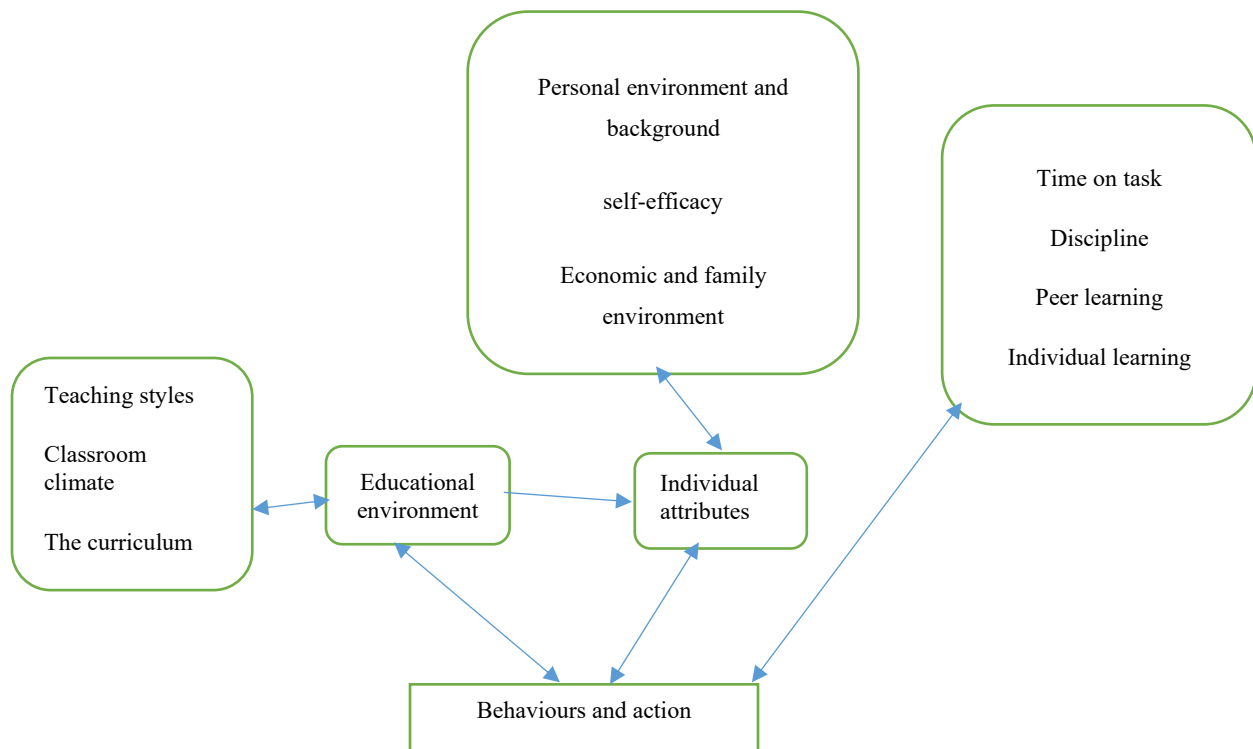


Figure 2.1: Summary of learning barriers (author's own)

2.4.1 Intrinsic Learning Barriers

The DBE (2001) characterizes intrinsic barriers as those that are internal to the person. They can include differences in intellectual capacity related to life experiences, psychosocial disturbances, and physical, mental, sensory, neurological, and developmental impairments. Neurological disorders include muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and auditory and fetal alcohol syndrome disorders, amongst many others. According to the Department of Education (1997), intrinsic barriers can also include emotional and behavioural issues, diseases, chronic illnesses, trauma, and other conditions. Charlesworth's (2007) theory states that students who are identified as having intrinsic learning barriers are highly diverse and range widely in terms of their cognitive, intellectual, social, and communicative skills, as well as the degree of obstacles they encounter in the educational system.

2.4.1.1 Disability conditions

Any physical ailment that limits a person's range of motion, endurance, or dexterity is referred to as an impairment. Smith (2005) states that students who face physical obstacles in their education are physically disabled and have issues with their vitality and mobility. These disabilities include, *inter alia*, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, respiratory conditions, hearing and vision impairments, brain or spinal cord injuries, and wheelchair-using students who have difficulty getting to school. According to Vlok (2016), these students may also encounter unfavorable comments and responses from others as a result of their disabilities, which could cause social issues.

2.4.1.2 Disease and Chronic Illness

Chronic illnesses, including HIV, cancer, diabetes, and Alzheimer's, can greatly affect a student's engagement in their school and daily activities. These illnesses can result in enduring or irreversible consequences for students, leading to feelings of seclusion, concern, and annoyance upon their return to school. Moreover, specific medications prescribed for chronic diseases can impact a student's academic performance by causing drowsiness in class or interfering with their learning process. Academic success is essential for the majority of students, including those with chronic illnesses, but it can also result in further stress for these individuals. English educators struggle to support these learners because they lack the necessary abilities to address their learning obstacles. Mastropieri and Scruggs (2001) raise concerns regarding inadequate professional development and training for teachers as they struggle to handle individualized lesson plans, leading to overload and tension. Teachers who are overwhelmed by negative emotions may have a diminished inclination to cultivate robust relationships with their students and report reduced levels of engagement, tolerance, and empathy.

Kunneke and Tze (2014) highlight the significance of teacher self-efficacy in school psychology research, as it influences teaching effectiveness, instructional methods, and student accomplishments. Many teachers lack confidence in managing responsibilities and difficulties in an inclusive classroom, which results in negative attitudes towards struggling students. Comprehending and tackling the obstacles presented by chronic diseases in education is essential for enhancing learning outcomes for all students.

2.4.1.3 Learning disabilities

A broad range of learning issues are collectively referred to as learning disorders or impairments. The Learning Impairments Association of Canada (LDAC, 2007) defines learning impairments as a group of conditions that can interfere with verbal or nonverbal information acquisition, organization, retention, understanding, and use. The LDAC (2007) goes on to say that these diseases have an impact on learning in people who otherwise exhibit at least the average talents necessary for reasoning and/or thinking. Wawryk-Epp et al. (2004) state that deficits in one or more processes associated with perception, thought, memory, or learning cause learning difficulties.

Language and phonological processing, visual-spatial processing, processing speed, memory and attention, and executive functions are a few of these, but they're not the only ones. According to Wawryk-Epp et al. (2004), learning disorders can affect a person's ability to acquire and apply one or more of the following skills, depending on their severity:

- oral language (e.g., listening, speaking, understanding)
- reading (e.g., decoding, phonetic knowledge, word recognition, comprehension)
- written language (e.g., spelling, written expression) and
- mathematics (e.g., computation, problem-solving).

Figure 2.2 summarises learning disabilities and the skills that those disabilities might affect.

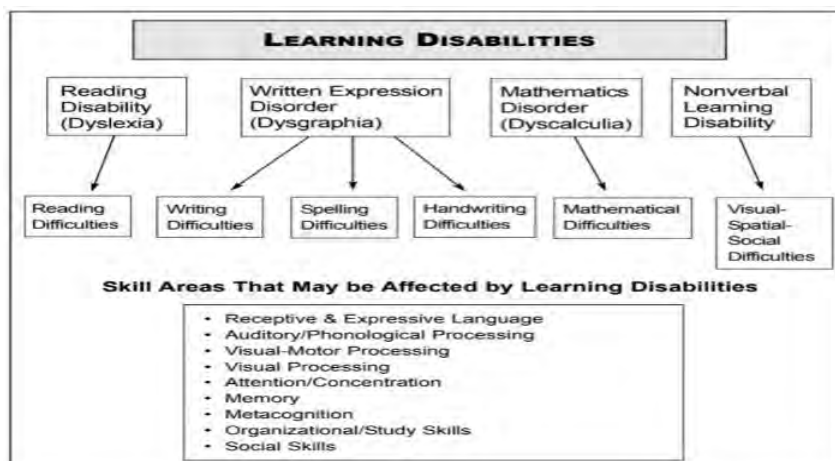


Figure 2.2: Summary of learning disabilities (Wawryk-Epp, 2004)

The above figure clearly shows the different learning barriers and the skills that may be affected, such as social skills, attention, memory, and study skills.

2.4.2 Extrinsic Learning Barriers

According to Landsberg (2008), extrinsic barriers are those that exist in the environment outside of or external to the individual. Thus, extrinsic obstacles are outside factors that have an impact on a learner's capacity for learning. These might result from family, societal, cultural, or economic reasons, or from parents who do not participate in their children's education. Higher education institutions are likely to provide challenges. This assertion is backed up by DBE (2001) and Engelbrecht et al. (2006), for example. They list extrinsic factors that can hinder learning in South Africa, such as socioeconomic conditions, unsafe environments, a lack of healthcare facilities, negative attitudes, a rigid curriculum, inappropriate and insufficient support services, the absence of parental involvement, and school-related issues like cramped classrooms, inexperienced teachers, and language that is inappropriate for instruction.

2.4.2.1 Prejudice, attitudes, and societal influences.

Themane and Osher (2014) list several socioeconomic variables that contribute to South Africa's extreme poverty, such as unemployment, underdevelopment, late school enrolment, a lack of essential amenities, racial and/or language prejudice, and disability, as well as learners without adult supervision. Poverty, according to Prinsloo (2005), has a significant impact on health, malnutrition, educational delays, informal settlements, language and communication obstacles, and negative attitudes. According to Vlok (2016), students from low-income families struggle to pay attention in class and have trouble meeting their most fundamental needs since they are undernourished. Emotional stress, low self-esteem, and scholastic difficulties are more common among children from very low-income homes who do not have adult support, according to the Department of Education (1997). Furthermore, Vlok (2016) points out that students dealing with chronic diseases frequently encounter prejudice and are frequently characterized as naive. To combat cultural biases and disseminate information about inclusion, Conway (2017) stresses the importance of community involvement.

2.4.2.2 Insufficient teaching experience

The research conducted by Hall (1998) emphasized the scarcity of trained professionals who can assist students who are facing challenges as a result of educational inequality. Many teachers are hesitant to include students with learning difficulties in mainstream classes because they do not have the necessary training or experience, according to Sabine (2017), who argues that teachers should adjust to a diverse student population. Teachers who received their degrees before 1994 can have a harder time adjusting to the modern classroom. Learning and its socially placed elements must be understood, according to Macleod and Golby (2003). Two out of six English language teachers at the participating schools have experience helping students who have difficulties learning to succeed in inclusive classrooms.

According to the International Literacy Association (ILA, 2013), reading instructors have a major impact on their students' interest in and success with reading. On the other hand, Mawela (2018) notes that instructors' lack of fluency in English language instruction and ineffective teaching methods are to blame for the low reading scores of intermediate school students in South Africa. There have been problems with the National Reading Strategy's implementation (DBE, 2008), and many educators do not possess the basic knowledge necessary to instruct students in reading and writing. According to Sivnarain (2013), there is a shortage of qualified educators with expertise in teaching in inclusive classrooms, which results in insufficient reading instruction for young students. According to Mawela (2018), new teachers leaving colleges and universities have poor subject matter knowledge and poor teacher quality.

2.4.2.3 The teacher-to-learner ratio

Lack of teaching and learning resources, coupled with enormous class sizes and exceptionally high teacher-to-student ratios, plague the majority of rural educational institutions. It is up to educators to devise strategies for meeting the requirements of students with learning difficulties. English language teachers in mainstream South African schools deal with a lot more work and more responsibility. The majority of them include students with learning and reading impairments in their five to six courses of more than forty students. The difficulties faced by educators include increased student-teacher ratios, a wide range of learning demands, a lack of planning time, a

variety of instructional layouts, more responsibilities, and higher standards for students passing their grades, according to Scanlon and Baker (2012) and Swayer and Rimm-Kaufman (2007).

According to Olson (1997), teachers struggle to meet the educational demands of every student in their classrooms. They share teachers' concerns about finding it difficult to plan for individual learning differences and experiencing anxiety about their workload and lack of preparation for the curriculum. Because of the high teacher-to-student ratio, educators also find it difficult to meet the needs of each student. This claim prevents teachers from providing students with options for extended study that might improve their learning.

2.4.2.4 Poor reading and writing proficiencies

According to our constitution, the right to read and write is outlined in the Department of Education (2002). However, due to various connected causes, including learning hurdles and undiagnosed learning disorders, English language teachers must deal with students who struggle with literacy. Literacy is the capacity to read, write, listen, see, depict, and engage in critical thought. It is the ability to employ words and pictures in a variety of complex ways (UNESCO, 2017). It involves the capacity to gather, arrange, and evaluate data, in addition to thinking critically and creatively and communicating ideas and points of view (UNESCO, 2017). Literacy includes critical thinking and reasoning, which are used to solve issues and make decisions on equity, fairness, and social justice (Miranda, 2021).

Reach Every Student – Energising Ontario Education states that literacy “connects individuals and communities and is an essential tool for personal growth and active participation in a cohesive, democratic society” (Ministry of Education, Ontario, 2008, p. 2). Similarly, literacy is described by Frankel et al. (2016) as the interaction and engagement with multimodal texts within the framework of socially situated practices to extract, construct, integrate, and criticize meaning through reading, writing, and speaking the language. The four literacy skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – are highlighted in the definition below.

The DBE (2011) explains these skills as follows:

1. Listening and Speaking Skills – These skills are central to learning in all subjects as learners collect and synthesize information, construct knowledge, solve problems, and express ideas and opinions.
2. Reading and Viewing Skills – Learners develop proficiency in reading and viewing a wide range of literary and non-literary texts, including visual text, and become critical and creative thinkers.
3. Writing and Presenting Skills – Writing allows learners to construct and communicate thoughts and ideas coherently and enables learners to communicate functionally and creatively.
4. Language Structures and Conventions – Learners develop a shared language for talking about language (a meta-language) so that they can evaluate their own and other texts critically in terms of meaning, effectiveness, and accuracy.

As a basic human right, literacy is an essential component of any quality education. Minister of Education, Angie Motshekga, asserted that students in the foundation phase must acquire strong reading skills to succeed in subsequent years of school and the workforce (DBE, 2018). Beeld (2010), consistent with Phajane (2014), states that intervention is crucial, particularly during the foundational phase, due to reading's key function both in and out of school. When students don't master reading in elementary school, they struggle to keep up with the demands of middle and high school. Rozendal et al. (2002). In addition to limited development in word reading and vocabulary, children with reading difficulties also show limitations in their knowledge and application of cognitive techniques during reading, according to Adams (1990). Similarly, research by Mawela (2018) reveals that proficiency in reading and writing is the primary reason for both student re-enrolment and school dropout rates. In support of this assertion, Probyn (2002) argues that students' academic performance must be at least as good as that of proficient readers of the same age for them to succeed in English-medium schools (Garner and Kraus, 1981-82).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2015) reported that over 781 million individuals in the world are illiterate at the age of 15. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2015). According to Rintaningrum (2009), being literate is

essential for success in school and life in general, so much so that it has become recognized as a crucial component of national development. Literacy brings academic success and personal growth. For students to grow in self-assurance and positive self-perception, reading is an essential skill. A lack of confidence in one's talents and abilities is a common trait among poor readers (Siddik, 2020). Siddik (2020) further states that students' inability to read and comprehend content might lead to low performances in other classes as well.

Students with reading impairments also tend to struggle academically (Signey, 2006). The student gives up trying because of bad outcomes. This is a problem that teachers face; students struggle not just with English but with reading and understanding in general. Reading is usually thought of as the link between correct word recognition and understanding (Pikulski & Chard, 2005). The fact that students need reading comprehension to write and answer questions shows how important reading is to their education.

2.5 Reading's Crucial Role in Learning

Literacy is more than just reading; it also requires the ability to write, speak, and listen enough to carry on meaningful conversations. In reading, readers respond to and make sense of a text by drawing on prior knowledge (Spratt et al., 2005). In a similar vein, Grabe (2009) defines it as an educational component in which students apply what they have read in a classroom context. What about the 2006 PIRLS? They define reading literacy as the capacity to comprehend and utilise written language forms that are either valued by individuals or mandated by society. A wide range of books can be meaningful to young readers; they read for fun, to learn, and to join reading clubs at school and in their social lives. As Ariffin (1992) points out, reading is often a solitary, peaceful pastime. Reading, as defined above, can be done silently or loudly and is associated with the act of acquiring knowledge.

Students need to work on reading, speaking, and listening in tandem with writing and listening if they want to reach reading proficiency. Isolated reading instruction is ineffective. Reading, according to Chitravelu (1995), is not a static competency but rather a multifaceted talent applicable to many contexts and assessments. According to Dizon's 2000 study, students exhibiting severe linguistic ineptitude do not possess the proficiency level of English language arts coursework expectations. According to Chizwina (2011), reading is like a workout for the brain.

Reading exposes one to a wealth of knowledge, which calls for the consistent use of reasoning, analysis, and comprehension skills in all adults. To succeed academically, contribute to society, work in the workforce, advance sustainable development, improve one's well-being, and ultimately progress civilization, De Vos and Van de Merwe (2014) argue that a minimum level of literacy is necessary.

Gee (1999) and Street (2005) cite reading as one of four social acts – the others being speaking, listening, and writing (Frankel et al., 2016). According to Frankel et al. (2016), these pursuits have their roots in the cultural, social, and historical milieux (Cole, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). To read and write, students must develop a wide variety of abilities, from more complex cognitive processes to the most basic, foundational motor skills required to decipher printed words. Johnson (2019) argues that intervention is crucial, especially in elementary schools, due to the total long-term expenses connected with literacy and the substantial role reading plays both in and out of the classroom. I chose to research inclusive classroom reading programmes because reading has such a profound effect on children's development and success in school. Breaking down language into smaller, more edible components while teaching reading and writing skills may be important to ensure that children can understand the abstract features of academic language. So, I will be able to determine if reading-difficult pupils' academic performance and reading abilities increase when provided full access to the RtL approach, which is at the centre of this study.

2.5.1 Reading in South African Schools

Reading, according to Krashen (1993), is an efficient method for stimulating the imaginations of students. Akin to this, the acting director of the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment at Pretoria University, Celeste Combrinck, asserts that reading proficiency is crucial for academic and future success. According to PIRLS (2016), reading literacy is an extremely vital skill that students acquire in the early years of schooling. It functions as a fundamental component of education across all academic disciplines, can be applied for recreational and personal growth purposes, and equips young individuals with the necessary skills to actively participate in their local communities and the broader society (PIRLS, 2016).

Van Staden and Boskerll (2014) argue that reading literacy is a critical skill that students cultivate as they progress through the early years of schooling. Reading difficulties are not a novel phenomenon in South Africa; this has been consistently documented in the media. Recent statistics indicate that a significant proportion of students continue to encounter difficulties in reading and writing, which hurt their overall performance in the matriculation examinations (DBE, 2010). The reading proficiency of South African schoolchildren was assessed by the Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ III) in 2011. For the wealthiest 25% of students, this ranking was fourth out of 15 in Africa, while for the poorest 25% of children, it was 14th (Spaull, 2011). The PIRLS examinations conducted in 2006 and 2011 revealed that South African students continued to perform inadequately, as no statistically significant improvement was identified between the two years (Mullis 2012). The fact that South Africa ranked last out of 50 countries on the PIRLS 2016 assessment is an emphatic indication that the nation is beset by a severe literacy crisis. The study sample comprised fourth graders who underwent a reading comprehension assessment. Despite a moderate improvement in home language proficiency, first supplementary language scores for all grades continue to fall below 50%, according to South Africa's ANA statistics (DBE, 2014). According to the findings of a study conducted by the National Education and Evaluation Development Unit of South Africa, 41% of a sample of fifth-grade English second language learners in rural areas were classified as 'non-readers of English,' as determined by Draper and Spaull (2015) and Rule and Land (2017).

Table 2.1: The PIRLS 2016 results for learners who did not reach the benchmark per province

PROVINCE	DID NOT REACH %	LOW BENCHMARK %	INTERMEDIATE BENCHMARK %	HIGH BENCHMARK %	ADVANCED BENCHMARK %
Limpopo	90,8	9,2	1,0	0,1	0,0
Eastern Cape	84,9	15,4	4,6	0,8	0,1
Mpumalanga	82,9	17,1	4,4	0,7	0,1

KwaZulu Natal	81,6	18,4	3,9	0,7	0,1
Northern Cape	80,6	19,4	6,5	0,9	0,1
Northwest	78,3	21,7	7,3	1,9	0,0
Free State	68,5	31,5	8,7	2,0	0,1
Gauteng	55,0	26,6	14,7	4,7	0,7
Western Cape	55,0	345,0	19,0	5,2	0,6
South Africa	77,9	22,1	7,5	1,9	0,2

Source: PIRLS (2016) and Combrinck et al. (2016)

According to research by Combrinck et al. (2016), about 81% of fourth graders in South Africa failed to meet the international standard for reading proficiency by the conclusion of the 2016 academic year. Spaul (2017) stated that the startling PIRLS results demonstrated that 80% of students could not comprehend what they read. In 2023 in South Africa, 82% of fourth graders are illiterate, up from 78% during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Spaul (2023). The pandemic, claims Spaul (2023), has undone ten years of progress in raising children's reading comprehension levels. In the 2016 PIRLS study, just 22% of fourth graders could not read for meaning; in the current 2023 report, that number drops to 18%.

Background elements connected to achievement include the family environment, classroom contextual factors, and the school environment (Combrinck et al., 2016). According to the same source, only 3% of pupils were located in urban regions, whereas the vast majority of low-performing students were from rural areas (39%), small towns (20%) or villages (18%). According to the results, urban students had better reading skills than their rural counterparts. With 75% of students classified as coming from low-income households, PIRLS (2016) found a correlation between students' socioeconomic status and their academic performance.

Students in grades 1–9 had their reading and math skills tested on a national scale in 2012, 2013, and 2014 by the DBE through the ANA. The ANA is based on the premise that effective testing will allow students to demonstrate relevant knowledge and skills while also assisting the educational system in identifying students' areas of weakness, according to Angie Motshekga's opening remarks at the DBE in 2014. English as a Second Language (ESL) students' reading, seeing, writing, grammar, and convention skills were evaluated using the ANA. The poor results provided important information on the development of learning differences among youngsters.

Although there has been a discernible improvement in performance in both language and mathematics fundamental skills, the DBE (2015) reports that a significant portion of students continue to face difficulties when faced with problems that demand higher-order cognitive abilities. This was determined by the findings from the ANA's review of the test takers' demonstrated knowledge and abilities. South African schoolchildren do poorly in terms of cognitive performance, according to Van der Berg (2015), who claims that the assessment of the ANA data verifies the conclusions of other domestic and foreign research. Similarly, the DBE (2014) found that many FAL learners struggled to respond to questions that required them to use their native language. The children also exhibited a lack of editing skills, struggled to interpret sentences and provide opinions when asked, and had trouble coming up with their summary of a text (DBE, 2014).

Both the ANA and PIRLS found that pupils from low-income families tended to do worse on the exams. Reading proficiency was much lower among pupils from low-income schools, according to the ANA data. The DBE classifies schools as either wealthy or poor based on their location; affluent schools are located in the fifth quintile (2014). Mawela (2018) notes the concerning fact that the lowest ANA test scores were generated by schools in quintiles one and two and asserts that these schools are lacking in both intellect and resources due to their past experiences under the Bantu Education system.

Table 2.2: ANA results per quintile schools

QUINTILE	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 9
Quintile 1	38.7	45.4	43.0	32.4
Quintile 2	40.2	46.2	44.7	33.6
Quintile 3	42.7	48.0	46.6	34.7
Quintile 4	46.5	52.2	50.6	37.0
Quintile 5	49.8	56.9	60.0	42.9

Source: DBE, (2014) The results according to quintile schools

The above data clearly showed that most South African children did not acquire proficient reading skills. The ANA exams conducted by the DBE in 2014 indicate a significant increase in home language literacy scores for children from 2012 to 2014. However, only 48% of grade 9 students attained a literacy rate of 50% or higher. The results indicated that students in quintiles one and two had low performance, whereas students in quintile five had scores above the 50% criterion in grades five and six. Mawela (2018) indicates that there is a correlation between the socioeconomic status of a community and the literacy skills of its learners. Van der Berg (2015) asserts that the performance analysis reveals a significant learning disparity between children from privileged and underprivileged families, which becomes notably wide by grade 4.

The educational system in South Africa exacerbates learning disparities due to its inconsistent operation (Spaull & Kotzé, 2015). Despite considerable investments of time and resources by South African schools and the education department into literacy improvement programmes, most South African learners continue to face challenges with reading (Haupt, 2020). The Department of Education's systematic evaluation (READ, 2022) found that literacy percentages were greater than numeracy percentages, mostly because of higher scores in listening compared to writing and

reading. The results indicate that South Africa is experiencing a reading crisis. Stellenbosch University economist Nic Spaull attributes poor academic performance to inefficient use of learning time, highly under-resourced schools, and inadequate reading instruction by educators.

Spaull (2017) suggests that inadequate literacy in schools is due to foundation phase teachers lacking the knowledge to teach reading systematically. The National Education Evaluation Department Unit (2016) indicated that low teacher expectations, stemming from a restricted comprehension of the literacy capabilities of 6–9-year-old children, significantly hindered the instruction and acquisition of reading skills during the foundation phase. Motshekga (2014) attributes inadequate literacy and numeracy to inappropriate teaching methods. Despite various interventions aimed at helping teachers develop students who possess reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, the lack of progress in students' performance indicates a disconnect between teaching methods and students' literacy levels (Motshekga, 2014). They claim that pupils' low reading and writing abilities may be attributed to the traditional teaching methods used in the classroom. Howie et al. (2017) suggest that schools and the Department of Education enhance the instruction of reading literacy and provide training in pedagogical content knowledge for teachers in all languages.

2.6 Traditional Methods of Teaching Reading

Educators' inadequacy in understanding successful pedagogies renders them unable to deliver quality reading instruction, regardless of their endeavours (Taylor, 2014). Hasnoor et al. (2013) state that the success or failure of educational programmes is heavily dependent on the chosen learning methodology. The students, the course, and the methods of instruction all play a role in how much information students retain, according to Mayya et al. (2004). Mawela (2017), citing Rose et al. (1999), states that poor literacy rates are caused by parents who do not provide academic support to their children. Mawela goes on to say that it's now obvious that classroom pedagogical practices require revision. According to Mapesos (2017), in the traditional view, teachers hold the view that the teacher-centered approach is the most effective way for students to learn. In this model, the teacher takes center stage in the classroom, and the students sit quietly and listen. In an inclusive English classroom, teachers use a variety of tactics. Most of them fail to deliver the desired outcomes. The traditional cycle is shown in Figure 2.3 below.

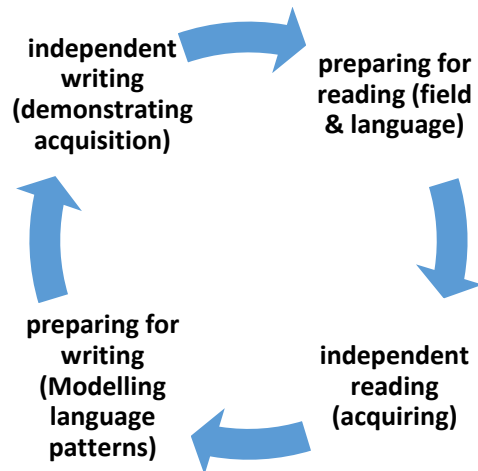


Figure 2.3: Traditional academic curriculum cycle (Millin, 2016)

The pedagogical approach prevalent in conventional education is teacher-centered. The knowledge acquired by the learners is predicated on the educator’s expertise. Traditional classrooms employ a generalized approach to education, which can pose difficulties for students in pursuing subject matter that piques their interest. Learners exhibit passive listening tendencies and may fail to actively engage in the instructor’s discourse. According to Figure 2.3 above, the educator adheres to a strict timetable, which frequently causes the students to struggle.

The following are examples of conventional approaches employed by educators:

2.6.1 Rote reading

Widespread in the field of education, rote learning prioritizes content memorization over comprehension and practical application. For academic success, this cognitive processing is accomplished via repetition and rehearsal of material (Morton, 2011). Significantly among high achievers, rote learning has negative connotations, including the impediment to subject comprehension (Harell, 2021). Moreover, it fails to foster the development of social skills, which are fundamental for effective learning in an all-inclusive educational setting (Gresham & MacMillan, 1997; Sucuoglu & Ozokcu, 2005). Mawela (2018) defines the phonetic reading method as a conventional strategy that emphasizes phonemic awareness, phonology, and alphabetic knowledge. It promotes the practice of children decoding words based on their noises as opposed to recognizing entire words. Conversely, synthetic phonics, according to Davis (2014),

is an ineffective method in inclusive classrooms. Based on isolated passages of text, he argues, students are taught to recognize letters and their sounds, and not all words conform to the norms regarding phonetic correspondence.

According to Mawela (2018), the primary drawback of this methodology is that although students may attain the ability to read, their capacity for comprehension remains uncultivated. In addition, she asserts that this method of memorizing sequences of words and sounds is tedious and inflexible for students. In complex subjects, the absence of context renders students ignorant of the material they are perusing. In summary, although rote learning and the phonetic method may prove to be effective under certain circumstances, they fail to produce favourable outcomes and may prove tedious for learners. Incorporating more effective and inclusive teaching strategies can assist students in acquiring superior reading abilities and achieving greater academic success overall.

2.6.2 Orton-Gillingham method

According to Rooney (2019), the Orton-Gillingham approach was created to help people with dyslexia who struggle with reading and writing. Rooney goes on to claim that the Orton-Gillingham approach is currently being employed in classroom settings with a wider range of pupils due to the growing body of research on the essential elements of successful reading instruction. This was the first strategy that was created specifically to assist struggling readers by teaching the relationships between letters and sounds clearly and concisely. Similarly, Mawela (2018) states that the emphasis of this approach is on teaching sounds and letters. According to Mawela, students learn letters through hearing, writing, touching, and seeing them. The students would be able to recognize letters and decipher words while employing this method. This approach does not address comprehension; rather, it focuses on helping students read at word level (Goeke and Ritchey, 2006; Mawela, 2018).

2.6.3 Whole language approach

According to Laney (2011), the whole language approach is an instructional philosophy for teaching reading and writing. This approach focuses on meaning, and the learners need to understand the text before they can learn to recognize the letters (Mawela, 2018). This approach will not work in an inclusive classroom because, in the classroom, the teacher sees the students as

individuals and not as a group, as advocated by the inclusive policy. Even though the approach is learner-centered, Decker (2007) and Mawela (2018) state that in this method, the teacher does not teach the basic skills of reading, and the learner ends up with no knowledge of the letters.

2.7 RtL Approach: A Substitute for Traditional Reading Methods

According to Cheminais (2004), effective teaching practices and individualized support are crucial for schools to assist students with learning challenges. Rose et al. (1999) suggest that pedagogical procedures in schools need to be revised. Phajane (2014) states that teachers lack confidence in the methods they use to teach early readers. The introduction of inclusive education in mainstream schools has exacerbated this issue. This project will use the RtL technique as an alternative pedagogical approach to enhance English language teaching in an inclusive classroom. The RtL methodology comprises various approaches that help teachers support all students in developing reading and writing skills.

Teachers can assist students in enhancing their reading and writing abilities by utilizing a set of strategies called RtL pedagogy. Rose (2006) devised a pedagogy to support marginalized students in Australia's Pitjantjara indigenous community, which is plagued by social and economic hurdles and lacks access to good quality education. According to Rose (2004), the primary goal of RtL is to advocate for social justice. RtL is centred on addressing social disparities faced by underprivileged communities through interventions in the classroom (Mataka, 2017). Becerra et al. (2020) propose that RtL is an instructional approach that aids students in transitioning from guided to independent comprehension in reading and writing. As Millin (2016) articulates, RtL is crafted to integrate subject-specific curriculum teaching with the fundamental skills children acquire from reading and engaging with teachers and classmates.

Mawela (2018) states that the RtL method focuses on enhancing pupils' reading and writing skills. It was designed to allow students from disadvantaged homes, who often experience a disparity in literacy skills between home and school, to actively engage in classroom activities. The educational approach known as RtL seeks to enhance students' text output and comprehension (Rose & Martin, 2012). RtL, originating from systemic functional linguistics, believes that any form of social communication, whether written or spoken, can be considered a text (Becerra et al.,

2020). Becerra et al. also state that RtL uses texts as a starting point for structuring, developing, and assessing lessons to assist students in improving their ability to analyse particular genres.

The RtL method employs scaffolding to assist all students in completing challenging projects, with a focus on providing the most support to disadvantaged children. Rose (2004) asserts that the RtL pedagogy not only recognizes this potential but also ensures that all students in a class are performing at a high level simultaneously. Students build independent competency by continually doing hard activities rather than studying in separate stages. Scaffold support is gradually removed as students assume greater responsibility. This approach allows for the creation of a democratic classroom where each student can equitably balance their identities as effective learners, thereby changing an unfair moral structure. The statement indicates that with proper help at each phase of their cognitive growth, all pupils can reach their full potential (Rose, 2005). To do this, pupils' reading and writing skills can be developed in three tiers, as seen in Figure 2.4 below (Millin, 2016).

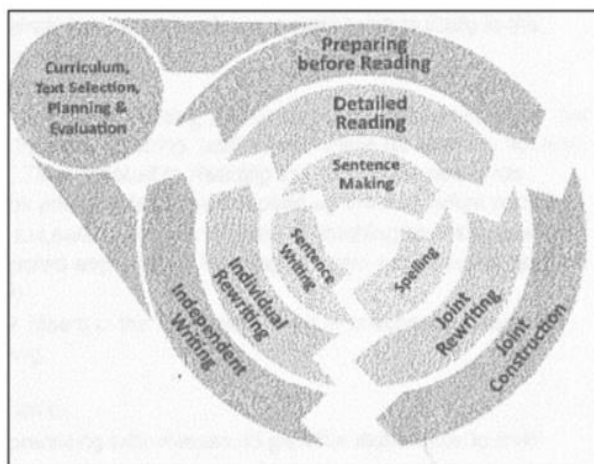


Figure 2.4: Three layers of scaffolding (Acevedo, 2010, p. 19)

The first level (outer layer): this layer gets students ready for reading in class, for understanding texts thereafter, and for reconstructing specific text kinds (Acevedo, 2010). Selected texts are used for instruction and later serve as templates for directing and encouraging individual rewriting projects. This necessitates selecting instructional materials carefully since well-written texts must be used as models for proper text development (Millin, 2016).

Second level (middle layer): This level deepens students' understanding of the story and assists them in reconstructing their text using the text's content and embedded language patterns (Acevedo, 2010). Even the least proficient pupils can replicate texts that are equally difficult with the help of extensive scaffolding (Millin, 2016). If students with lower performance levels are placed with those with higher performance levels, both teachers and peers can help with learning at this level.

Third level three (inner layer): To give students the tools they need to alter language patterns seen in the text's sentences; this layer offers a high degree of scaffolding (Millin, 2016). Additionally, learners receive assistance with spelling unfamiliar terms (Acevedo, 2010).

Students can not only benefit from these strategies for learning sentence structure and grammar but they can also be used to assist children who struggle with vocabulary development, according to Millin (2016). The top-down structure of RtL is exemplified, according to Millin, by the three distinct levels that culminate in a more contemporary six-stage teaching cycle. She elaborates that top-down assistance pertains to providing guidance starting from the most general understanding of the text (common sense) and progressing to the level of individual sentences and words (Millin, 2016). Irrespective of socioeconomic status or academic standing, every student can derive advantages from the RtL pedagogy, which consists of a six-step scaffolding interaction cycle (Mawela, 2018). Mawela (2018) further states that when an educator implements the RtL pedagogy, there are mutual benefits for the instructor and the students, and the instructor's instruction improves. RtL establishes an educational strategy that expedites the development of academic literacy skills in students by integrating elements of numerous 'academic literacy pedagogies' (Acevedo, 2010; Millin, 2011; Rose, 2005). The RtL approach improves 'academic literacy' skills, according to several studies conducted outside of South Africa (Acevedo, 2010; McRae et al., 2000; Millin & Millin, 2014; Rose & Acevedo, 2006).



Figure 2.5: Six stages pedagogical cycle of RtL (Acevedo & Rose, 2007; Rose, 2006)

1. Preparing before reading

Since the first step is discussion-based, the teachers introduce the students to the text's genre and subject matter before the read-aloud session begins (Rose, 2005). This suggests that for students to grasp and comprehend the material, teachers should clarify the text's contextual meaning and break the material down into manageable, comprehensive chunks (Rose, 2005). Learning about the text's content (the subject matter of the text) and schematic structure, as well as the circumstances in which it was generated, are all facilitated by getting students ready for reading (Becerra, 2020). The teacher reads aloud from the material and provides a summary in this step. As they listen, the students comprehend the passage's meaning. The teacher paraphrases the material for the students to help them with reading and to help them get started. The story's order is also emphasized. This phase is crucial because it allows the teacher to scaffold the students' reading comprehension by modeling the texts. This structure, meanwhile, is dependent on the students. The RtL approach, according to Millin (2016), is said to accomplish this on two different levels: first, by orienting students to the text's 'field,' and second, by scaffolding them through the interpretation of the language used in each phrase and paragraph of the chosen text. According to Freire (1970), 'literacy' instruction must be rich in a vocabulary that pupils will find meaningful. This means that teachers ought to select a work that speaks to real-world circumstances or the

learners' context. For instance, learners in rural locations cannot benefit from stories featuring railroads, and city dwellers may not find texts featuring donkey carts interesting.

2. Detailed reading

At this point, students are getting ready by expanding on new terms and using metaphorical language as they recognize and emphasize them in the story that Rose cites (Webster et al., 2005). To strengthen their comprehension skills, students are required to read aloud after interpreting the sentence contexts and answering follow-up 'wh-' inquiries, such as who, where, and when (Webster et al., 2005). To help the students read independently, the teacher defines new words in each sentence. Every student can read along with the teacher and gain confidence in their ability to read that piece. This helps everyone who struggles academically, and those who face reading obstacles, to gain confidence and a love of reading. Lastly, teachers clarify and validate student answers by elaborating on the meaning of the words used or the way they make sense in the text (Rose, 2008). In-depth reading fosters comprehension of the lexical and grammatical (lexico-grammatical) aspects of texts, preparing students for writing and reading in the future (Rose, 2018).

3. Preparing before writing

Since the students have already become familiar with the terms from the 'detailed reading' stage, the teacher uses this step to get them talking in groups about synonyms for the words that have been highlighted. These synonyms will be used in the collaborative reconstruction stage (Rose, 2005). At this point, the students practice spelling by manipulating texts on cardboard strips (primary school). Alternatively, students will use the passage as a source of notes to practice spelling in a high school note-taking exercise. To facilitate collaborative rewriting exercises, the learners are asked to use terms or phrases that they underlined during the detailed reading stage (Hart, 2011). The students are asked to write out the keywords they selected from the story.

4. Joint reconstruction

To enable students to create a new story without altering the plot, setting, or characters of the original work, teachers prepare them for this step by describing discourse patterns and keynotes using the scaffolding interaction cycle (Martin & Rose, 2012). This phase presents an additional chance to support students' writing decisions. By highlighting important wording and offering

substitutes, the teachers employ the extensive reading interaction cycle to get students ready to create new texts. Every student writes a fresh piece or story on the chalkboard. Here, the class creates a new story with fresh events, characters, and settings using the same words from the section that was read. The section read in factual texts is rewritten using the learners' annotations; the learners' language is used. Because of the supported practice of dissecting and reconstructing meanings they have received at all levels of the text, this class or group activity will help students reconstruct the text. Students must first complete joint construction to write their texts using the same notes (individual reconstruction). This is a supportive step that leads to autonomous building in the same genre on a different topic. This phase can be used to emphasize the specific role those rhetorical devices like the conjunctive have in producing texts that are coherent and cohesive (Millin, 2016).

5. Individual reconstruction

Individual students create their own, original narrative (Rose, 2005). At this point, the student uses the same words to compose a new story on his or her own. In factual texts, the student rewrites the chapter or story using the annotations, but on their own this time.

6. Independent writing

The last phase of the cycle involves the learners completing an individual assignment that is evaluated: independent writing (Rose, 2005).

2.7.1 Motivations for the creation of RtL pedagogy

RtL devised its pedagogical approach to rectify the subpar academic achievements of indigenous Australian pupils and enhance their access to and success in education, particularly in areas where academic reading and writing appeared to be critical determinants (Millin, 2016). RtL pedagogy, as defined by Mawela (2018), is an approach that emphasizes the instruction of writing and reading that was created to democratize the classroom. This indicates that its primary objective was to facilitate learning and establish purposeful learning environments for children from disadvantaged backgrounds who often encounter a disconnect between literacy practices at home and in school (Mawela, 2018).

The objective of RtL is to eliminate educational inequality by employing a pedagogy that aims to assist students in achieving fundamental approaches to writing and reading through thorough scaffolding in carefully planned interactive cycles (Millin & Millin, 2014; Rose & Martin, 2012). This program is a professional teacher development initiative developed in Australia over multiple years to cater to students who faced challenges accessing learning materials due to substantial gaps in their literacy skills (Rose & Martin, 2012; Rose, 2004). According to Millin (2016), the curriculum's initial concept is based on the idea that reading is the primary method of teaching. Millin (2016), Rose and Acevedo (2006) emphasized that teachers should incorporate the instruction of reading and writing skills throughout all academic disciplines. All students in the same classroom receive training at a consistent level of reading and writing to prevent the widening of the skills gap sometimes caused by individualized learning. This differs from present educational practices in South Africa, where class activities are based on students' abilities. Learning is facilitated when teachers offer support to students who surpass their capabilities, enabling them to advance their learning through intentional scaffolding (Rose & Acevedo, 2006). Millin (2016) finds the three main concepts described above to be promising in the context of South African education. However, research by Nel and Muller (2010) and Krugel and Fourie (2014) suggests that South Africa may lack the skilled teaching workforce required to implement a curriculum like RtL.

Millin (2016) states that the programme contains distinct features that suit school-based interventions in South Africa, similar to its suitability for Australian children. Millin goes on to say that the curriculum should be customized for adolescent students, the teaching methods should embrace the diverse cultural and linguistic aspects found in multilingual and multicultural classrooms, there should be alignment with traditional national curriculum standards, flexible delivery methods, and there should be strong support for both academically successful students and those who struggle academically (Millin, 2016). These statements indicate that RtL might be used in an inclusive classroom and, if done correctly, could lead to positive results. RtL was created to eradicate educational inequality by providing equitable access to high-quality literacy activities for all students, regardless of socioeconomic situation or language background (Rose et al., 1999). RtL has been noted for its effectiveness in reducing educational inequality in schools, as documented by various researchers, including Rose and Acevedo (2006), Acevedo (2010), Millin (2011), and Rose and Martin (2012).

The RtL is an educational method for the development of literacy skills, as described by Millin (2016). The program is a professional teacher development initiative created in Australia over the years to cater to students facing challenges in accessing learning materials due to significant delays in their literacy development. The pedagogy of RtL education, such as the social constructivist theory, replaces traditional learning with collaborative constructivist learning. Vygotsky (1978) asserts that a child's cognitive development is significantly impacted by the environment in which they are raised. From this assertion, one might infer that the classroom setting significantly influences the learners' acquisition of knowledge and comprehension. The constructivist philosophy, such as the RtL pedagogy, deviates from standard teaching methods to cater to all students, regardless of their reading or learning challenges.

Table 2.3: The difference between the traditional classroom and the constructivist classroom

TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM	CONSTRUCTIVIST CLASSROOM
1. Strict adherence to a fixed curriculum	1. The pursuit of student questions and interests is valued
2. Learning is based on repetition	2. Learning is interactively built on what learners know
3. Teacher-centred	3. Learner-centred
4. Teachers disseminate information to students and the students are recipients of knowledge	4. Teachers have a dialogue with learners, helping them to construct their knowledge
5. Teachers' roles are directive and rooted in authority	5. Teachers' roles are interactive
6. Learners work primarily alone – competitive learning	6. Learners work primarily in groups – cooperative learning

Source: Tom (2000)

Table 2.3. above indicates that in constructivist classrooms, the teacher must structure material around significant concepts that capture the student's attention, help pupils build fresh perspectives, and link these with their prior knowledge (Bhattacharjee, 2015). The learner

activities are based around the learners, who are prompted to inquire, conduct experiments, draw analogies, and reach conclusions. Bhattacharjee (2015) also emphasizes the importance of social and communication skills, as well as teamwork and idea exchange. Contrary to the typical classroom model where students work independently, learning is based on repetition, and subjects are strictly defined and led by a textbook, RtL's teaching style is distinctive because it views language holistically. Teaching reading should be comprehensive, covering phonemes, words, phrases, paragraphs, and the overall text to ensure all learners can read and comprehend (Millin, 2016). Millin (2016) goes on to say that RtL considers the entire scaffolding cycle, as proposed by Vygotsky, Bruner, and Halliday, who all support the social learning of language.

2.7.2 Theoretical foundations of RtL pedagogy

According to Millin (2011), RtL is based on a conceptual framework that encompasses the ideas of Vygotsky (1978), Halliday (1978, 1989, 1996), and Bernstein (1975, 1990, 1996). Vygotsky views learning as a social process, while Halliday views language as a text within a social context. Towards an orientation of individual words within a text, RtL offers a top-down strategy for academic literacy development, starting with the text as a whole unit (Millin, 2011, 2014, 2016).

2.7.2.1 Vygotsky's learning as a social process

According to Millin (2016), three key components of Vygotsky's theory are incorporated into RtL: 'mediated learning', 'social interaction', and support for the development of higher-order cognitive abilities within each student's unique 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD). Lev Semenovich Vygotsky created the idea of the ZPD in the late 1920s and continued to develop it until he died in 1934. The difference between actual development levels ascertained by autonomous problem-solving and potential development levels ascertained by problem-solving under the supervision of an adult or in cooperation with more experienced individuals is known as the ZPD. In other words, explains Shabani (2010), Vygotsky understood the ZPD to represent the learner's real or current degree of development as well as the next level that can be reached with the help of environmental and mediating semiotic resources, as well as competent adult or peer facilitation. According to Cole and Cole (2001), the term 'proximal' denotes support that complements and enhances the learner's current abilities while just marginally surpassing their current level of competence.

Learners' ZPDs are not all the same; thus, the teacher needs to cushion learners by offering them opportunities to learn from one another in groups and gradually withdrawing help until all learners master the ideas (Eddy, 2010; Mawela, 2017; Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky defined the 'more knowledgeable other' as a competent individual, such as a teacher or peer, who authoritatively supports learners with modeling so they can finish the work at hand with this assistance. The goal of the support is to help students produce work of a higher calibre than they would be able to on their own (Rose et al., 2004).



Figure 2.6: The ZPD (Mawela, 2018)

Vygotsky believed that a child's mental development was more impacted by what they could achieve with the assistance of others than by what they could achieve on their own (McIntyre, 2011). According to Chisamba (2014), assisted performance happens spontaneously in every culture. In the same manner that novices learn from experts, so do youngsters learn from adults as they grow older (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 2003; Tharp & Gallimore, 1993; McIntyre, 2011). Rogoff (2003) used this information to describe 'guided participation' as the process by which parents assist, encourage, and mentor their children's intellectual development. This advice is given by peers or more mature individuals and can apply to both teachers and students in educational environments. (Chisamba, 2014).

By providing the structure and questions needed to begin organizing and piecing together the necessary material, the teachers assist the students through the ZPD (Moll, 1990; Rose, 2006). This is in line with the RtL approach, which has the teacher model the desired output, the skills required, or even the concepts to consider for the task. Students practice the necessary skills under the guidance of the teacher, seeing the work that is modelled, until they can complete it independently (Rose et al., 2004). Roosevelt (2008) asserts that, from a Vygotskian standpoint, the primary goal of education is to maintain pupils as much as possible in their ZPDs. Teachers should set up learning assignments and problem-solving exercises that are slightly more challenging than what students can accomplish on their own, while still being entertaining and culturally relevant, to keep the learners in their zone of proficiency. To finish the assignment, students will have to work with a teacher, an adult, or a peer who is more experienced than they are. Shabani (2010) states that the idea is that if a student completes a task in a group setting, they will most likely be able to do it on their own the next time. RtL was developed, according to Vygotsky's 1978 study, to make use of social interaction in supportive environments to assist students in acquiring more sophisticated 'academic literacy' skills than they otherwise would have been able to accomplish on their own.

According to Shabani (2010), group learning is the best way for people to learn. Through these kinds of collaborative efforts with more seasoned individuals, learners internalize new concepts, psychological tools, and skills. Students usually learn more complex sorts of awareness and reasoning when working with peers who are more skilled than they are (Schaffer, 2004). The distinction between ZPD, which stresses teacher-learner collaboration and negotiation as a bilateral process, and scaffolding, which portrays teaching performance as a one-way communication process, is highlighted by Lave and Wenger (1991). In Vygotsky's theory, the relationship between learning and development is heavily stressed (Mawela, 2018). Scaffolding enables students to perform at a higher level than they could without the teacher's tactical support and, in addition, enables them to do what they were previously unable to do (Mataka, 2017). According to Vygotsky, children acquire specialized information when they start school and learn from birth (see Figure 2.7, Vygotsky's stages of learning). He continues by saying that children's learning in the classroom is enhanced by their prior knowledge because they are not 'empty canisters' and bring knowledge from home with them to school. According to Vygotsky (1978),

when children are tested, the findings of the evaluation show their actual developmental stage and exactly what they know and are capable of.

This zone, according to Millin (2016), is where students who are unable to achieve school expectations for literacy are given the tools, they need to independently analyse academic texts and understand the language patterns that are used to give them meaning. She continues by making the case that because students are allegedly predisposed to mimicking language or thought patterns expressed during extensive scaffolding from a significant person, they eventually acquire the ability to mimic the thought patterns that are modelled in the classroom. At some point, students should be able to complete projects on their own without assistance (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Students who think in these ways are better able to decipher hidden meanings in texts. As a result, academic autonomy is increasingly being gained by students. Mawela (2018) claims that while the ZPD tackles these problems, the teacher-centered and learner-centered approaches uphold society's classification of students as achievers or non-achievers. Rose (2005) claims that the ZPD theory backs up the notion that all children, no matter how talented or not, can achieve at their highest level when they receive assistance from their teachers until they can work independently.

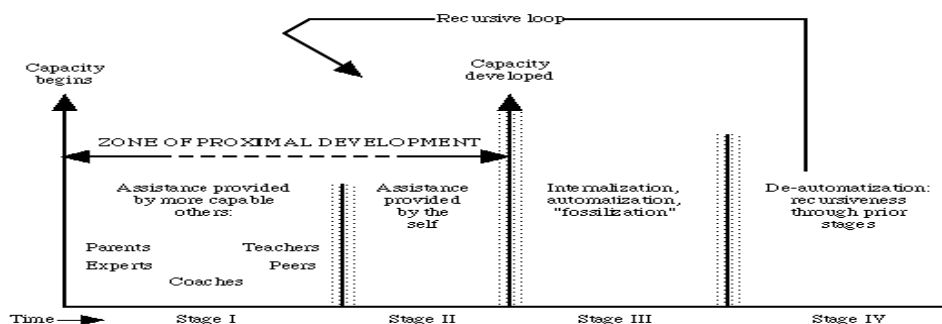


Figure 2.7: Vygotsky's stages of learning (Thorpe & Gallimore, 1988)

2.7.2.2 Bernstein's Code Theory

Code, as defined by Bernstein (1962), refers to the fundamental principles that govern how individuals link, select, and structure language. Basil Bernstein's code theory explains how socioeconomic conditions and educational institutions work together to maintain cultural

reproduction (Chiang, 2022). Bernstein (1962) found a correlation between the use of complex or restrictive codes and socioeconomic position. Instead of the term 'restricted', Moore (2013) employed the phrases 'condensed' and 'elaborated codes' to depict similar occurrences. Samha (2023) notes that speech and writing in the restricted (condensed) code are typically constructed with a limited vocabulary. He stated that working-class and middle-class households often use the condensed code. Condensed code language is practical, concise, status-focused, context-specific, and predictable (Chiang, 2022). Those acquainted with the scenario employ it mostly due to its reliance on past information and life experiences. Bernstein (1962) characterized them as public manifestations.

The detailed code necessitates extensive written and verbal explanation due to its wide range of abstract ideas that allow for language use without context dependency. Samha (2023) states that the middle class uses this verbally expressive code. Bernstein (1962) considered them to be formal expressions. Mothers' preconceptions about their children's knowledge, whether expressed or not, cause the difference between these two codes (Hasan, 2002). Bernstein contended that the development of these two language forms is influenced by the environments in which speakers reside, rather than suggesting that complex codes are superior or that codes are linked to students' cognitive capacities (Nash, 2006). Bernstein (1964) stated that social ties within the social context establish the coding principles that control language use.

Littlejohn (2002) states that this theory elucidates how language in regular conversations both influences and mirrors the beliefs of a particular social group. He supports this assertion by explaining that the relationships formed within social groups impact the language and speech patterns used by those organizations. Mawela (2018) explains that Bernstein identified two types of discourse in his code theory: regulative discourse, which is an everyday language that shapes social connections and identity; and instructional discourse, which is the technical language used in formal education to teach and convey knowledge. Mawela (2018) asserts that the discourse used at home and in the community is the regulatory discourse. All young individuals are familiar with it before starting formal education, as they are introduced to it through socialization. Educators in the classroom employ instructional discourse to convey knowledge and teach skills. Regulatory discourse involves developing an identity and overseeing the management and structure of performance (Bernstein, 1996; Rose, 2005).

Millin (2016) states that instructional discourse is integrated into a regulatory discourse in educational environments. Instructional discourse focuses on skill development, while regulative discourse prioritizes sustaining social order (Ivinson, 2002; Rose, 2005). Millin (2016) and Bernstein (1996) suggest that disparities in students' literacy development are not due to inherent biological limitations but are more likely a result of inadequate training in specific academic literacy skills. Inadequate educational models like the literacy development curriculum assume that all students possess a predetermined level of educational proficiency when they start school, based on their familiarity with the formal education system's main discourse (Rose, 2004, 2005).

According to Bernstein, cited in Mawela (2018), middle-class children grasp the instructional code more effectively than working-class children since they are exposed to it at home while working-class children encounter it solely in school. Rose (2004) asserted that children from highly educated, middle-class families reportedly read aloud to their parents for about a thousand hours before starting school. These youngsters are more likely to excel in reading during their early school years and develop the necessary skills to engage with written materials effectively (Millin, 2016). Millin suggests that students from low-literate households often lack exposure to written stories, leading to difficulties in interacting with written materials. She suggests that this can make it difficult for youngsters to acquire the abilities needed to become proficient readers at an early age.

Mawela (2018) states that evaluation categorizes students into achievers and non-achievers. Individuals who have difficulty comprehending instructional communication often fail to reach their objectives and continue to be non-achievers due to the demotivating effect of their inability to understand. Successful individuals comprehend the educational dialogue in the classroom, which motivates them to pursue further learning and accomplishments. Rose (1999) suggests that language from the working class tends to be classified as 'restricted', whereas discourse from the middle class is often categorized as 'elaborate'. Bernstein (1996) suggests that this could explain why children from working-class backgrounds are more prone to academic underperformance compared to those from middle-class backgrounds. The performance difference indicates that while the impoverished remain stagnant, the middle class retains its status (Peter, 2013; Rose, 2005).

2.7.2.3 Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is an approach to language developed largely by M.A.K. Halliday and his followers during the 1960s in the United Kingdom and later in Australia (O'Donnell, 2012). SFL is a theory of language that deals with the functions of language. The focus is on the meaning and the role of words in a text (Mawela, 2018). It is an approach that considers language as a social semiotic system as shown in Figure 2.8 below.

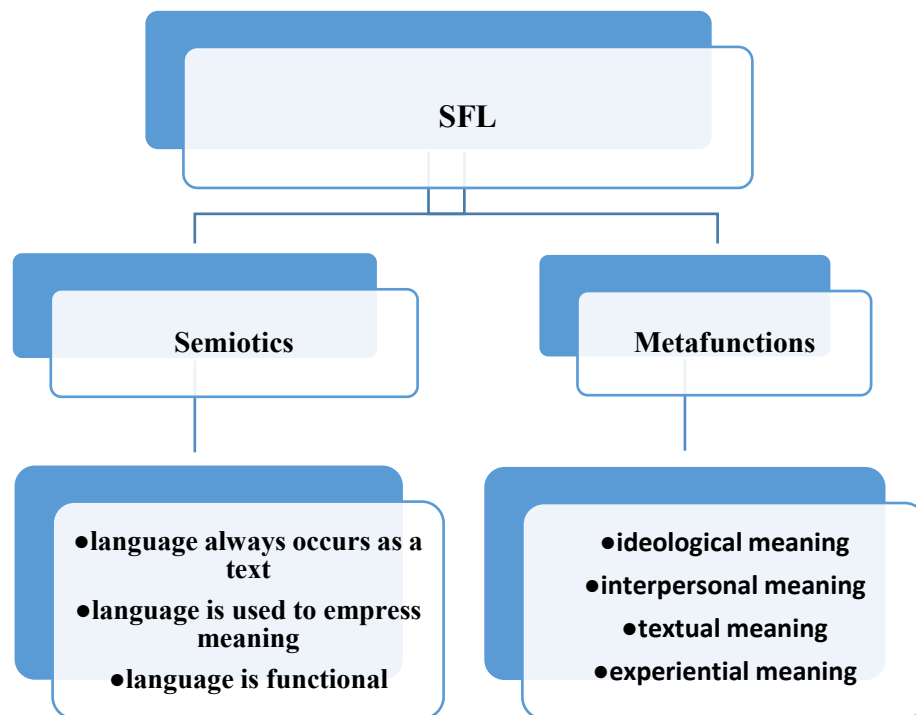


Figure 2.8: Diagram showing Halliday's Systemic Function Linguistics (author's own)

The SFL approach is used globally, particularly in language education, for various objectives such as discourse analysis (Almurashi, 2016). Halliday (1998) supports the use of functional grammar, emphasizing the importance of focusing on meaning rather than analysing words based on their grammatical categories, such as adjectives, nouns, and verbs. According to Halliday and Hasan (1989), this method assists educators in accommodating students from homes with few resources. According to Clarence-Fincham (2001), SFL provides valuable information on how certain linguistic systems work in social contexts and is a useful instrument for in-depth research of texts. It allows pupils to foster a deeper understanding of how texts are created by analyzing word choices

in depth. Halliday and Hassan (1989) outline the four components of language semantics: experiential, interpersonal, logical, and textual components (Figure 2.8).

Mawela (2018) provides a concise explanation of the four components. The experiential component aids language users in comprehending the sentence's meaning based on real-life experiences. The interpersonal component aids language users in interpreting phrase meanings based on interactions and social dynamics. The logical component aids language users in comprehending the sentence's meaning through logical relationships. The textual component aids language users in comprehending the sentence through syntax, rhythm, and theme. When learners engage with each other, they can form interpersonal relationships, and these interactions are reflected in clauses (Millin, 2016). 'Modality' refers to the deliberate choice of vocabulary that enables the author to adopt a specific position in the text with different levels of conviction. Almurashi (2016) elucidates the three components:

1. *Experiential meanings* refer to how reality is depicted, and the grammatical tools used to express our perception of the world, including what is happening, who is participating, and the details of the events. Transitivity is categorized by Matthiessen and Halliday (1997) as the main grammatical system in language.
2. *Interpersonal meanings* focus on the communication between the speaker(s) and addressee(s). It is used to define the speaker's position in the speech context and their connection with others. One of its primary grammatical systems is mood and modality, according to Matthiessen and Halliday (1997).
3. *Textual function* is examined by Matthiessen et al. (2010), Butt et al. (2000), and Droga and Humphrey (2003). It uses a variety of linguistic resources to organize interpersonal meanings inside texts.

The SFL method analyses a text in four ways: context, semantics, lexico-grammar, and phonology (Figure 2.8). Almurashi (2016) considers context a major problem since it is crucial for creating meaning. According to Matthiessen and Halliday (1997), language used in a context is connected to several contexts. SFL aims to understand how language is used for different purposes and in different situations, acting as a communicative incentive in language learning (Almurashi, 2016). SFL has proven to be beneficial for toddler language development, according to Painter (1999).

Knowles and Malmkjaer (1996) stated that SFL has had a significant impact on the approach to researching the language structure of children's literary texts. SFL can also aid in developing children's strategies for in-depth literary text comprehension (Amurashi, 2016).

According to Halliday (1978), as cited in Clarence-Fincham (2001), language can be viewed as a system of likely meaning, supported by structures that bring meaning to life. The SFL method goes beyond the sentence level to analyse grammar within and across bigger texts, unlike most texts that focus just on the sentence level. Millin (2016) states that SFL enables the understanding of a text based on its context of use. Halliday suggests teaching meaning and grammar, with the order starting with the overall meaning (Rose, 2005) (see Figure 2.9 below).

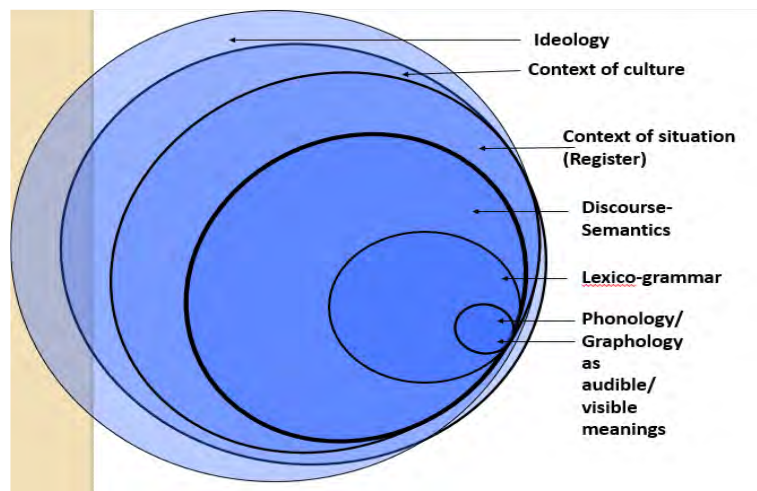


Figure 2.9: The different levels of SFL (John, 2014)

2.8 Theoretical Framework: Social Constructivism

The theoretical underpinning of the study is the social constructivism hypothesis. Social constructivism is not so much an instructional theory as it is a theory of knowledge and learning (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). The idea that social interactions have a dual effect on human development and the production of new information is central to this sociological view of knowledge. Consequently, the idea states that knowledge is not objective since it is fleeting, ever-changing, and impacted by culture and society. This study is informed by the RtL pedagogy, which

incorporates elements from three theoretical frameworks: Bernstein's pedagogic discourse theory, Bruner and Vygotsky's social learning theory, and Halliday's systemic functional linguistic theory.

2.8.1 Constructivism: What is it?

The idea that students make sense of the world as they acquire new knowledge is known as constructivism, according to Hein (1991). Following this notion, students should actively participate in the learning process rather than merely absorb facts and figures. So, to explain how humans know things, constructivism is a theory or branch of epistemology. The central tenet of constructivism is that through doing and reflecting on what they have experienced, individuals build their knowledge and understanding of the world. According to Elliot (2000), constructivism is a theory of learning that posits that learners shape their world through their own experiences and that knowledge is created through active construction. Arends (1998) also asserts that constructivism holds that learners build their meaning through experience, with prior knowledge influencing this process.

According to constructivism, each learner engages in a unique process of knowledge acquisition. Bhattacharjee (2015) states that this theory postulates that people attempt to make sense of all they encounter and will thus 'construct' their meaning from whatever information they take in. As Driscoll (2000) notes, constructivist theory posits that knowledge is subjective and exists solely in the mind of the individual, independent of any objective reality. In light of these assertions, it is clear that constructivism is a scientifically grounded philosophy of learning. The core principle of the educational philosophy known as 'constructivism' is that we build our knowledge of the world around us through introspective thought and analysis of past events.

Three titans in the field of psychology – Jerome Bruner (1957), Lev Vygotsky (1978), and Jean Piaget (1952) – founded the two main constructivist theories: the social constructivist theory and the cognitive theory. Jean Piaget, the man who laid the groundwork for cognitive constructivism, held the view that learners actively build knowledge using their pre-existing cognitive structures. Intelligence, in his view, developed in tandem with a child's maturation. Concerned with the organization and representation of knowledge, Bruner (1960) investigated children's cognitive development. The goal of education, according to Bruner (1961), should not be the transmission of facts but the development of generalizable cognitive abilities in children. The work of Lev

Vygotsky, the progenitor of social constructivism, serves as the theoretical framework for this investigation.

2.8.2 Social constructivism

Social constructivism is a sociological theory of knowledge according to which humans develop in social situations and knowledge is constructed through interaction with others (Ssenyomo, 2020). The theory states that language and culture are the frameworks through which humans experience, communicate, and understand reality (Akpan et al., 2020). From a social constructivist perspective, learners are actively involved in constructing and reconstructing their knowledge (Vlok, 2016). According to Lynch (2016), a basic conversation between two or more people presents an opportunity for new knowledge to be obtained or present knowledge to be expanded. Lynch (2016) states that social constructivism teaches that all knowledge develops because of social interaction, and therefore knowledge is shared and is not an individual experience. In line with the above claim, Vygotsky believed that the lifelong process of development is dependent on social interaction and that social learning leads to cognitive development (Akpan, 2020).

Ernest (2010) argues that learning and knowledge construction takes place in the social arena, in the space between people, even if their end products are appropriated and internalized by those persons individually. In social constructivism, children's understanding is shaped not only through adaptive encounters with the physical world but also through interactions between people about the world that is not merely physical and apprehended by the senses but cultural, meaningful, and significant, and made so primarily by language (Akpan et al., 2020). On the social plane, the learner interacts with the more knowledgeable other (MKO), who may be a teacher, an adult, a coach, or his or her peer(s) (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky sees learning as a social activity associated with other human beings, like peers, family members, and casual acquaintances, including people who existed before. In my study, the MKOs were the teachers and the peers. The educators taught and also helped the learners in their groups, while the peers helped during pair work as well as group work that was given by the educators. Kapur (2018) observed that the social construction of knowledge takes place in various ways and at different locations. It could be achieved through group discussion, teamwork, or any instructional interaction in an educational or training institution, social media forum, religious context, marketplace, etc. As learners interact with people

and the material and immaterial environment, they gain the understanding and gather the experience that is needed to live successful and functional lives. In Ssenyomo (2020), Vygotsky (1962) asserts that direct teaching of concepts is impossible and fruitless. He further argues that “a teacher who tries to do this usually achieves nothing but empty verbalism, a parrot-like repetition of words by the child, stimulating knowledge of the corresponding concepts but covering up a vacuum” (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 50).

Figure 2.10 below shows the different aspects of the social constructivist theory that have been discussed.

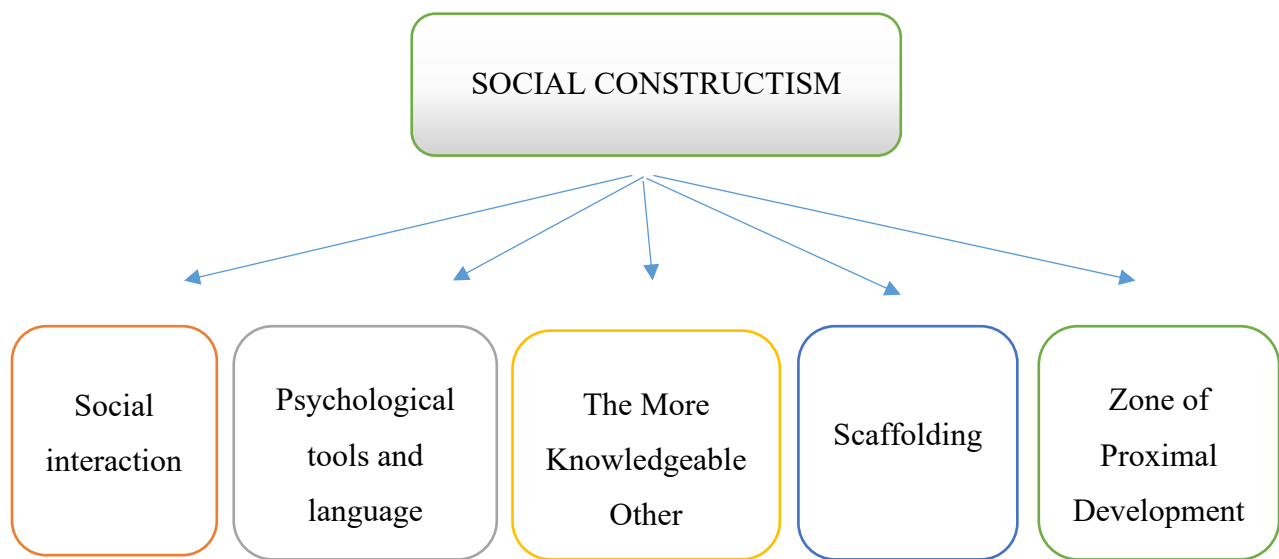


Figure 2.10: The social constructivist theory (author’s own)

2.8.3 Social constructivism and RtL pedagogy

The RtL methodology emphasizes the importance of group work and how learners, as well as teachers, should participate in it, following in the footsteps of Vygotsky (1978) and Rose (2006). According to Mataka (2017), educators have a responsibility to help learners develop personally and professionally so that they can become contributing members of society. When put into practice in the classroom, RtL enables students to strengthen their reading and writing abilities. The intervention's all-encompassing character raises the question of what kinds of problems and triumphs have resulted from implementing the pedagogy in inclusive classrooms. One of the tenets

of social constructivism is that information is actively created, not only absorbed. This means that students construct new information by adding to what they already know from their home environments.

One theory put forth by Philips (1995) is that students' existing knowledge shapes the kind of adapted knowledge they bring to class. We call this body of past information a 'schema'. Since the RtL approach encourages students to bring their prior knowledge to the table, it aligns with this notion. Contrary to what Vygotsky (1978) said, the RtL pedagogy holds that students are not blank slates waiting to be filled with information. Good and Brophy (1994) argue that when it comes to meaning, learners build it themselves; they are not objects that merely absorb. Taking in information passively is difficult for learners to understand and apply. Good and Brophy go on to say that for knowledge to be applicable in many contexts, students need to actively try to understand the data that is presented to them.

The role of the teacher, according to Vygotsky (1978), is to prepare the way for learning and to facilitate it as the students study in their company. According to Mataka (2017), there is no dominance, and communication is mutually beneficial. Students should be able to shape their knowledge according to their own beliefs through discovery, manipulation, and creation. According to Bhattacharjee (2015), learning is facilitated by social interaction, and, as such, students benefit most from the constructivist process when they can collaborate and compare their ideas in a group. All knowledge is socially constructed, according to Dewey (1932), so rather than being an abstract idea, learning is something we accomplish in groups through interaction with one another. As they work to reconcile competing viewpoints, students acquire new knowledge.

Students can network more effectively in small groups, but class discussions provide everyone with a chance to share what they know and get insight from others (Bhattacharjee, 2015). These assertions are consistent with RtL pedagogy, which advocates an inclusive classroom environment free of learner isolation and focused on collaborative learning. Students of varying abilities are placed in classes together because, according to RtL pedagogy, group learning is more effective than solo learning. The foregoing arguments suggest that the exchange and negotiation of socially created knowledge constitute the essence of all learning and instruction. Scaffolded learning, or

the ZPD, is an important part of Vygotsky's theory. The RtL guiding theories have touched on the ZPD.

Through this method, I was able to determine if RtL has the potential to be an effective reading instruction strategy for inclusive ninth graders. English as a First Language is based on scaffolded learning, which prepares pupils for global reading levels through the technique of 'scaffolded' reading. The RtL approach stands out from other language curricula due to its holistic approach to teaching language. To ensure that all students can read and comprehend, reading instruction must cover all bases: phonemes, words, phrases, paragraphs, and the text as a whole (Millin, 2016). Millin goes on to say that RtL considers the entire scaffolding cycle, as proposed by social language theorists Vygotsky, Bruner, and Halliday. Similar to social constructivism, RtL pedagogy promotes collaborative constructivist learning and rejects conventional wisdom about education. According to Vygotsky, children's upbringing shapes their thinking processes and the topics they choose to focus on. If this assertion is true, then the classroom setting significantly affects students' ability to learn and retain information.

I was able to use this framework to determine whether or not students with reading difficulties made more progress in their reading comprehension when allowed to study in small groups using the RtL methodology. Featuring features of Vygotsky's theory of social learning in its pedagogic approach, RtL reportedly delivers equitable learning opportunities to all students (Rose, 1999; Rose & Acevedo, 2006; Martin & Rose, 2005). With this structure in place, I was able to investigate the pros and cons of RtL pedagogy as it pertains to students who have been enrolled in regular classes despite having difficulties reading or learning. Mataka (2017) asserts that for students to acquire the abilities necessary for engaged citizenship, it is the responsibility of educators to foster their personal and academic development.

2.8 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a critical analysis of the literature that was pertinent to the research and to identify the theoretical framework that underpins this study. The literature study emphasized the global movement to end exclusion in mainstream schools as a driving force for the introduction of inclusive education in South Africa. My review of a variety of literary works served to emphasize the significance of inclusion. I then discussed the difficulties that have

persisted since the inception of inclusion in general education classrooms for teachers of ESL. After that, I discussed the many reading pedagogies used by teachers and how they are deemed ineffective. RtL is one alternative pedagogy. In my opinion, it is quite difficult for ESL teachers to impart their lessons to students who encounter hurdles. That is why the RtL approach was selected for this study; it helps teachers overcome most of the obstacles they face. Lastly, I identify the theoretical framework that underpinned this study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Figure 3.1 below illustrates the research technique that governed the research process for this study, which is detailed in this chapter. Although a case study served as my major research tool, I also made use of interpretative research methodologies to collect and analyse qualitative data. This chapter details the methods I used to collect data for my research project. I conducted my study using a variety of methods, including semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and focus groups. My methodology for data analysis and the criteria I used to choose participants are also detailed. This chapter concludes with an analysis of the validity issues and ethical considerations used to improve the quality of this study. Below is the representation of a qualitative research design.



Figure 3.1: A diagram of a qualitative research design (Hllalethwa, 2013)

3.2 Aim of the Research

In four schools in the JTG District of the Northern Cape, this study looked at the efficacy and limitations of the ‘literacy’ intervention, RtL, which was developed outside of South Africa and adapted to suit the needs of South African students, in teaching reading to grade 9 students who struggled with reading in inclusive English FAL classes. This was carried out in response to the following research questions:

1. In what way have the BEd English language teaching (in-service) educators been able to apply the RtL pedagogy in their classroom practice after graduation?
2. How do they describe their successes and challenges in applying the pedagogy?
3. To what extent have the learners with reading barriers improved their reading abilities and academic performances when comprehensively engaged in reading complemented with the RtL pedagogy?
4. How effective could the RtL pedagogy be in teaching reading in inclusive grade 9 English FAL classrooms?

3.3 Research Orientation

Research orientation is the idea that one’s worldview informs one’s approach to conducting research (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Because of this, researchers address the many viewpoints and interpretations that each participant brings to the study when talking about the subjective meanings of the topics they are researching (Pring, 2000). In this study, I looked at the subjective understandings and interpretations of the RtL pedagogy held by the four teachers selected for the research. Thus, the context for this study was established by a constructive interpretivist paradigm.

3.3.1 Research paradigm

A paradigm is a way of thinking that a certain individual follows. According to Bogdan and Knopp-Biklen (2007) and Henning (2004), it is a loose collection of logically connected presumptions, notions, or assertions that guide study and thought. It is a worldview or a set of presumptions about how things operate, according to Neuman (2011), and, according to Maree (2007), it is a set of ideas or viewpoints that people use to frame their conception of reality. It is a

research methodology, model, or pattern. According to Clark and Creswell (2008), a paradigm is a conceptual model of an individual's worldview, complete with all of the presumptions that accompany it. An epistemological paradigm serves as a frame of reference for acquiring knowledge and imparting it to others and a lens through which the study's results can be understood (Maree, 2015). Most research is based on applying three interconnected research dimensions: methodology, ontology, and epistemology as shown in Figure 3.2. below.

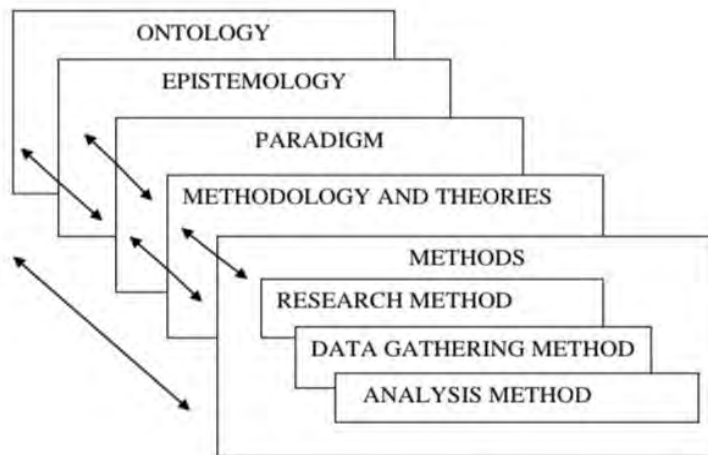


Figure 3.2: A paradigm's hierarchical order (Fayolle et al., 2005)

Maree (2006) says that a paradigm addresses fundamental assumptions taken on faith, and these include:

- **Ontology** refers to beliefs about the nature of reality.
- **Epistemology** refers to the nature of the knowledge of that reality. It seeks to comprehend the nature of the relationship between the knower (researcher) and the known (researched).
- **Methodology** refers to the instruments the researcher uses to obtain the desired reality (knowledge and understanding) (Ssenyomo, 2020).

This work is primarily epistemologically supported by an interpretive paradigm. The interpretivism paradigm also referred to as the ‘constructivist paradigm’, stems from the understanding that realities are socially produced and multifaceted. This aligns with the theoretical framework of research that directs this investigation.

3.3.2 Interpretation of the paradigm

The interpretive constructivist paradigm, which maintains that people experience different realities, served as the foundation for this investigation. The interpretivism paradigm sometimes called the ‘constructivist paradigm’, is based on the idea that realities are complex and socially constructed. Interpretivism, according to Schwandt (1994), holds that knowledge and the world are socially generated and that there is only one reality. Therefore, rather than existing in a single form, the ontological foundation of this paradigm is that social reality is shaped by human experiences and social settings. The epistemological tenet that knowledge and humans are intricately intertwined forms the foundation of it. According to Taylor (2013), the objective of this paradigm is to understand various cultures. According to Creswell (2007), interpretive scholars should gain a thorough understanding of the subject and its complexities within its specific context, as opposed to trying to generalize the base of knowledge for the entire community. This was perfect for my study because it gave me a platform to understand how study participants examined the successes and challenges of the RtL pedagogy as well as whether the pedagogy put obstacles in the way of their ability to improve their reading and writing abilities.

Bertram and Christiansen (2014) state that study data obtained by interpretive methods ought to be authentic and true to the participant’s experiences. The researcher was able to get honest feedback from the participants about their experiences, both good and bad. According to Creswell (2007), an interpretative researcher gains a thorough understanding of the research and its complexity in its particular context rather than trying to generalize the foundation of knowledge for the entire population. By allowing the researcher and the participants to build a reciprocal link, this paradigm encouraged participants to elaborate on their replies and promoted unrestricted communication. Interpretivism, according to Chowdhury (2014), highlights the meanings people give to their experiences and lives and the reasons behind their actions, including how they behave themselves and how they connect with others in society. This interpretive paradigm is therefore

relevant to the study because, in the words of Cohen et al. (2011), the investigator attempted to comprehend the participants by viewing the events from their perspective. As Cresswell (2007) noted, I gained a deeper understanding of the research, which demonstrates that researchers usually gain a greater understanding of the phenomenon and its complexity in its unique context rather than trying to generalise the base of understanding from the entire population.

By monitoring people's attitudes, feelings, and actions, this paradigm went beyond merely counting and rating objects, it provided precision and depth. As far as the use of the RtL pedagogy was concerned, I was able to understand the attitudes, sentiments, and actions of teachers and students, as well as the teachers' perspectives on how the pedagogy helped students who were struggling in their usual classrooms. According to Tuli (2010), by doing research in a natural setting while applying the interpretivism paradigm, researchers can gain insider insights into their objects and deliver more authentic information about the research topic. I was able to investigate and prompt things that could not be anticipated in addition to investigating the participants' thoughts, values, prejudices, attitudes, and sentiments (Wellington & Szczerbinsk, 2007).

The following traits define an interpretive paradigm:

- Makes use of tiny samples.
- Generates unstructured data.
- Interested in ideas that generalize.
- The data is subjective and rich.
- The setting is organic.
- Reliability is not high.
- There is strong validity.
- Makes generalisations across contexts.

3.3.3 Qualitative research methodology

To investigate the use of the RtL pedagogy in inclusive English language classes, qualitative research was used in this study (see Figure 3.3. below). According to Maree (2016), qualitative research is a naturalistic inquiry process that aims to gain a thorough understanding of social

phenomena in their natural environments. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is a method for examining and comprehending the meaning that people or groups assign to social or human problems. Qualitative designs come in several forms, including grounded theory, ethnography, phenomenology, narrative, and case studies. This study will employ a case study design. According to Maree, qualitative research allows the researcher to investigate a broad range of social world elements, such as the complexity and interwoven nature of daily living, understandings, and experiences (Mason, 2002). One of the most reliable and efficient ways to look into and comprehend problems in real-world situations is through a case study. Creswell (2008) came up with a model for analysing qualitative data (figure 3.3). The model shows how raw data is organised and prepared for analysis, coded into different themes, and interpreted as the meaning of the different themes that emerge.

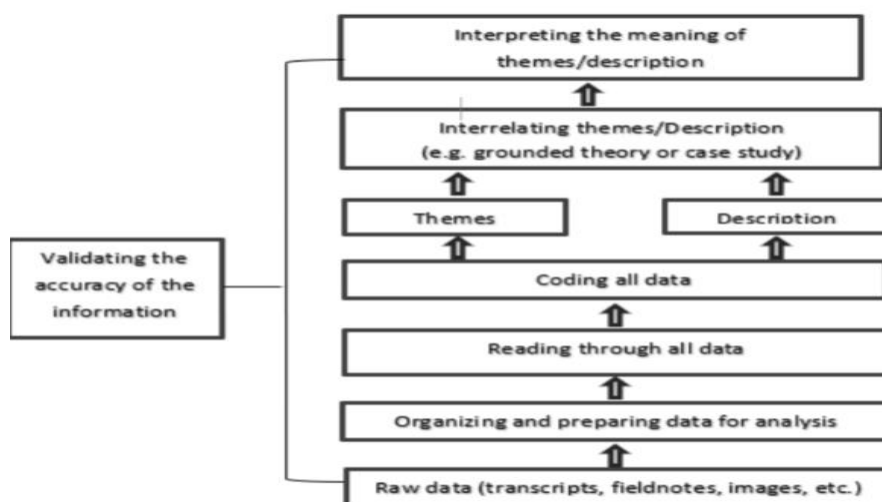


Figure 3.3: Cresswell’s model for analysing qualitative data (Creswell, 2009)

3.3.4 Research design: Case study

This study employed an exploratory case study methodology with four carefully selected grade 9 English FAL teachers from four senior high schools in the JTG District of the Northern Cape Province, South Africa (Table 3.1). A case study is a dependable and effective method for examining and understanding issues in practical settings. Flyvbjerg (2011) describes case study research as a systematic approach to inquiry that has been around for as long as history is known.

Bertram and Christiansen (2014) define it as the systematic and comprehensive analysis of a single case in its context. A family, a community, an organization, a school or an individual (teacher, student, parent, administrator, or group of people) may be involved in the case.

A case study provides significant and in-depth information about a single person or small group. A case study methodology examines the phenomenon under real-world circumstances (Yin, 2003). By employing this method, I was able to spend time with the phenomenon, looking at it in action. This made it possible for me to thoroughly analyse the phenomenon and understand the difficulties faced by teachers in inclusive schools, as well as their feelings and perspectives. According to Cohen et al. (2011), a case study's objective is for the researcher to accurately document the participants' viewpoints and real-life experiences with a particular event. The purpose of this study was to get additional insight into the viewpoints and experiences of a selected group of participants in the application of RtL pedagogy in inclusive classrooms. All participants had learners who had different barriers, these barriers included emotional factors, lack of goals, lack of motivation, learning challenges, and lack of support. Teacher D had learners who had extreme learning disabilities such as Dyslexia and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder.

An exploratory case study is tightly focused and thoroughly evaluates a sample. It studies, characterizes, and develops a theory about the phenomenon using a qualitative research approach. It clarifies haphazard connections as well. With this design, I was able to address the 'how' and 'why' concerns. I also developed and demonstrated an understanding of the advantages of using the RtL approach to teach reading in an inclusive classroom. A case study is the most effective approach, according to Yin (1994), for responding to 'how' or 'why' inquiries about situations and occurrences that the researcher has little to no control over. For example, I was curious about the potential effectiveness of RtL methodology in teaching reading in inclusive grade 9 English FAL classrooms. I did not, however, have any bearing on the participants' assessments of the pedagogy's applicability or lack thereof.

3.4 Sampling and Population

According to Ssenyomo (2020), sampling in research refers to choosing which individuals, environments, activities, or behaviours to include in the study, whereas the population in research refers to the entire number of persons, groups, or organizations that could be included in a study.

According to Maree (2017), a population is often made up of all the subjects that researchers are looking to examine. The research population consisted of English language teachers teaching Grade 9 who possessed expertise in the RtL approach. I decided to select a sample of four people for the study because it was not feasible to include the entire community due to time constraints, and I needed teachers who knew about RtL pedagogy and were using it in inclusive classrooms. I also needed teachers who had learners with learning barriers in their inclusive classes.

I purposefully sampled four educators to be included in this research. According to Bertram and Christiansen (2015), purposive sampling involves a researcher making deliberate decisions about which individuals, groups, or items to include in their sample. Of the seventy people who received training in using the RtL pedagogy between 2016 and 2022, I purposefully chose four to be my research subjects.

The four finalists were selected based on their prior involvement in the 2016–2022 RtL study. One participant was added from the 2016–2017 cohort, two from the 2018–2020 cohort, and the final two from the 2021–2023 cohort. These four participants were familiar with the RtL pedagogy; they either currently use it in their classrooms or have previously used it, and they have students in their inclusive classes who face literacy problems. To clearly understand the benefits and shortcomings of the RtL pedagogy, I chose to distribute the participants among all three cohorts. The teachers I selected were all teaching English First as an extra language until Grade 9. This grade was my choice since it marks the change from the senior phase to the FET phase. The four educators selected were all qualified to teach English First as an additional language in the senior phase. All the participants were not trained to teach in inclusive classrooms, and the knowledge they have of inclusive education is self-taught. The participants have BEd degrees obtained from Rhodes University between 2017 and 2023. In the interviews, they all indicated that they had learners with learning barriers such as a lack of grammatical and linguistic competence, a language and comprehension processing deficit, a phonological processing deficit (learners struggling with the sound structure), an orthographic or processing speed deficit or a reading disability (dyslexia). The volunteers were carefully chosen using the following criteria (Hannah 2015):

- School educators trained to teach using the RtL pedagogy.
- Non-gender specific.

- Teachers with teaching experience who were willing to share their experiences of teaching learners with diverse reading needs.
- Active involvement in classrooms that included learners with diverse needs.

I collaborated with seasoned teachers from institutions lacking adequate resources. They only use textbooks for instruction, and their schools lack libraries. The reading materials for their students were outsourced by each of the four participants. Each participant stated that they worked with students who faced obstacles related to reading, peer pressure, the economy, emotional, physical, and mental health, and material accessibility. The participant profiles are included below:

3.4.1 Individual profiles

The success and difficulties of using RtL in inclusive classrooms were the study's main objectives, not gender issues; the reason there were more female participants was primarily because they met the requirements. The credentials of the research participants, the grades they presently teach, their jobs, and their teaching experience are listed in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Teacher's profiles

<i>Participants</i>	<i>Qualifications</i>	<i>Grades taught</i>	<i>Years of experience</i>	<i>Roles at school</i>	<i>No of interviews</i>	<i>No lessons taught</i>	<i>Gender</i>
Teacher A	Bed	9, 11 and 12	13	PL1 educator	1	1	Female
Teacher B	Bed	9 and 12	15	PL1 Educator	1	1	Female
Teacher C	BEd Honours degree	8-10	18	PL1 educator	1	1	Female
Teacher D	Bed	9. 10 and 12	33	Deputy Principal	1	1	Male

Table 3.2: Teacher coding

The teachers who were sampled for this study were coded, as Table 3.2. below demonstrates. Every tool had a unique code that indicated whether the data was gathered by focus groups, interviews, or semi-structured interviews.

Codes	Meaning
TAI	Teacher A interviews
TBI	Teacher B interviews
TCI	Teacher C interviews
TDI	Teacher D interviews
TAARL1	Teacher A audio-recorded lesson 1
TBARL1	Teacher B audio-recorded lesson 1
TCARL1	Teacher C audio-recorded lesson 1
TDARL1	Teacher D audio-recorded lesson 1
TAFG1	Teacher A focus group 1
TBFR1	Teacher B focus group 1
TCFG1	Teacher C focus group 1
TDFGI	Teacher D focus group 1

The most authentic data imaginable is the work, words, and responses of the research participants in the semi-structured interviews, class observations, and focus group interviews that have been

used to support the presented data. Table 3.2 displays the codes for the research subjects that will be used to analyse the data.

The schools were not included in the researcher's selection process; however, the classrooms and school grounds are summarised in Table 3.3 below. Additionally, this table displays information about the schools' resources, location quintile, and type of school.

Table 3.3: An overview of the classrooms and school grounds

School codes	Type of school	District	Location	Quintile	Resources
School A	Combined school	JTG	Semi-Rural	2	Not fully resourced
School B	Middle school	JTG	Rural	1	Not fully resourced
School C	High school	JTG	Rural	1	Not fully resourced
School D	Middle school	JTG	Rural	1	Not fully resourced

The teachers who work in the aforementioned schools were not chosen based on the schools; they were chosen because they satisfied the researcher's requirements. Nonetheless, I did a profile of the school to demonstrate the benefits and drawbacks of implementing the RtL pedagogy in rural quintile schools that lack sufficient funding. The four schools are all designated as rural public schools, with the bulk of their students coming from low-income families. The schools are situated in quintiles one through two.

These educational institutions are categorized as 'no-fee' institutions, meaning that, in theory, no student may be denied admission owing to their inability to pay the required fees. With teachers depending solely on textbooks, the schools lack adequate resources. No working libraries exist. Despite the lack of libraries in the schools, three out of the four had print-rich classrooms with wall-mounted charts. One of the teachers did not have a chat room, and she mentioned in the post-observation report that the teachers rotated, making it challenging for her to hang charts because students damaged them. While English was the primary language of instruction in all four schools,

Setswana speakers made up most of the student body. I employed document analysis, focus group interviews, classroom observation, and individual semi-structured interviews in my case study.

3.5 Data Collection and Research Instruments

Three research instruments were used in the study. Initially, I conducted semi-structured interviews with four individuals. Along with lesson observations, I also employed focus group interviews.

3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

I employed SSIs to gather comprehensive data from the selected participants. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) define an interview as a conversation between a researcher and a respondent. The responses from the educators and the themes that would come out of these interviews were investigated using SSIs to ascertain whether or not the B.Ed. English language teaching (in-service) instructors could use the RtL approach in their post-graduation classrooms and learn how they articulated the successes and challenges they had when implementing the approach. In an SSI, the researcher asks the participants a series of open-ended, pre-planned questions to collect qualitative data. These interviews allowed me to investigate the educators' responses and the themes that emerged from them. I was able to obtain a lot of information using SSIs as the teachers were open and willing to discuss their thoughts and emotions. In my capacity to determine if the B.Ed. English Language teachers (in-service) were equipped to apply the RtL approach in their classrooms, I gained an understanding of their teaching strategies by reading about their accomplishments and difficulties. SSI helped illustrate the extent to which reading abilities and the academic performance of students facing reading hurdles improved when they were actively engaged in reading and supplemented with the RtL approach. It also proved how well the RtL technique works when teaching reading in inclusive English as a FAL (grade 9) classes. I made sure the participants were at ease and didn't feel intimidated for the interview to go well. I avoided scaring them by asking direct, succinct open-ended questions to each person individually. I did not press the participants to answer right away; instead, I gave them time to gather their thoughts and exhale.

3.5.2 Classroom observation

The methodical approach of gathering data through observation relies on the researcher's ability to use their senses to gather information without talking to or interrogating subjects (Anthanasou, 2018). The researcher sought to find out how the B.Ed. English language teaching (in-service) teachers used the RtL methodology in their classroom practice following graduation through the use of classroom observation. I wanted to also find out how much learners who struggle with reading improve their academic performance and reading skills when they comprehensively engage in reading complemented with RtL. I observed the selected educators giving lessons in their inclusive classrooms. According to Muhembo (2017), observation provides researchers with access to primary data. As per Bertram and Christiansen's (2014) assertion, observation comprises the researcher observing the study's setting and goal for themselves. One distinctive feature of observation as a research method, according to Cohen (2011), is that it enables the researcher to obtain primary data in social circumstances that organically arise.

Using an observation sheet that comprised aspects that helped me assess whether the pedagogy was effective – learner involvement, lesson scaffolding, and peer learning – I documented four sessions during my observation of the participants, one for each participant. Observations allowed me to ascertain how the B.Ed. English Language teaching (in-service) teachers were qualified to apply the RtL methodology in their teaching settings. Because I had the audio of the session taped, I could ascertain whether or not the participants were still using the RtL pedagogy during the reading and writing lessons. I was able to ascertain the extent to which students with reading barriers improved their academic performance and reading abilities when fully immersed in reading and supplemented with the RtL pedagogy through the students' presentations, responses, group discussions, and individual work.

One other result of observations is semi-structured interviews. I gave the educators enough time to fill out an assessment form (see Appendix 8), which included an explanation of the elements of their session that went well as well as the elements that went wrong and how they could be fixed. In the evaluation sheet, the educators are also asked to explain specific aspects of the lessons, such as the reasoning behind the learners' groupings.

3.5.3 Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews were also used. Focus group interviews, according to Maree (2017), are a tactic predicated on the idea that the group dynamic will be beneficial in expanding the range of responses, bringing to light details of past experiences, and lowering inhibitions that might otherwise deter participants from sharing information. I included focus group interviews to collect the data from the responses that I had missed from the SSS. I aimed to gather comprehensive data on the participants' attitudes, ideas, and experiences of implementing RtL in their inclusive classrooms through focus group interviews. Through these interviews, I was able to get detailed information about the participants' attitudes, ideas, and experiences with implementing RtL in their inclusive classrooms. Interviews with focus groups allowed me to address the research question, "How do the B.Ed. graduates discuss their application of the pedagogy, including their accomplishments and failings?"

3.6 Data Analysis

The process of data analysis leads to data interpretation, grounded in the values that underpin the study (Dladla 2022). According to Hlaithwa (2013), categorizing data and finding patterns within them constitutes the inductive process of qualitative data analysis. To find themes and patterns, the researcher must first minimize the amount of data, according to Bertram and Christiansen (2014). Data analysis in qualitative research could be defined as the process of methodically searching and organizing the interview transcripts, observation notes, or other non-textual materials that the researcher accumulates to increase the understanding of the phenomenon. Hannah (2015) states that qualitative data analysis is the process researchers use to make sense of the data they have collected during the research process. The schematic presentation below (Figure 3.4) explains how data is qualitatively analysed to produce findings.



Figure 3.4: Schematic representation of the data analysis strategy (Hlaithwa, 2013)

I used a thematic analytic approach to analyse the qualitative data I gleaned from interviews and document analysis. According to Braun and Clark (2006), the process of thematic analysis entails locating, evaluating, and summarising patterns in data. Because theme analysis conveyed the experiences, meanings, and realities of study participants, it was a crucial research method. A theme is an arrangement of related categories that have a common understanding (Dladla 2022). Furthermore, according to Braun and Clark (2006), this analytical approach looks at how various societal discourses impact events (interviews), realities, meanings, and experiences. I looked over the interview data and used the things that stood out as interesting and noteworthy to inform the research questions.

I transferred the data from the audio recorder to the computer to categorize the audio recordings made by the different participants. I did this to protect the transcripts of the interviews. After conducting interviews and making observations, I converted audio recordings and lesson observation sheets into text data. Creswell (2008) (figure 3.3) provided me with guidance on how to interpret the textual data. I took notes as I went through each transcription and lesson observation sheet, carefully reading each one and making notes about any questions that sprang up. After breaking up the text into informational segments, I labeled each one with code words or phrases

that accurately described what was being said in that section. I was able to write my qualitative report after reducing my collection of codes to five themes.

Below is an example of how the data was coded:

Interview extract	Codes
Learners tend to work together because they work together mostly in groups, so it creates that thing of having them get used to working as a community rather than as individuals. Some learners often feel overwhelmed in class because they do not know how to read due to some different barriers but as they work together in their communities, they feel supported and that they belong. You see some of these learners come from poor backgrounds and they do not have any reading material, but this pedagogy helps all the learners because the six steps are a way of scaffolding reading and by the end of the cycle the learners would be able to read and also to construct their own story.	● scaffolding ● grouping ● non-readers

According to Creswell (2008) and Hlaithwa (2013), themes are made up of connected codes that are merged to create a main concept within the database. A theme can be defined as a group of connected categories that share a common meaning (Dladla, 2022). For the examination of qualitative data, they are indispensable (Hlaithwa, 2013). Once found, the themes were stacked as major themes and subthemes; Chapter Four will address these.

3.7 Positionality³

I am an English FAL teacher at KP Toto Technical High School in the Northern Cape. Because I am well-versed in the subject matter and was trained in the RtL pedagogy in 2017, I used an insider perspective in this study. I was able to communicate with my subjects and place myself on the same footing as the teacher and researcher to fully understand them. The fact that I was equal in the language department of both the school and the district gave my participants the confidence to engage in this study because I was not in an official position. I had to always communicate with teachers from different schools impartially and honestly because I worked with them.

3.8 Trustworthiness

“Can findings be trusted?” is essentially the question that qualitative researchers pose when talking about trustworthiness. Moser and Korstjens (2018) and Maree and Pietersen (2020) define ‘trustworthiness’ as the capacity of the qualitative data to produce comparable results or outcomes in the future as it has in the past, or to be dependable, consistent, stable, predictable, and reliable. Conformability, dependability, credibility, reliability, and transferability were employed to guarantee the investigation’s trustworthiness. Joppe (2000) defined dependability as the extent to which results persist over time and give a true representation of the whole population under investigation. The capacity of a research tool to yield consistent results while employing a comparable approach is another definition of reliability. I used a range of data collection methods, which allowed me to get reliable study results.

Conformability is described as the degree of neutrality or how much the participants, not the researcher, influence the study's conclusions (Maree, 2020). To ensure compliance, I provided a clear audit trail that detailed each step of the data collection and processing. I used an audio recorder to capture every single detail. I gave my participants access to my transcriptions so they could check if what I had written aligned with their feedback. Transferability is the extent to which research can be used in a different context (Bertram and Christiansen, 2020). I give enough details about the study's participants, the setting, and the methods of data collection to ensure that the findings apply to other contexts. I also provided evidence to the reader that the research study might apply to various groups, eras, places, and circumstances.

Finally, I confirmed that this research study is legitimate. Research must be objective towards the topic of study to be seen as trustworthy. Credibility, according to Korstjens and Moser (2018), is the degree of dependability that can be attributed to study results. To improve their comprehension of the study, I gave the participants a thorough explanation of its goals and objectives. I also tried to view the material I was studying with objectivity. By asking the participants to test false information, I was able to gain their trust.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

I asked for permission to enter the four schools where the study would be conducted in my role as a researcher. As such, I wrote letters asking for permission from the Northern Cape Department of Education (Appendix 2) and the principals of the schools where the study was conducted (Appendix 4). I was granted permission from all the aforementioned gatekeepers to conduct the research. I requested permission from the participating teachers (Appendix 7) and they agreed to be my participants. I ensured that the selected individuals knew their names would remain confidential and that this was a completely voluntary involvement. They were also told that they might withdraw from the study at any moment. Nevertheless, I let them know that more individuals would be in attendance when the voice recordings were shared and reviewed.

I demonstrated integrity in my study by clearly communicating the investigation's purpose to the participants. I described my plans for using the findings. Throughout the data collection process, I remained approachable to participants to encourage them to share their experiences with the RtL pedagogy. I repeatedly expressed my gratitude to the participants for taking part in the research.

The supervisor will keep the interview data in strict confidence for five years. I always followed Rhodes University's ethical guidelines when interacting with participants. Professionalism and integrity were continuously maintained in this study. I respected the professionalism, academic honesty, and standards that Rhodes University required by adhering to its set policies and expectations. I encouraged the participants to tell me the truth about their experiences rather than attempt to alter them.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter's main topics, which were addressed in considerable length, were the research paradigm and methodology. The chapter discussed study methodology, design, data analysis, and epistemological paradigms. The procedures for collecting data and the methodology for selecting samples were explained. A description of the data analysis procedure was included, along with an emphasis on data verification and ethical considerations. Chapter Four will present, discuss, and analyse the data.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This study explores the effectiveness of the RtL pedagogy in inclusive classrooms. Data was gathered through document analysis, interviews, and focus groups as well as observation with English FAL teachers in the JTG District. The research aimed to evaluate the impact of RtL on learners' academic performance and reading skills. The study identified five major themes which will be examined and evaluated in this chapter: *Teachers' challenges in teaching reading to learners with reading barriers; teachers' perspectives of and insights into the use of RtL; successes of using the RtL pedagogy in an inclusive classroom; and challenges of using the RtL pedagogy in the inclusive classroom.* The summary of the research findings brings the chapter to a close.

4.2 Research Results from Data

As previously indicated, semi-structured interviews and focus groups along with classroom observations and document analysis were used to gather data. Using the mentioned tools assisted me to establish the following:

1. If teachers were still using the RtL pedagogy in their inclusive classrooms.
2. Teachers' perceptions and experiences when using RtL.
3. Successes and challenges of using RtL in inclusive classrooms.
4. If the learners with barriers improved their reading capabilities and academic proficiencies when taught using RtL.

The gathered data is arranged thematically in the next section. Literature served as inspiration for a few of the subjects. These included the following: the difficulties faced by teachers when instructing in inclusive classrooms; the viewpoints of educators; insights gained from using the RtL pedagogy to teach reading in inclusive classrooms; the successes and challenges of implementing the RtL pedagogy in inclusive classrooms; and the importance of scaffolding and collaborative learning in teaching and learning.

4.3 Teachers' Challenges in Teaching Reading to Learners with Barriers

Everyday teaching presents problems for teachers, particularly when dealing with learners who have learning obstacles. The difficulties faced by teachers are complicated and thought-provoking and can be explained by a variety of systems or situations – government agencies, households, DS, and schools are some examples of these contexts (Phala & Hugo, 2022). The following issues surfaced from the research interviews: teacher's insufficient knowledge to teach learners with diverse needs, lack of reading resources, and lack of professional support.

4.3.1 Teachers' insufficient knowledge to teach learners with diverse needs

Teaching learners with diverse needs is a challenging and complex task for teachers who have not been equipped with the knowledge and skills to teach such learners. TCI and TBI drew attention to the difficulties experienced by educators in traditional classroom settings as a result of their inexperience in dealing with various learning obstacles. They also encountered a lack of assistance from parents, schools, and the Department of Education. TCI claimed that they had no formal understanding of inclusiveness and were self-taught.

Extract 1

TAI	TBI	TCI	TDI
<i>But I have a learner who ahh I think she stroked or something now she cannot speak properly, and her right hand also is not good.</i>	<i>I am an English-qualified educator and I have been teaching for so many years, so I know the theory but when it comes to learners with barriers, we need practical help... we need someone to demonstrate to us yeah, honestly to be able to identify the learners who struggle in my class and be able to, teach them is a struggle.</i>	<i>No, no. You know, during my teaching training I was not trained on inclusion, so I do not have any formal education in that regard, but in our cases, we have learners with barriers and extreme barriers, for that matter.</i> <i>You see ma'am there is a lot we are doing wrong in these classrooms because of lack of knowledge. You see we need the knowledge; I need the practical knowledge.</i>	<i>Because in actuality, I've got learners who have extremely poor writing proficiencies.</i> <i>I also have learners with medical conditions, you know my learners are like my children they disclose everything, but I don't have the right to tell you about their illnesses and all right... I have two learners one is hard of hearing and the other one cannot see she has been to the doctors, but they don't see anything else ma'am it is sad.</i>

Based on the aforementioned responses, every teacher expressed their dissatisfaction over their incapacity to manage students who face learning obstacles. The educators emphasized that they had not been provided with any training on how to instruct students who encountered different challenges. The significance of special education in courses for first-year teacher preparation for inclusive education was highlighted by Michigan and Golder (2005). Nonetheless, Dreyer et al. (2012) discovered that as many as 65% of mainstream educators do not hold a formal degree in first-teacher education, a sign of insufficient preparation and expertise in instructing students with learning obstacles. This emphasizes how much more extensive training and assistance are required for teachers working in regular classrooms.

TCI, in agreement with Engelbrecht (2003), emphasized the difficulties educators confront when tackling the significant obstacles encountered by students with impairments. She emphasized that some of the students in her class had major challenges. This posed a serious problem for the teacher, who voiced her concern that she was ill-prepared to help or instruct students with a range of needs even though she had students who faced substantial obstacles in the classroom. The study by Walton (2013) emphasizes the necessity of support networks and inclusion training to get past these challenges. These studies demonstrate how teachers must become more equipped to assist students with a range of requirements. Despite the difficulties they had working with students who had medical obstacles, TAI and TDI were devoted to supporting them even in the absence of training. Ndinisa (2016) highlights the value of educators as parents and the necessity of a close relationship between them and their charges. According to Coristine et al. (2022), a positive learner-teacher relationship is essential because it builds trust and makes it possible for students to depend on their teachers.

Various academics have emphasized the critical importance of implementing inclusive education and policies. However, educators have felt that insufficient efforts have been made to provide them with the necessary training to instruct learners with severe learning disabilities or barriers (Bansilal, 2011; Chambers, 2011; Rix, 2009; Rogan 2007; Ntombela, 2011). Teaching is a calling, but without the knowledge and abilities to recognize learners who require extra support and to provide it, it can be difficult for educators to design engaging lessons for their learners. Ladbrook (2009) asserts that neither pre-service nor district offices have provided educators with formal

training on the application of inclusive education. TCI stated that although learners were required to accomplish a lot of tasks in the regular classroom, she believed that their lack of knowledge and experience was the reason why they were not doing things correctly. It was evident that the educators required practical assistance because they were unable to perform their duties as teachers due to a lack of practical knowledge. As a result, it was evident to the researcher that the educators needed to be empowered with knowledge and practical skills to differentiate instruction for learners who had particular learning barriers. In addition, educators require knowledge and skills for teaching diversity in the classroom, which includes an understanding of barriers so they can modify and adapt teaching methodologies in the classroom, as stated by Ladbrook (2009).

In my understanding of the findings, it is evident that teachers must possess a strong foundation in inclusive education, as outlined in policy papers. The true reason for TCI's outcry was that she thought she was failing the students who looked up to her for advice since they did not have the training required to teach students with learning difficulties. The teachers' comments made it evident that they struggled to identify students who presented obstacles and made an effort to change students' understanding.

4.3.2 Lack of professional support

The Department of Education is essential in ensuring that teachers receive the resources, knowledge, and training they need in addition to professional assistance. Inclusive education guarantees that every child can learn. There are several support systems in place in South Africa for teachers, students, and educational institutions. These include full-service schools, district-based support teams, institution-level support teams, and special schools as resource centres. The research teachers contend, however, that these approaches have not provided novice teachers with enough assistance to overcome learning challenges.

According to Bantwini and Bogan (2013), to enhance the educational system, South African educators have been inundated with reform after reform and new educational policies one after another. However, teacher TCI claimed that not much has been done by the Department of Education to support educators and learners. She said that although the department was focused on results, they did not assist in the learning process, particularly for children facing learning obstacles. The teachers' statements below demonstrated how the department did not provide

enough professional assistance, particularly for those teaching in inclusive schools, despite the department's requirement that the teachers deliver high-quality work.

Extract 2

TCI	TDI
<i>The struggle is real, but we have to try by all means because the department needs results and if your learners don't perform you will be answerable. the department demands results, but the question is what are they doing to meet the teacher halfway?</i> <i>What I'm trying to say is we go for cluster meetings, but we are only taught how to teach for example how to analyse the poem or folklore what about the poor child who can't read, who doesn't have the confidence? What about us teachers who are trying to be heroes and heroines to help that child who has special needs?</i>	<i>Our department is worried not only about the results but how we achieve them they do not care. We make this concession, but we have never been helped.</i>

The teachers said that when it comes to learners who face learning obstacles, the DBE does not provide them with assistance. According to TCI, the department did not meet the educators halfway who struggled to teach learners with hurdles; instead, they were solely concerned with the results. This statement is consistent with Ndinisa's (2016) assertion that inadequate support for teachers poses a significant difficulty as it hinders their ability to provide effective instruction to learners. Ndinisa (2016) goes on to say that if educators do not receive support, they will constantly feel unworthy. Teachers believe that one reason for their lack of excitement for the new educational paradigm – inclusive education – is the absence of sufficient and reliable support systems (Engelbrecht, 2005). Based on the assertions made by TCI and TDI, it can be inferred that educators lack the necessary preparation to instruct learners who face learning obstacles. In addition, they believe that the Department of Education has not provided them with adequate support to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively address the unique needs of their learners and impart pertinent information.

TCI and Ndinisa (2016) drew attention to the necessity of providing teachers in inclusive classrooms and schools with enhanced support services. Ladbrook (2018) and Engelbrecht et al. (2003) both stress the significance of ongoing assistance for inclusive classrooms. TCI also

emphasized the need to provide support to learners who lack literacy and drew attention to the District Learning Area Manager's lack of pedagogy-based training on conventional teaching setups. This is in line with Ndinisa's (2016) finding which highlights how students are impacted by teachers' lack of professional development, underscoring the necessity of teachers having the appropriate methodology and expertise.

4.3.3 Lack of parental support

The participation of parents is essential to a child's development and success. Nonetheless, a lot of parents encounter difficulties and choose to not get involved, which lowers student achievement and attendance as stated by TAI. For learners to perform better in the classroom, parents and other stakeholders must be fully involved as noted by Porumbu and Nescsoi (2013) that a child's growth is largely influenced by their family. Nonetheless, most parents of learners who face learning obstacles express a desire to remain detached from their children's education. The study teachers expressed worry that most parents of learners facing obstacles failed to provide the necessary assistance to their children or their teachers to help them succeed academically. When parents do not actively participate in their children's education, there is a discernible fall in both academic performance and school attendance in those families.

There is growing evidence, according to Afolabi (2014), that family participation is a key tactic for successful inclusive education practices and is extremely important for teaching learners with special educational needs. Given that they usually have a larger emotional and temporal interest in their children, parents are an invaluable resource for professionals (Gargiulo, 2012). However, according to TDFGI, some parents of learners who are experiencing learning hurdles disagree that their children need assistance, and when requested to visit the school to talk about the student's progress, they refuse to come and stay mute. Most of the examined literature repeatedly shows how crucial parental participation is for helping children excel academically (Porumbu et al., 2012). According to Porumbu et al (2012), research has shown that parental participation traits are a better indicator of academic success than certain sociodemographic traits of the family. It was evident that the parents of TDFGI's learners were completely unaware of how much they were failing their children by ignoring the school's and the teachers' pleas for assistance. TCFGI expressed concern about the parents of learners who face difficulties staying silent when asked to

meet to talk about their children's progress. As seen in the teachers' comments below, the parents of learners with barriers are not involved in their children's education.

Extract 3

TAFGI	TBFGI	TCFGI	TDFGI
<i>Some problems in the classroom need the involvement of the parents. We then discuss that problem with the parents. Frankly speaking ma'am, the parents hate coming to school it is only the parents of academically gifted learners who are always visiting the school, we cannot chase the learners away also because the parent did not come for intervention you know.</i>	<i>The unfortunate part is that if you call the parents to come to school so that we find a solution they don't come at all. Some even think we want to take their children to Learamele.</i>	<i>If there is a problem with the learner the best person to discuss it with is the parent. But you see at our school the parents do not involve themselves in the education of their children you see the struggle is real ma. What I have noticed is that some of the parents are in denial they don't want to accept that their children struggle. Once you bring that up the fight erupts. We try we call the parent but eish...</i>	<i>Some of the parents of learners with learning barriers will never agree that their children need help they are always defensive and when asked to visit the school to discuss the progress of their children they refuse to avail themselves and they remain silent.</i>

The lack of parental involvement discussed above was consistent with the teachers from Ndinisa's study (2016), who similarly expressed that a major issue is the absence of parental participation. Children suffer because parents find it difficult and refuse to acknowledge that their children have learning disabilities. It was evident that other districts and provinces were also impacted by the issue of low parental participation in addition to the JTG District. It was clear to the researcher that the parents of learners who faced obstacles were unwilling to assist the teachers. It was also evident that the parents are in denial because they are unaware of the various learning obstacles that can have an impact on a student's academic performance. As a result, teachers find it difficult to assist learners since, once a student has been recognized, parents must permit the teacher to obtain the support required so that the student can be easily accommodated in the regular classroom. The basic tenet of parent-school cooperation, as articulated by Bronfenbrenner (1992), highlights the

significance of parent-teacher collaboration in the development of children. To provide appropriate schooling for children with a variety of requirements, Engelbrecht (2005) highlights the necessity for parents to recognize barriers and underlying causes.

The research teachers' exact quotes, which are presented above, demonstrate that teachers in inclusive classrooms sometimes find themselves in challenging circumstances where they are unable to assist the learners because they need to be aware of the learners' personal histories and circumstances to provide appropriate support. According to TBFGI, some parents believe that their children's teachers are calling them to special schools when they are summoned to school. I was able to determine from this comment that parents likewise know very little or nothing about special schools, inclusion, and learning hurdles for learners. It was evident that parents of learners with disabilities need to be informed that although their children are accepted in all mainstream schools, the teachers and the school require them to be available to support their children.

4.3.4 Insufficient Reading Materials

One of the most important parts of teaching and learning is reading, and for a student to pick up and practice reading, they need to have access to sufficient reading materials either at school or at home. Nonetheless, there were not enough reading materials in the classrooms where the research teachers worked. District offices are viewed as essential institutional actors in education reform, according to the DBE (2020). School principals can improve the quality of teaching and learning in their institutions by implementing district interventions, and districts are essential components and authorized agents in this process (Nkambule & Amsterdam, 2018). Teachers also emphasized that because their schools lacked adequate infrastructure, there were not enough reading materials available. Below are some of the teachers' responses about the reading materials in their schools.

Extract 4

TBI	TDFGI
<i>And also here at school, we do not have enough reading materials and we rely on making copies. The school DBEs do not have a library.</i>	<i>We have the library but since we have a shortage of classrooms, we use it as a classroom. I can say there are no books because most of the ones there are outdated books. You see our school has learners who barely have enough to eat, so their parents will never provide them with reading material they just rely on the school which also has a shortage because the learners have to share books at times in fours. It is a mess.</i>

It was evident that teachers were having difficulty not only educating learners who had hurdles to learning but also getting the learners the educational materials they needed. According to Myende (2020), there are dysfunctional schools in South Africa that do not effectively provide education for all learners. According to Bantwini and Moorosi, (2018b), Myende et al. (2020), and Ncwane (2019), who is cited in Stern and Fuller’s research (2023), more pressure is placed on already scarce resources and is a factor in the drastic changes made to the educational system – this widens the socioeconomic divide between the impoverished and the rest of the population. In a similar spirit, Hochschild (2021), McDonald (2020), and Ncwane (2019) state that corruption and improper use of public money have left certain schools grappling with insufficient resources.

According to TDFGI, their school had a library that was turned into a classroom, and the books in it were not appropriate for the learners’ level of study. In addition, he stated that because his school was in a rural region, most of its learners came from low-income families and relied on the resources the school provided because they did not have access to these resources at home. According to the National Reading Strategy (2008), there are various obstacles in South Africa’s way of fostering literacy, including the dearth of well-stocked general libraries in schools. There is a lack of books in many homes and because of a lack of books in African languages, children are unable to read in their mother tongue. I noted that not many schools have books and even those that do, frequently have readers that are not leveled appropriately. One factor contributing to the poor matriculation outcomes is the learners’ poor reading proficiency.

Pretoria University researchers have shown that more than half of South African schools do not have enough textbooks, libraries, or instructional resources, which has an impact on the reading proficiency of primary and secondary students. Learning is challenging in certain schools due to severe resource limitations, and students from different homes and villages have daily difficulties reading which leads to low reading proficiency. Since TDI's students come from a variety of backgrounds and towns and find it challenging to read daily, it was troubling that they were required to share the books in groups of four. I concluded that a lack of resources made it challenging for educators and students to meet the department's standards for excellent work. This result was consistent with studies by Pretorius and Mampuru (2007), which supported the assertions that South African schools lacked adequate library resources and that the majority of them lacked books. They found that learners in these kinds of schools are not given many opportunities to read and are instead forced to spend their time in environments with little print. As a result, they are unable to reach reading levels comparable to or higher than those of their peers and frequently experience feelings of inferiority or underperformance. The study concluded that teachers already underqualified to instruct learners who had difficulties with reading and learning were further burdened by the lack of resources. This is a serious issue that requires immediate attention from the DBE to assist teachers in achieving the intended outcomes for all learners, barrier-free or not.

4.4 Teachers' Perspectives of and Insights into the Use of RtL in Inclusive Classrooms

It is concerning that South African learners struggle with reading. The implementation of inclusive education in mainstream schools has not improved matters, since teachers find it difficult to help learners acquire the fundamentals of reading in both primary and senior schools. Numerous studies have been conducted, and the results indicate that low reading comprehension is not just a South African problem but a global issue. Participating in numerous national and international studies, including ANA, PIRLS, and TIMMS, South Africa has confirmed the remarkable symbiosis between the two by repeatedly linking learners' low reading literacy to poor academic achievement (Mgqwashu, 2017). Between 2017 and 2023, Mawela (2018) taught the research teachers and other English teachers about the RtL pedagogy in an attempt to address the reading crisis in the JTG District. She was investigating how English FAL teachers in the JTG District could improve their

classroom practices by using the RtL pedagogy. All the teacher participants admitted that they applied the methodology in their teaching settings. This theme gave rise to other subthemes. The following are the subthemes that surfaced and were noted by the educators. These are the subthemes that emerged from theme 4.4.: Teacher appreciation for the introduction of RtL, the vitalness of learner support, and the importance of learners' prior knowledge.

4.4.1 Teacher appreciation for the introduction of RtL

The research participants previously stated that they struggled to teach their learners with reading barriers and disabilities before the introduction of RtL. They showed appreciation that the pedagogy was introduced to them during their in-service training at Rhodes University. Rose (2008) developed the RtL approach as a way to address reading difficulties. Mawela (2018) brought the pedagogy to the JTG District in 2017. As per the norms and standards of education, a teacher ought to be a lifelong student. Lifelong learning is defined as the obligation placed on the individual themselves and all the activities people engage in throughout their lives to increase their knowledge from a social, cultural, and economic perspective. This implies that knowledge, whether formal or informal, should constantly be acquired by educators. Wig (2006) asserts that teachers must continuously push themselves to read and try out new techniques. The exact remarks from the educators who were first exposed to the RtL pedagogy and are currently implementing it in their inclusive classrooms for reading and writing instruction are listed below.

Extract 5

TAI	TBI	TCI	TDI
<i>I appreciate the methodology because it has helped me to help my learners. You see some of these learners come from poor backgrounds and they do not have any reading material, but this methodology helps all the learners</i>	<i>You see studying at Rhodes helped me because even though I still need to read more on learner reading difficulties introduction of Reading to Learn helped me a lot especially teaching my grade 9s and 8 who cannot read and write.</i> <i>Yeah, I'm using it. It is because I've realized that it is of great use to me. I am happy that I had a chance</i>	<i>Enrolling at Rhodes has been the best option for me because I truly am managing fine, especially when it comes to learners with barriers. when it comes to</i>	<i>Honestly speaking, before I was introduced to RtL, I was expected to teach everyone including learners who could not read or write. However, I was struggling especially teaching those who couldn't</i>

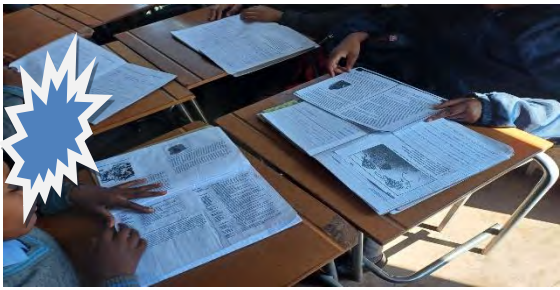
<i>because the six steps are a way of scaffolding reading and by the end of the cycle the learners would be able to read and also to construct their own story.</i>	<i>to be introduced to this methodology because, like I said I have learners with different barriers to learning, some are extreme. However, since I was introduced to the pedagogy, I find it easy for me to interact with my learners and to help them achieve their desired goals.</i>	<i>learners with barriers.</i>	<i>read, so coming back to your question, I still use RtL because it has helped me a lot to teach especially now that we teach all learners including the ones with disabilities. I now manage to teach reading and writing more effectively.</i>
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Teacher TDI stated that joining the cohort at that time was the best decision for him as they were the first to receive training on using RtL. It was evident that TDI and other educators teaching learners with reading obstacles in inclusive classrooms found great benefit from the introduction to RtL, despite his earlier claim that he was not qualified to instruct learners with barriers. He went so far as to say that he was now comfortable instructing learners who had obstacles. TBI also stated that she was able to teach her learners who were illiterate much more effectively after RtL was introduced.

Because they were in a stage where everyone thought they could read independently without assistance from the teacher, it was unsettling to see that some learners in grades eight and nine could not read. This was a glaring sign that there was still more work to be done by South African educators and the department to support learners with reading obstacles, in particular with improving their writing and reading skills. All four research teachers recognized the importance of RtL when beginning their careers as teachers. In addition, they stated that they continued to use it in their inclusive classrooms to teach writing and reading. The teachers' opinions of the RtL approach varied when I asked them about its use in their inclusive classrooms.

TBI incorporated RtL into her classes and was aware of its advantages, having studied it during her undergraduate studies. As stated in Theme 1, it makes a compelling case for the RtL pedagogy as a crucial undergraduate component to close the knowledge/training gap. She said that the pedagogy had been very helpful to her since she was able to instruct her learners, even those who had learning obstacles. She admitted that ever since learning about the pedagogy, she has been

able to effectively engage learners who face obstacles. In addition, TAI said that the RtL pedagogy was very helpful and that she was glad to have been introduced to it because she found it difficult to work with learners who had barriers in her inclusive classroom. Since she used the pedagogy to scaffold reading and writing in her lessons, the teacher demonstrated her enthusiasm for the pedagogy and emphasized how the six-step reading cycle also benefited learners who did not have access to reading materials at home. TDI and other educators agreed that to support students who are struggling with reading, inclusive classrooms should use RtL teaching. They agreed that RtL was essential to overcoming these obstacles. The study examined the use of RtL pedagogy by BED English Language teaching (in-service) educators after graduation, and it found that all four teachers persisted in using the RtL pedagogy despite their early struggles. To improve their capacity to assist students who were facing learning challenges, the teachers used several phases of the RtL cycle and literary genres as shown in Figure 4.1 below.

TAARL1: Stage two: Detailed reading (short story) She read the passage aloud then the learners followed after her while pointing at the words they were reading. 	TBARL1: Stage two: Detailed reading (poetry) She played an audio recording of the poem for the learners to listen to. She then identified the challenging words as a class and defined them. After that, she played the audio the second time the learners followed after the audio while pointing to the print poem they were given at the beginning of the lesson. 
TCARL1: Stage 3: Prepare before writing (folklore) She recapped the story they had read with the learners then gave learners the cut strips in their groups to reconstruct the story again.	TDARL1: Stage 1: Detailed reading (drama) He recapped the scene and act they had read. He asked the learners questions related to the previous scene then he read the next scene to the learners. He then gave different characters to the groups and the learners read the scene. Each group read where there was a particular character given to them

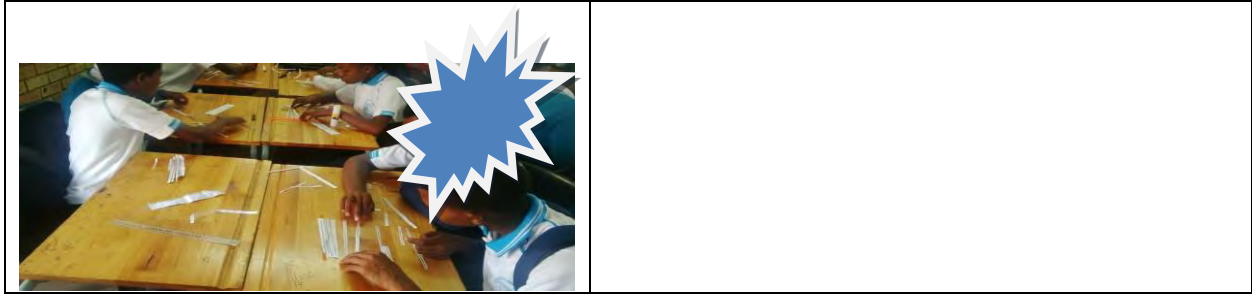


Figure 4.1: The stages of RtL used by the teachers

It was evident from lesson observations that the teachers were still teaching reading and other language-related skills using the approach. The teachers taught a variety of subjects using the various pedagogy phases, including required short stories, poetry, and folklore knowledge. The many phases that I saw while the teachers were instructing in their classrooms are listed above. All the learners participated in the lessons that the teachers led, and they appeared to be having fun and were hands-on. This result was consistent with the primary goal of the study, which was to determine whether or not BED English Language teaching (in-service) educators could continue to use the RtL pedagogy in their classrooms after graduation and why they could not. The second stage of the RtL, detailed reading, was used by TAARL1, TAARL1, and TDARL1 as learners copy what the teacher reads considering the punctuation and pronunciation. This enables the learners to acquire pronouncing skills. During in-depth reading, the teacher and learners also pinpoint challenging words, provide explanations, and use those terms to subsequently construct their sentences. TCRL1 used stage three – prepare before writing. During this stage, learners had the opportunity to cut the story into strips, jumble the strips, and then reorder the narrative. This phase assessed the learners’ comprehension and reading skills.

4.4.2 The vitalness of learner support

Learners’ emotional well-being majorly impacts their ability to do well in reading and writing. Therefore, learners need to be supported to ensure that maximum learning is taking place. There are different ways of supporting learners which include learners’ emotional support. Emotional support includes ensuring that learners feel valued as individuals and that self-esteem is enhanced. This includes an effort to notice and reinforce learners when they are doing something right. From the teachers’ responses, it is clear that the RtL pedagogy is a pedagogy that ensures that learners

are equally treated and that they are equally given emotional support during teaching and learning. The learners do not only get support from the teacher, but they also support each other as a class or in their groups as stated by TCFGI – the learners who often feel challenged in the classroom due to various learning barriers are often supported by their peers in their different groups.

Extract 6

TCFGI	TBI
<i>Learners tend to work together because they work together mostly in groups, so it creates that thing of having them get used to working as a community rather than as individuals. Some learners often feel overwhelmed in class because they do not know how to read due to some different barriers but as they work together in their communities, they feel supported and that they belong.</i>	<i>This pedagogy does not isolate the learners in any way because learners get to work together with the teacher.</i>

Teachers reported that learners feel included in the lessons and do not feel alone because they are illiterate. In addition to granting learners the ability to read and write, the RtL approach gives them the ability to cope both emotionally and academically. You may accomplish far more than you may imagine if you have confidence in yourself. It can be inferred from this statement that providing emotional coping strategies makes learners feel good about themselves which improves their academic achievement. Hughes (2011) suggests that for teacher-student relationships to be emotionally supportive, teachers must have favourable feelings for their pupils.

It is evident from the verbatim quotes above from TBI and TCFGI that the RtL pedagogy improves effective teacher-student relationships. Farmer (2011) asserts that learners' social functioning and academic engagement greatly benefit from teachers' emotional support. According to Baumeister (2005), those who are marginalized exhibit lowered levels of self-control which results in aggressiveness. Because it will help them intellectually, learners must have strong social and emotional development (Holz, 2004). Buyse (2009) said that one way that teachers might affect their learners' academic engagement and well-being is by offering them emotional support. Most of an educator's time is spent working with learners and assisting them in developing their academic knowledge and abilities. According to Acevedo (2010), RtL is purportedly intended to

integrate the teaching of curriculum information with the skills that learners may need to learn by reading and engaging with other learners and educators.

4.4.3 Importance of learner's prior knowledge

A learner-centered approach views learners as active agents thus allowing them to bring their own experiences, prior knowledge, and ideas. According to the teachers, the RtL pedagogy is a learner-centered approach that allows the learner to bring their prior knowledge into the classroom. Bada and Olusegun (2015) state that humans construct knowledge and meaning from their experiences. Learners discover and transform information, check the news against the information they already have, and can change the information when it is no longer applicable as they are active agents in the process of knowledge acquisition (Mabonga et al., 2021). As can be seen from TBI's quotes below, she stated that in her reading lessons, she tapped into her learners' prior knowledge.

Extract 7

TAI	TBI
<i>I usually write the title of the passage on the board and then we discuss it as a class. You see it is important to tap into the prior knowledge of these learners you will be amazed at what they know. Some of the things they say are great and relevant (TAI).</i>	<i>If I'm doing the pre-reading, yes, there are pre-reading activities I can also tap on their prior knowledge of the subject we will be dealing with in that cycle because these learners already have the knowledge they bring from home, they are not empty vessels.</i>

According to these verbatim quotes, the participants valued the prior knowledge of their students and did not view them as empty vessels. Tophat (2021) elucidates that prior knowledge is the information that someone has before they acquire new ideas or concepts – this information could have been gathered over time from their personal, social, and cultural influences. Hence, pre-reading activities play a vital role in introducing a reading lesson. From the teacher's comments, it is clear that every reading lesson should start with activities to activate background knowledge and a series of activities to prepare learners for the reading.

This is in line with Agvbevivi and Adogba (2022), whose study revealed that pre-reading activities motivate and sustain pupils' interest in the actual reading activity and activate the building of related information in such a way that new information is easily assimilated into learners' existing fields of knowledge. TBI stated that the learners were not empty vessels as stated in Vygotskian theory, that the learner is not a tabula rasa but brings past experiences and cultural factors and situations.

TAI also shared her sentiments on tapping into her learners' prior knowledge. She stated that it is important to tap into the learners' experiences as they usually bring relevant information from home and their environment. According to Mabonga et al. (2021), learners' prior knowledge is important as it allows the teacher to correct misconceptions. Learners may come into the learning environment with views or ideas that are incorrect about what the teacher must teach. Tapping into the learners' prior knowledge is one of how the teacher liberates the learners as pointed out by Rose and Acevedo (2006), Acevedo (2010), Millin (2011), and Rose and Martin (2012), in that RtL can minimize educational inequality in classrooms. Mawela (2018) states that RtL was developed to democratize the classroom. This means that it was developed to enable learning and ensure meaningful classrooms for children who come from less advantaged backgrounds and frequently experience a gap between home and home school literacy practices. The teachers made it clear that RtL allowed them to tap into the learners' prior knowledge thus allowing them to fill in the gaps some children had between their home and school experiences. Below are the lesson introductions of the four teachers which clearly show how their lessons were linked to the previous lessons and how it would be linked with the next lesson. It also shows how the lessons were introduced which also included tapping into the learners' prior knowledge.

TAARL1: Introduction: Short story	TCARL1: Introduction: Folklore
The learners under the guidance of the teacher underwent a 'who am I' activity. Randomly the teacher asked a learner to name a character of choice and in a few words the learner described his/her role in the short story then the other learners could identify who the character was. The educator defined the key terms of the lesson:	The teacher wrote on the board the statement: <i>when I started high school.</i> The learners narrated what happened from the time they started school until that particular day while the teacher drew a timeline on the chalkboard. The teacher prompted the discussion by asking oral questions, such as, did you know anyone at that school and did your parents accompany you to school? She allowed learners to tell about their experiences using the past and the present tenses.

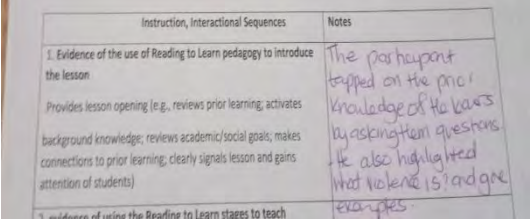
TBARL1: Introduction: Poem – cattle in the rain  The teacher pasted the above picture on the board and then asked the learners to identify what they saw in the picture, some learners stated that they saw mountains, animals, trees, and river old man. They also stated that the old man was tending cattle.	TDARL1: Introduction: Short story  The teacher asked the learners about the story they had read the previous day. She asked the learners about the characters in the story they asked one learner to quickly summarise what had happened in the story. She then asked the learners what poverty was, the synonym for poverty, what happens when there is drought, The learners gave their own opinions which included people dying animals dying, the village being dry, and plants and trees withering.

Figure 4.2: Lesson introductions for the teachers

Looking at the above introductions, the teachers introduced the lessons differently, however, there was one thing in common, tapping into the prior knowledge of the learners. Mabonga et al. (2021) states that to stimulate children's prior knowledge, the teacher must actively involve learners to help them share their experiences during the teaching and learning process since they are the base or foundation for constructing new knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes.

TAARL1 introduced the lesson through a game. The learners in her class were all participating in the game. She used the game to tap into the knowledge of the learners. She had previously taught the story; thus, the aim was to remind them what they read as well as introduce the new topic in an interesting manner. TBARL1 pasted a chart on the board and asked the learners to identify what was on the picture. From the way the learners managed to identify it, it was clear that they had personal experience with what was happening in the picture. One of her learners indicated that "*an old man was holding a whip to beat the cattle because the old man was herding them*". The fact that the learner could compile such a detailed analysis of the picture showed that he had some knowledge and experience of the subject.

After writing a statement on the board, TCARL1 requested the learners to share their high school beginning experiences. To ensure that every student participated in the class, she provided the learners with guiding questions. Her learners engaged in active learning as they shared their stories in the past and present tenses, and they had a lot to say. TDARL1 summarised the narrative that was read aloud in class. He led the learners by posing definitions, synonyms, and antonym-filled questions. He next tested the learners' understanding by asking them what would happen in their community in the event of a drought or hunger. The learners gave various answers.

During lesson observations, students actively engaged and used ways to draw from their past knowledge. By preparing students before reading, the RtL approach enhances their prior knowledge. This enables people to broaden their previous knowledge, create new perspectives, and make connections between new material and what they already know. Building on prior knowledge helps students gain confidence and enhances their comprehension since it enables them to internalize the material and make sense of novel concepts and experiences (Mabonga et al., 2021). When students read with preparation, they are more likely to be able to use what they already know about the book, investigate the context of its creation, and comprehend its structure and subject matter (Becerra, 2020). The ability of learners to draw connections between newly taught information and existing knowledge is facilitated by prior knowledge.

4.5 Scaffolding is Central to Teaching Reading

Educators have a responsibility to employ a variety of teaching styles to meet the needs of every student in the classroom. Teachers should provide tools and lesson plans that are learner-centered and accommodate diversity. With scaffolding and no isolation, the learner-centered approach known as RtL pedagogy makes sure that learners actively participate in the teaching and learning process. Notably, each of the four teachers discussed the RtL approach as a scaffolding technique. TBI clarified that RtL is a scaffolding technique that allows learners to receive assistance from the very beginning to the very end. She said that the learners discussed the assigned work in groups or pairs, with her acting as both a teacher and a peer mentor. Although the term “scaffolding” has gained widespread usage, it is frequently applied ambiguously to kinds of support that do not always fit the definition of scaffolding (Pea, 2004; Puntambekar & Hubscher, 2005). In construction, scaffolding refers to a temporary framework that is used to support workers while

they are building. In the context of education, scaffolding describes a more experienced person who acts as a support system for the student during their learning. The ZPD, as defined by Vygotsky (1979), is the distance between the achievable and achieved. The scaffolding process fills in the knowledge gap between the learner and what they can accomplish on their own and with the assistance of a knowledgeable

If weaker learners are matched with higher-performing learners, peer facilitation and teachers provide support (Millin, 2016). As stated by Downes and Spandafora (2020), teachers must use scaffolding in the classroom efficiently. Similar to what Fischer (2018) outlined, there is a natural phasing out of the teacher's direction while learners are learning through scaffolding. Nonetheless, there is little chance that learners will be able to effectively use the knowledge and abilities outside of the particular case if they have not been successfully challenged to think more critically and expand their knowledge base (Downes & Spandafora, 2020). The remarks that follow support the idea that scaffolding is a crucial component of the learning process.

Extract 8

TAI	TBI	TDI
<i>You see some of these learners come from poor backgrounds and they do not have any reading material, but this pedagogy helps all the learners because the six steps are a way of scaffolding reading and by the end of the cycle the learners would be able to read and also to construct their own story.</i>	<i>You see this pedagogy is scaffolding the learners throughout the six-step process. In every stage, the learner is scaffolded, and the learner is not left alone until he or she can read and write on his own. Either I scaffold through the modeling of the text or when they do group work.</i>	<i>When I got into the classroom, I tried by all means to model some text that I would be doing with my learners for that particular week. I read and they follow in other words I scaffold reading. I model it, and even those who cannot read on their own end up managing to follow behind and read. I also group my learners to discuss the work I give them. You see these learners even if they are struggling with some concepts, end up managing because they can easily discuss with their peers. RtL is a 6-stage cycle and in all those stages the learner is either scaffolded by me the teacher or by her peers, you see ma'am.</i>

As can be seen in the above comments, TAI said unequivocally that scaffolding aided in the learners' ability to read and write after the cycle. She added that because they had been scaffolded, her learners from low-income families who lacked access to reading materials also succeeded in the classroom. According to Acevedo (2010), RtL is purportedly intended to integrate the teaching of curriculum information with the skills that learners may need to learn by reading and engaging with other learners and educators. It was evident from the teachers' statements that the scaffolding process aids learners in achieving the goals set out by their teachers. Millin (2016) claims that even the least proficient learners can replicate texts that are just as difficult thanks to the RtL scaffolding process. Even when the work is too difficult for the learners to complete without assistance, the level of support must enable them to participate in it productively. This is because learning is mediated through the support level (Taber, 2017).

According to what the teachers said, scaffolding using the RtL method enabled learners who had conceptual difficulties to be able to read and write after the six-stage cycle. Learners are expected to acquire the ability to mimic thought patterns and language used during thorough scaffolding from a significant other (teacher discussion on how to interact with texts and derive meaning from language). Gradually, they can mimic the thought patterns that are modelled in the classroom (Millin, 2016). With enough practice, learners can do assignments without help from others (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). According to Millin (2016), RtL aims to address three aspects of the development of "academic literacy" through a scaffolded process: (1) emphasizing how learning occurs (i.e. employing varying degrees and kinds of scaffolding based on different learners' needs that focus on "discourse" specific acquisition of skills); (2) through intensive scaffolding and repetition; and (3) the process of scaffolding is not a one-size-fits-all method of teaching and learning but is differentially targeted using RtL, meaning that academically "weaker" learners are more likely to improve their skills more quickly than their previously academically "stronger," more competent peers. This statement makes it evident that learners who face academic challenges or other obstacles will probably advance in their reading abilities more quickly if RtL fosters cognitive growth through regular word scaffolding and modeling as well as real-world language use (Dladla, 2022). Similarly, Mataka et al. (2020) attest that RtL improves cognitive capacities by addressing nearly all reading obstacles and removing age and grade as discriminatory criteria. Figure 4.3 showcases the importance of scaffolding.

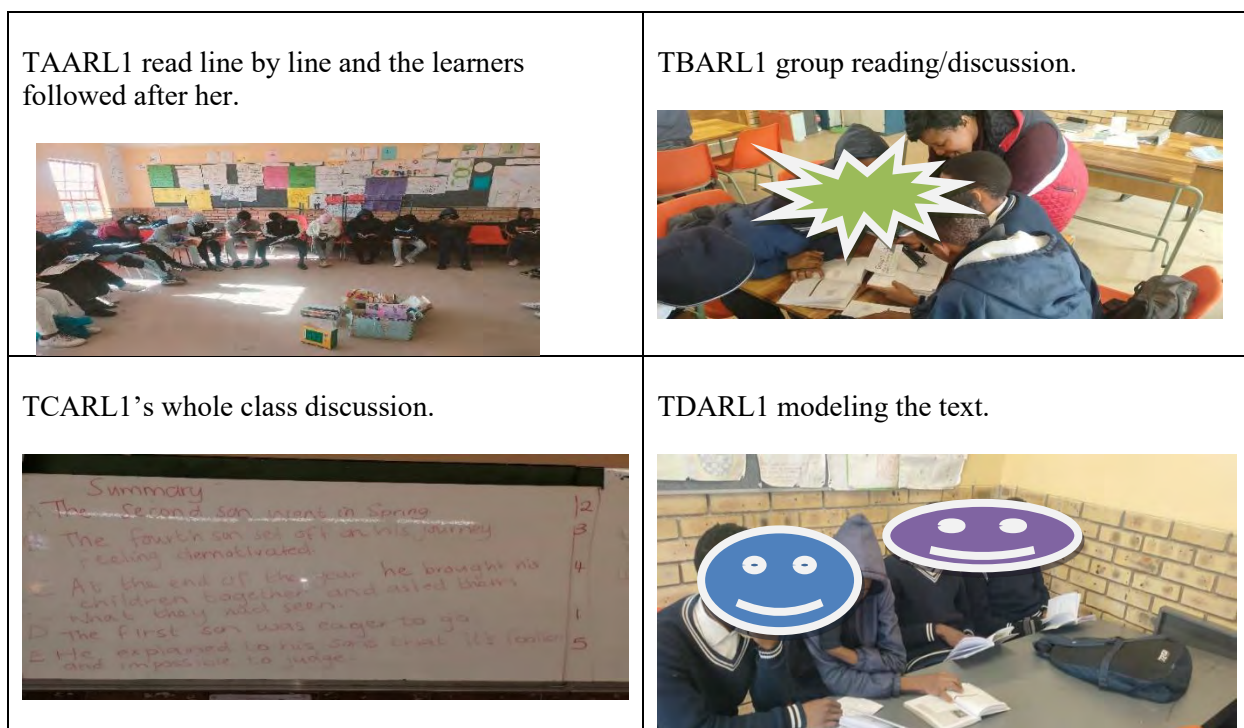


Figure 4.3: Scaffolding processes used by the teachers during lesson observations

Figure 4.3 shows the different scaffolding techniques that the teachers use during lesson observations. After modelling the content and reading out each line, teachers asked learners to work in groups to create statements. Students' fingers pointed in unison as they pointed. It was evident from the lesson observations that the learners engaged with the material throughout the scaffolding exercises. The students were able to fill in the blanks when TCARL1 summarised the narrative.

4.5.1 Scaffolding through text modelling

Observations of the lessons showed that modelling was an essential scaffolding strategy for raising the effectiveness of the lessons. During the lesson observations, I observed that TBI played an audio version of the poem she intended to teach her grade 9 learners first. She urged the learners to follow along while pointing at the words on the hard copy that was given to them as she played it for the second time. In addition, TDI and TAI modelled the text for the learners. The learners followed along as they both read the texts, identifying words with their fingers. According to TBI, they provided scaffolding for their learners by modelling the text, which aligns with TAI and TDI's lesson observations that modelling the text before reading increased learners' comprehension and

confidence. The story was read out twice by TDI and TAI. The learners were silent during the teacher's reading the first time, and they were noisy during the teacher's reading the second time. Allen and Black (2018) explain that a key element of effective scaffolding is modelling. Should the modelling be hurried or not customized by simplifying it for every student, it is possible that learners will not be able to fully develop their transferrable skills and knowledge. Model texts are legitimate teaching tools that can be used to help learners improve their writing in L2 contexts, according to recent research on second language writing (Salisu & Ransom, 2014). The genre-based approach is where the idea of modelling first arose. The goal of the genre-based method is to help learners understand the structure and intent of various text kinds so they can analyse these elements and then replicate them in their work (Salisu & Ransom, 2014). One technique to model fluent reading and intelligent conversation about books, stories, and responses for children is to read aloud to them (Salisu & Ransom, 2014). Despite the growing popularity of read-aloud, studies show that about one-third of classroom teachers hardly ever read aloud children's books to their learners (Hoffman et al., 1993).

The comments below further illustrate the effectiveness of scaffolding through modelling the text.

Extract 9

TBI	TCI
<i>OK, I used it to develop the learner's reading skills through modeling the text which is the first stage of reading with the whole class as well. Modelling the text helps the learners to be able to pronounce words. My learners can pronounce the words the way I read.</i>	<i>It is a good method because it encourages me as a teacher to model everything. You know, if you don't model a reading, learners will never know how to use gestures, how to lower their voice, how to raise their voice, and when to do it. Also, it helps me to teach vocabulary. Because most learners do not have our vocabulary, you know our learners don't read at home. So, if you don't teach vocabulary, you will have problems.</i>

From the above extracts, the teachers reported that modelling the text helped their learners become more proficient readers. According to TBI, since the learners will mimic his reading, having him demonstrate the text helps them enunciate the words. According to TCI, she demonstrated the book

so that her learners could acquire vocabulary, pace, make gestures, and read in addition to understanding the text. Salisu and Ransom (2014) state that teachers should consider learners' place in the learning process while using modelling as a scaffolding approach. Learners are given tasks to do and are expected to go through them at their own pace after teachers have modelled the tasks for them. Teachers will model the assignment several times to create a helpful learning environment for learners with learning difficulties or English language learners (Salisu & Ransom, 2014). According to Ferreira and Peloghitis (2018), effective modelling necessitates being approachable at every stage of the process and structured to enable learners to start with the most fundamental rhetorical devices and norms. As their knowledge grows, these foundational model designs can grow increasingly intricate. Using modelling as one of the strategies, RtL pedagogy supports learners who face various reading challenges, as the teachers directly quoted.

4.5.2 Scaffolding through collaborative learning

One of the most important methods for teaching reading in inclusive classrooms is collaborative learning. All four participants had their students sit in organized groups of no more than eight during the lesson observations. Groups of learners cooperate to adopt a collaborative learning strategy to resolve a problem, complete a task, or produce a product (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012). As noted by Downes and Spandafora (2020), it is also essential to assign learners at random to different groups so they can cooperate. If learners are not grouped with people who have different points of view, it is unlikely that the questions will challenge their preconceptions and allow them to build on what they already know to alter their learning and, eventually, improve their capacity to transfer more complex information from one context to another (Black & Allen, 2018). The teachers acknowledged the value of teaching collaborative learning as a way to enhance student's writing and reading abilities. The verbatim quotes below explain why the teachers used collaborative learning as a strategy.

Extract 10

TBFGI	TCFGI	TDFGI
<i>First I model the reading, then they read after me and. Then they also read in pairs and groups. This way even the learners who are not academically gifted were able to work as they were actively involved in learning.</i>	<i>Learners tend to work together because they work together mostly in groups, so it creates that thing of having them get used to working as a community rather than as individuals. Some learners often feel overwhelmed in class because they do not know how to read due to some different barriers but as they work together in their communities, they feel supported and that they belong. Uh, RtL helped my learners to be able to read. It took time, but eventually, they got to know how to read. And also, learners also get to know, and get ideas when you're about to give them a writing task. They get ideas on what they can write. Some can relate to the story. Some rewrite the story, but at least they write. They don't just sit there and just submit an empty. So, for me that is positive.</i>	<i>They are also able to work together and come up with possible answers or possible explanations to whatever we have been reading. So, they read, and they understand and they're. able to freely interact with each other. This also improves the classroom results you see.</i>

From these responses, it was evident that even in the face of academic challenges, students actively participate in reading and writing when a collaborative method is employed. The RtL pedagogy eliminates traditional learning and encourages collaborative learning, much like social constructivism. Students usually develop more complex sorts of awareness and reasoning when working with peers who are more skilled than they are (Schaffer, 2004).

As indicated in the table above, TCFG I stated that collaborative learning enables learners with barriers to read and write because they receive guidance from more experienced peers in their groups. By removing obstacles to learning, the RtL pedagogy also enables learners to collaborate and share knowledge. In addition to the peer support that they received in their groups, the teachers worked together with the learners as they moved around the classroom to see how well they were doing. According to TCFG I, Laal et al. (2012) propose that collaborative learning fosters the growth of learners' social support networks, fosters an appreciation of diversity among faculty and learners, and creates a supportive environment for modelling and putting cooperation into practice.

Self-esteem is raised in pupils through student-centred instruction and cooperation lowers anxiety, fosters critical thinking abilities, and involves learners actively in the learning process.

In agreement with the benefits of collaborative learning listed above, TBI led group work well; she provided her learners with something to discuss in the groups and the learners engaged fully in the conversation. In addition, the teacher went around to check on everyone's discussion while also giving feedback. Based on my observations, it was evident that every student had an opportunity to speak. In addition, the teacher posed several questions to the learners in their groups to encourage critical thinking. This result was consistent with white paper 6, which asserts that with adequate help, all learners are capable of learning. Two of the four participants' various collaboration styles during lesson observations are depicted in Figure 4.4 below.

Teacher A: Pair work  The learners were given a story and the teacher modelled reading. The learners were then asked to read in pairs line by line then in their pairs they answered questions relevant to the story. The teacher walked around the classroom checking the learners' progress.	Teacher B: Group work  Learners were given a poem to analyse in their groups. The teacher moved around to check that the learners had grasped the concepts. The learners were all speaking, and in some groups, some learners had barriers according to the teacher, but they were all involved in the discussion despite their barriers.
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Figure 4.4: Pictures of different collaborative learning during observations

Most of the learners in TAARL1's and TBARL1's classes enthusiastically engaged in the discussions led by the teachers. I observed the learners as I went around to see if they were conversing, and I was pleased to see that they were talking in groups or pairs.

4.5.3 Scaffolding through repeated reading aloud

One scaffolding technique that tries to improve oral reading fluency is repeated reading. Guided repeated reading has, for both proficient and struggling readers, typically resulted in modest gains in accuracy and fluency as well as, on occasion, understanding. It is evident that in inclusive classrooms with learners who face significant obstacles in reading and writing, modelling and guided practice in the use of methods are essential. Because the teacher uses the thorough reading interaction cycle to prepare learners for the next level, RtL is a scaffolding approach that permits repeated reading. In the learning process guided by RtL, learners overcome most deficiencies and disadvantages by explicitly teaching them to read, having them read aloud, and giving them signals to grasp each word in a sentence (Rose, 2006). According to the National Research Council and DBASSE (2012), guided repeated reading is an additional effective scaffolding technique that offers feedback and assistance to learners in recognizing and rectifying errors.

I saw that the teachers scaffolded reading in every class by having the learners read aloud again. For the learners in stage one of the RtL cycle, the four teachers read twice. Studies on repeated reading attest to its advantages. Rereading helps learners feel more comfortable with the material, improves their fluency, and internalizes language. It is evident from the quoted teacher responses above that the teacher used the repeated reading method recommended by the RtL pedagogy. Rereading the story several times helps learners with pronunciation, comprehension of the material, critical thinking, and reading comprehension. In addition, because it makes it simple for the learners to interact comfortably with the material, it increases their confidence.

4.5.4 Scaffolding through Guided Questioning

One essential question that helps the learner grasp reading concepts is guided inquiry. The researcher saw the teachers posing open-ended questions during the lesson observations, allowing the pupils to respond and express themselves. When using RtL, the teacher poses questions to the learners, such as who the characters are in the tale, how they believe it will finish, and what happened at the beginning of the story. Flood (1984) and Amalia and Devanti (2016) demonstrate that although asking questions prompts and guides thought processes, you also need to include work conception forms or schema development in your training. To provide pupils with a vast reservoir of knowledge to draw from when reading, it is necessary to improve their knowledge,

experience, and background (Amalia & Devanti, 2016). TCI led a class-wide debate. She posed many guided inquiries. That made it easier for the learners to understand the narrative they were reading. Below are some of the guided questions TCARL1 asked.

Extract 11: From the teacher's lesson plans

<i>Teacher: What is drought</i>	<i>Teacher: What is the synonym of drought?</i>
<i>Learner 1: It is when there is no food.</i> <i>Learner 2: There won't be water and the animals die.</i> <i>Learner 3: When there is hunger.</i> Teacher: it is when there is a dry season, there is no rain and like what others have said, people die of hunger and there is no grass for animals, so they also die.	<i>Learners: (all quiet)</i> <i>Teacher: The word that means the same as drought.</i> <i>Learner1: Hunger</i> <i>Learner2: Lack of food</i> <i>Learner 3: Dry spell</i> Teacher: Wow that is good I didn't think of dry spell and one else. <i>Learner 4: Lack of rain</i>

The responses provided by the students above show that they had no idea what a drought was. However, the students were able to provide diverse replies because the teacher persisted in guiding them through directed questioning. It made me happy to see students engage even when they did not know the answer. Based on my observations, it was clear that most learners raised their hands in response to the second student's response. The teacher next asked for synonyms for "drought," which was a smart method to scaffold her learners' learning. Every student participated actively in the conversation. The teacher persisted in guiding the learners as they answered the guided questions and for the entire lesson. She requested the learners to read after her the second time she finished the story. She offered the learners the chance to role-play the narrative when she had finished reading it. After reading a line, she would ask a student to act it out. This was a novel yet efficient technique to help the learners comprehend the narrative and develop their own stories. As

stated by TBFGI below, the RtL pedagogy is a learner-centered approach for the teacher and the learners to fully engage in teaching and learning.

Extract 12

TBFGI
<i>And then I asked them to predict what will happen during what they think happened in the story. Then I read it to them. You see RtL is a learner-centered pedagogy it allows the teacher to engage all the learners and they give their ideas. See when I ask them what they think will happen they all get involved in the teaching and learning and all the learners get a chance to speak.</i>

According to TBFGI, she asked the learners to make predictions about the plot of the story. Using well-informed predictions, the learners could use this method to interpret the text. When learners are allowed to make predictions, they are actively engaged in their education. With the use of prediction in RtL teaching, learners can become more engaged teachers in the class and enhance their reading comprehension. Bailey (2015) said that one key reading method is prediction, which teaches learners to guess what will happen in a tale by using textual cues like titles, headings, and illustrations.

4.6 Success in Using the RtL Pedagogy in Inclusive Classrooms

When I questioned the teachers if they were still using the pedagogy and why, they affirmed that they continued to use the RtL approach in their classrooms for a variety of reasons that were similar but distinct. By posing this query, I could better grasp how educators articulated the pedagogy's application accomplishments. Martin and Rose (2005) state that RtL was created to employ a "genre"-type pedagogy, which comprises the application of instructional techniques meant to help learners write the "genres" that formal education demands. According to this assertion, the teachers gave several explanations for why they continued to use the RtL approach to teach reading and writing in their classes. The teachers' justifications were examined to determine whether or not they demonstrated the effectiveness of the RtL pedagogy. The reasons stated by the teachers are illustrated as follows.

Extract 13

Researcher: are you still using it to teach reading and writing in your classroom and why?	
<i>TAI: You see in the rural school most of the learners are struggling with reading for understanding. So, most of the learners fail to read and understand or comprehend what they have read. So, I use it so that it can help assist the learners who are struggling, especially those who are struggling with reading to understand.</i>	<i>TBI: As I have said it is the best reading pedagogy that promotes learner's reading with comprehension.</i>
<i>TCI: OK, before I was introduced to RtL, I had learners who had barriers to reading and writing, but I didn't know how to help those learners. So, since I was introduced to RtL, I got to use it. This method is for my learners. I got to use this method for my learners, so I see that it has been working. Well over the years. So that's why I'm still using it, because now at times I won't even know that learners have got problems. For example, when I start teaching in general, it is a good method for me to use to engage all my learners.</i>	<i>TDI: Honestly speaking, before I was introduced to RtL, I was expected to teach everyone in my class including learners who could not read. However, I was struggling especially teaching those who couldn't read, so coming back to your question, I still use RtL because it has helped me a lot to teach especially now that we teach all learners including the ones with disabilities. I now manage to teach reading and writing more effectively.</i>

Most teachers felt that the RtL pedagogy was also an effective way to support learners who were experiencing reading obstacles. TAI remarked that she employed the approach to improve understanding in her learners' reading, particularly for those who struggled with it. The most intriguing aspect was that most of her learners were from impoverished socioeconomic circumstances, lived in remote, deep rural areas and the majority of their parents were illiterate. In addition, TAI's school lacked a library and had to rely on photocopying textbooks. TBI disclosed that she employed the technique because she felt it would best support her struggling learners' reading competencies. TCI stated that this technique was intended for her learners and that she enjoyed it as it appeared to be effective based on what she had read. Finally, TDI continued to employ the technique since it enabled her to instruct learners who faced learning obstacles. The teachers were questioned about why they continued to teach reading and writing in their inclusive classrooms using the RtL pedagogy. This subject gave rise to other subthemes, such as learners'

reading proficiency and academic advancement and a supportive atmosphere for varied reading instruction.

4.6.1 The academic performance and reading competencies of learners

A collection of techniques known as RtL pedagogy enables educators to assist all learners in their classes in achieving the reading and writing proficiency levels required for success (Mgqwashu, 2011; Mgqwashu & Makhathini, 2017; RtL South Africa, 2015). According to Rose (2015), pupils can succeed in reading and writing at grade level and above. All learners can achieve their best if they have the necessary assistance at every stage of their cognitive growth (Rose, 2006). It has also been confirmed by Mataka et al. (2021) and Mataka (2017) that RtL can contribute to the resolution of reading difficulties across the curriculum. Below are the varying responses from the research teachers who supported the use of RtL in inclusive classrooms.

Extract 14

TAI	TBFGI	TCFGI	TDI
<i>So, when I use this pedagogy, it helps to assist those learners who are struggling to read with understanding. And also, it improves them you See in our classroom, it is not all learners who are struggling with reading, some are average readers who still need to be pushed so that they can be better readers, so even the average readers, will find that they are reading competency develops since I use Reading to Learn they have become excellent readers. I also have you know, in my classroom some flowers are the bright ones. There are the average ones and there are those who are very, very good readers. Also, you'll find once you use the pedagogy they are, they are reading pace improves and their reading abilities have improved</i>	<i>The six learners that I spoke about are now excellent readers. I can tell you and rest assured that I think some of these learners lack the reading foundation and when you use RtL they grasp words and sentences. For some, I think it is because of their attitudes towards reading. they lack that reading culture in them. So, what I can say is that I see a great change in my learners'</i>	<i>Something positive I see is that RtL helps to improve my learners' skills of reading with understanding because we struggle with reading. So, my learners can now comprehend and answer questions.</i>	<i>You see in one of my classes I have almost, I think around six learners who really could not even read. I was not even teaching them in grade 8, you know, so I just met them now at 9 for the first time and it was a difficult experience, but I had to employ the strategies of RtL since now I have them. I see a great improvement both in reading and writing. I will show you their books actually from term 1 up to now. So that you can also witness what I have experienced and the transformation that has just occurred due to the use of the RtL pedagogy that I've employed during my</i>

<i>since I used Reading to Learn pedagogy.</i>	<i>reading capabilities because of RtL.</i>		<i>teaching. my learners can read and comprehend and they can now write their own stories.</i>
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The comments from the participants above show that they administered the RtL pedagogy in their classes which had learners of mixed ability. TCI stated that the learners who struggled to read improved their reading competencies, and the average readers became excellent readers. This showed that the RtL pedagogy was helpful to her and her learners. She also claimed that excellent readers also improved their pace when reading due to the use of the RtL pedagogy. This was in line with RtL South Africa (2015) which notes that RtL pedagogy uses a cycle that provides more intensive support to advance the most successful learners while accelerating learning for the slow learners. It was clear that the RtL pedagogy was a pedagogy that enhanced learning across academic differences and had a positive effect on each learner whether academically gifted or challenged. Chizwina (2011) argues that learners who are taught to read well are bound to be successful readers. The exact comment from TDI showed how much his students' reading and writing abilities had improved. Six of his students had reading difficulties before he introduced the RtL pedagogy. Nevertheless, despite early reservations about their reading proficiency, he demonstrated notable progress with a few grade 9 students.

According to TDI, RtL helped her students improve their reading skills. This was consistent with the findings of Mataka et al. (2020), Dladla (2022), and Mawela (2018), who noted that RtL improved learners' reading and writing skills and asserted that the approach teaches children how to succeed in school. Continuous scaffolding and real-world language use are key components of the RtL pedagogy, which enhances students' reading and writing skills. According to Mataka's research, learners' reading skills improved, highlighting the need for specific reading teaching.

From the above assertion, it was clear that some of the learners were not confident to read which also led to a negative attitude towards reading. However, RtL according to TBFGI brought a great change to the learners' reading capabilities and boosted their reading confidence and engagement in learning. TBFGI also showed that some of his learners had poor reading cultures and habits and that this had greatly affected their academic performance. Sandars (2007) defines reading culture

as a learned practice of seeking knowledge, information, or entertainment through the written word. The RtL approach helped learners with both reading barriers and poor reading cultures to be accommodated in the teaching and learning of reading in inclusive classrooms. Developing a reading culture fosters a love for reading and a habit of reading among learners (Oyewole, 2017).

The reading culture is a valuable asset that boosts human generative powers of thinking for innovation and development and natural endowments (Oyewole, 2017). This finding was in line with Mataka's (2015) case study that concluded that through the use of the exercise which was informed by RtL, the learners improved their reading abilities. He further ascertained that there was a positive shift in the reading abilities of his learners compared to the period before the intervention. This standard of specificity because of the use of the RtL pedagogy contributed to the improvements in the reading abilities of learners (Mataka, 2017).

4.6.2 Learner engagement and participation

The term “learner engagement” describes the focus, curiosity, enthusiasm, and passion a student exhibits when they are studying, receiving instruction, or being inspired by a teacher. The concept of learner involvement dates back to the late 1800s and the philosopher John Dewey. A measure of a learner's contact and cooperation with teachers and classmates as well as their quantity and quality of participation in teaching and learning is called learner engagement. Three types of engagement occur in the classroom: emotional, social, cognitive, and behavioural (Fredericks et al., 2004). The teachers in the interviews emphasized how the RtL approach increased student participation and promoted learner engagement. The opinions of the teachers are shown in the table below.

Extract 15

TCFGI	TAFGI	TDFGI
<i>The positive aspect I've seen working for me is that Reading to Learn promotes learner relationships as they correct each other in their groups, especially when they read in</i>	<i>When I use Reading to Learn pedagogy. Reading to Learn is there to liberate both the teacher and the learners, it</i>	<i>Eish, what I have noticed is that these learners who lack a reading foundation and cannot read tend to have a negative attitude towards reading as well as other learners in the classroom. I think their fear of not</i>

groups, maybe someone will know how to pronounce a word then that person helps the one who cannot. You see relationships work like that. Also, since they will be working in their communities the learners' behaviours change. You know some of my learners behaved unruly because they cannot read so if they learn how to read with the help of their peers then they change positively.	accommodates all learners whether they are academically gifted or not. The six steps are a way of differentiating the lesson. The instructions accommodate every learner.	being able to read on their own causes them not to try at all to read. They fear being laughed at by their peers and thus develop that negative attitude towards reading. they also bully other learners and disrupt the lesson. My learners were like that at the beginning of the year. I struggled but what I have noticed is that using RtL is advantageous because the learners are not isolated, they read with their peers until they can read on their own, and that boosts their self-esteem, and confidence and also makes them better readers. You see learner participation is enhanced as well.
TCI	TAI	TDI
It is the best reading pedagogy that promotes learner's reading with comprehension. And I also realized that it puts their confidence up. What I am trying to say is I boost their self-esteem. Especially the learners who cannot read as they learn to read, especially when they read with their peers in groups.	RtL is advantageous because the learners are not isolated, they read with their peers until they can read on their own.	The learners also develop amongst others great oral communication, self-esteem as well as learner interaction. These learners also gain self-confidence. In one of my classes, there is still one who has not shown any signs of improvement.

TCFGI claimed that by using RtL, her learners improved their cognitive and behavioural abilities. She disclosed that when they interacted with their peers, those who struggled academically and exhibited behavioural issues changed. This demonstrated that the RtL pedagogy altered the learners' thoughts and behaviours in addition to helping them with their reading inadequacies. According to many studies, learners may act inappropriately in the classroom because of personal or family issues, transitions, low self-esteem, or general academic challenges. The information above is consistent with TCFGI's claim that some of her learners misbehaved because they were illiterate and felt excluded from the teaching and learning process. However, since she began implementing the RtL pedagogy, the learners who had previously disrupted the class had changed for the better.

Based on TDI's view, it is evident that learners who struggle with behavior in the classroom often have low self-esteem, a fear of failing to complete tasks, a lack of reading comprehension, and a lack of confidence. Because they are frequently teased or made fun of, illiterate learners frequently struggle in social situations and resort to acting out as a coping mechanism. TDI concurred with TCFGI that his learners' behavioral skills had improved as a result of RtL. Rose (2015) argues that RtL is beneficial because it keeps learners together as they learn in their communities and involves all of them, academically gifted or not. This was demonstrated by TDI, which showed that RtL allows teachers to engage all learners in the same learning activities without isolating them. The RtL pedagogy, according to TDI, TCI, and TBI, increases their learners' self-esteem and confidence.

TCI admitted that while most of her learners had made progress, she still had one student who was having difficulty reading and was not contributing completely in class. She did, however, reassure me that she would keep working with the students to help them reach the intended results. Researchers and developers of RtL, like Rose, claim that the programme closes the achievement gap between learners with diverse backgrounds and learning styles. This pedagogical tool is inclusive because RtL enables learners from underprivileged backgrounds, learners facing obstacles, learners with reading disabilities, and learners with behavioral issues to be accommodated in the same classroom and supported throughout the lesson without being isolated. This result is consistent with the study by Mataka et al. (2021), which found that RtL pedagogy did democratize classroom learning. Teachers in the RtL intervention from varying socioeconomic backgrounds flourished to level the playing field in Mataka et al.'s (2021) study. They concluded that adopting RtL in explicit teaching can have a positive impact on learners' reading comprehension development as RtL improves learners' writing, reading comprehension, and fluency (Mataka et al., 2021).

Based on TDI's observations, the RtL pedagogy fosters positive learner-learner interactions by encouraging learners to become friends with one another. Research has shown that when learners collaborate well, they not only learn together but also feel safe and have great interactions with other learners. Throughout the learning process, learner-to-learner interaction is made possible through the cycle of RtL. According to Brown (2015), interaction is the cornerstone of second language acquisition since it allows learners to improve their communication skills while also

building their social identities through compromise and teamwork. According to TDI, the RtL pedagogy improves learner participation. Maximum engagement from the learners is necessary for them to learn, therefore, offering them a variety of ways to participate encourages both learning and inclusivity. One of the pedagogies that encourages the most engagement in the classroom is RtL. According to TDI, learners who faced obstacles and were academically challenged participated in the learning process just as much as those who were academically gifted.

When teachers and learners interact and take part in learning activities, there is an effective learning process – there is no denying the link between learners’ academic success and their involvement in the classroom (Abdullah et al., 2011). The statements expressed by the teachers make it evident that Rose’s RtL pedagogy, which promotes positive learner participation, is also a factor in the enhancement of learners’ learning in the classroom. According to the statements made above, the RtL pedagogy not only helps learners become more engaged and proficient readers but also benefits teachers who frequently find it difficult to work with learners who have learning obstacles. This result is consistent with an interventionist study conducted in the Kwa-Zulu Natal province by Mqgwashu and Makhathini (2017), which examined how the RtL pedagogy changed primary school teachers’ views about how crucial explicit reading instruction is for learners’ academic success. The study took place in a rural primary school, focusing on grades 4 and 6. The results demonstrated that the RtL pedagogy can eliminate classroom practices that disadvantage most learners and benefit the elite, as well as alter teachers’ viewpoints on the explicit teaching of reading in formal education (Dladla, 2022).

The learners demonstrated a desire to learn as they engaged in the class, according to the lesson observations of the four teachers. The learners engaged in the activities and showed interest in them regardless of whether the teacher assigned whole class, group, or pair work (see Figure 4.4). Both the learners and the teachers exhibited a supportive attitude towards learners with varying skill levels. A classroom atmosphere that is conducive to learning is facilitated by mutual coexistence and collaboration through conversation and idea exchange, according to Mataka (2017). It also needs to be able to accelerate learning and develop positive relationships between teachers and learners. One factor that determines whether learners learn or not is the attitude of the teachers towards them. To help the learners feel welcomed and loved, the teacher should act in a kind and parental manner. This will facilitate the development of a reciprocal teacher-learner

relationship between the educator and the learners. As suggested by TCFGI, the teacher should have patience and faith in each of their learners to build trust.

Extract 16

TBI	TCFGI
<i>I also realized that it puts their confidence up. What I am trying to say is I boost their self-esteem. Especially the learners who cannot read as they learn to read, especially when they read with their peers in groups. The pedagogy also uses group work and pair work. As advocated by theorists such as Vygotsky who advocate for collaborative learning. It also lets us get to do individual activities.</i>	<i>Being honest with the learners will create a good environment where there is trust between the teacher and the learner and also learner and learner so that the learners will be able to do things individually at the end of the six steps of the RtL.</i>

The teacher’s attitude towards the learners makes a great change in the classroom. Inclusive education is about how teachers create teaching and learning programmes and a conducive classroom environment for all learners to learn. It includes how the teachers and institutions provide learners with challenging, engaging curricula that help the educators to “adapt and integrate” lessons appropriately to support all the learners equally. The RtL pedagogy allows educators to support the learners through a six-step scaffolding process which allows all the learners to learn and participate. In the RtL scaffolding process, the teacher takes the role of both the teacher and the parent as they make sure that no learner is left behind academically and emotionally supports the learners individually.

All children have the right to education, as stipulated by the white paper 6, therefore, one of the principles is choosing appropriate teaching and learning materials. It is important to include diverse teaching and learning materials, such as visual information and audio information to reduce exclusion in the classroom. These materials motivate the learners to learn. It is every educator’s job to create chances for all learners to participate and to critically think. Using these teaching and learning materials the educator scaffolds the learners to enable maximum participation in the classroom and learner success – as cited by Rose and Martin (2012), RtL was formulated to democratize the classroom and allow learners to have equal opportunities for success. A print-rich

classroom will also enable the learners to learn on their own. These include having charts on the wall and having a reading corner or a library. Teachers C and B had print-rich classrooms and library corners.

Teacher C's print-rich walls. 	Teacher B's print-rich walls. 
Teachers A and D did not have the charts hanging as they claimed that the learners tore them since the teachers were the ones rotating.	

Figure 4.5: Teachers print-rich walls

Establishing a print-rich literacy environment supports the development of early literacy skills, including print concepts, and fosters in learners a favourable attitude towards reading. Since learners learn best in groups, isolating them will have an impact on the learners in the classroom. As a result, the teachers divided their learners into small, manageable groups and assisted them. Mutual trust is built through the groups, which increases these learners’ academic performance and reading comprehension, according to the teachers. Every teacher organized their learners into groups during the observations. During the interviews, TCI stated that she avoided isolating her learners by placing them in mixed-ability groups. According to constructivist learning theories, learners learn best when they are allowed to make their discoveries via interactions with their surroundings – in the case of RtL, this means interacting with classmates and teachers (Mataka, 2015). In a similar line, Vygotsky (1978) was persuaded that constructive interaction between the learner and a more knowledgeable person is how cognitive ability manifests itself rather than instruction taking precedence.

4.7 Challenges of RtL in Inclusive Classrooms

The RtL pedagogy has its own set of issues and is not infallible like other pedagogies. Although the positives of implementing RtL pedagogy in inclusive classrooms outweighed the problems, the research teachers acknowledged certain difficulties. This assertion was consistent with Dladla's (2022) statement that one of the difficulties with RtL is the conflict between departmental expectations regarding the pace and delivery of the curriculum and the amount of time needed for RtL. The following difficulties were brought up by the teachers: curriculum coverage, lack of resources, crowding, and time-consuming. The ensuing subthemes surfaced: The pedagogy of RtL versus the English FAL annual teaching plan and packed classrooms.

4.7.1 RtL pedagogy versus the English FAL annual teaching plan

A document known as an annual teaching plan (ATP) describes the competencies that each student should possess after each term. It includes ideas, skills, and values that should be taught both daily and after each week or term, along with a weekly schedule for each term. At the start of the school year, all teachers get the ATP document, which they use as a guide for topic coverage. Every term, the Learning Area Managers make one or two school visits each term to review the curriculum coverage. The teacher responses below illustrate how their curriculum coverage is impacted by the RtL cycle.

Extract 17

TAFGI	TBI	TDI
<i>I think I'll also agree on the issue of time because remember that even the learners who don't have barriers, take time with this method, it is even worse with those with barriers. So, time is a constraint.</i>	<i>So, grouping, learners and pairing them, will take time and we will end up not finishing what you wanted to teach. At my schoolteachers are rotating at times you find that the seating arrangement has changed now you have to rearrange and create groups. Time is consumed.</i>	<i>One thing for sure is that I can say it is time-consuming. You see, we are guided by the ATP from the Department of Education. At times I do not cover what I have to because I have to follow stages. So at times, I skip certain stages.</i>

The teachers' quotes above show that teachers are under pressure to complete the stipulated weekly tasks because every week the department heads review the curriculum coverage. Because their hands were tied to finish the programme whether or not they learned to place, the teachers were concerned that the RtL approach was time-consuming. All four educators brought up the subject of time. Even more, TDI stated that while they followed the ATP's instructions, it was challenging to complete all six phases because he would not complete the required amount of work, which would have led the department to view him as incompetent. This assertion is consistent with Dladla's (2022) disclosure that most educators appear to concur that employing RtL requires more time. It slows down the process of ensuring that no student falls behind because it is meant to be scaffolded.

According to Millin (2016), there could be limitations on the curriculum coverage of the RtL. She noted that teachers in South African classrooms may choose to focus on specific sections of the text rather than the entire text due to time constraints. What matters more is that a new technique for handling more difficult academic reading is being modelled, providing learners with access to a fresh perspective on reading. If the cycle's "preparing for reading" subdivision is executed well, pupils may be able to access context (also known as "genre") or "discourse semantics," which is typically thought to be impossible for weaker readers to accomplish on their own (Millin, 2016).

TAI and TDI confirmed that they had chosen certain RtL levels to permit comprehensive curriculum covering by Millin (date). TAI noted, though, that while the learners received full scaffolding, selecting the steps had no bearing on the outcome. In addition to taking time to teach, the RtL pedagogy requires the teacher to make time to prepare. This includes creating concept charts, locating pertinent materials, and photocopying as needed. This finding is consistent with a research teacher's observation made by Mawela (2018) that preparing took a significant amount of time: "I spent the majority of my weekend preparing for the two weeks," the teacher stated. Despite the time limits, it is evident that implementing the RtL pedagogy requires a committed teacher. The teachers' rotation was another concern mentioned by the teachers, which resulted in having to adjust the desks before the lesson began, which took up valuable teaching time. TBI's statement made it quite evident that some teachers did not employ group work, which is why they occasionally found learners sitting in rows that had to be rearranged.

4.7.2 Overcrowded classrooms

Overcrowding was one of the difficulties teachers identified in adopting the RtL pedagogy. Pupils who require additional support and have learning obstacles are frequently impacted by crowded classrooms. Another issue brought up was the difficulty teachers faced in providing one-on-one assistance to learners who had difficulty with reading and writing. According to TBI, there was difficulty grouping the learners in some of her classes because there were 60 learners, making the groups too big and unmanageable. In addition to TBI, As shown in the table below, other teachers also voiced concerns about overcrowding.

Extract 18

TAI	TBI
<i>I struggle with overcrowding as you can see now, I have 49 learners in this class, so at times it becomes very chaotic when you try to do group work. you see some learners cannot discuss well with others now you have to continue shifting them. See the problem is not with RtL but the caliber of learners who cannot follow rules and we have as well as this overcrowding because of a lack of classrooms and teachers, the department must do something.</i>	<i>Considering that our classes are overcrowded, sometimes it is difficult, you find in a class around 60 learners. Sometimes it becomes a problem to do group work. It will take time for you to for them to for them to each read in groups and so forth. So, the number of learners in a group is also another challenge.</i>

To maintain control over the learners and allow them to participate fully in the group discussion without upsetting one another, it is usually advised that the educator place the learners in small, manageable groups. TAI indicated that a chaotic classroom results from overcrowding, which in turn influences the number of learners in each group. This was evident for TBI. A crowded classroom can become unruly and be challenging for the teacher to manage. According to Van Wyk (2008), crammed classrooms are another reason why there are inadequate spaces, little natural light, and excessive noise, all of which can cause learners to become distracted or even stressed. According to Thompson and Haskins (2014), disorder and unpredictability in confined spaces such as packed classrooms can lead to stress. Since most teachers struggle with discipline, physical health, and appraisal issues, crammed classrooms make it difficult to teach successfully (Iqbal & Khan, 2012). These assertions lead one to the conclusion that crammed classrooms impair

instruction and learning and complicate the use of RtL in situations where learners must work in groups. TAI clarified, however, that the issue with public schools was not pedagogy but rather a deficiency of resources, both human and physical.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter included a study of the various research themes that surfaced via document analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and classroom observations. The motifs that emerged were recurring among the many data sources. The teacher data revealed that the RtL pedagogy enhanced the reading proficiency of the teachers' learners. It also demonstrated how involved the learners were in both teaching and learning. Though they were outnumbered by the positives, the teachers also acknowledged that they encountered certain difficulties when putting RtL into practice in their classrooms. The discussion of the results, suggestions for additional research, and the study's conclusion are covered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter sums up my research project. I provide an overview of the results, discuss the study's contribution, offer suggestions, discuss its limitations, and lastly offer my reflections. This study set out to investigate the benefits and drawbacks of the RtL approach in grade 9 English FAL-inclusive classrooms across four schools in the Northern Cape Province's JTG District. The following four research questions were the focus of this study:

RQ1: In what way have the BED English Language teaching (in-service) educators been able to apply the RtL pedagogy in their classroom practice after graduation?

RQ2: How do they describe their successes and challenges in applying the pedagogy?

RQ3: To what extent have the learners with reading barriers improved their reading abilities and academic performances when comprehensively engaged in reading complemented with the RtL pedagogy?

RQ4: How effective could the RtL pedagogy be in teaching reading in inclusive grade 9 English FAL classes?

The main findings about the above questions will be explained in 5.2. The study employed Vygotsky's social constructivist theoretical framework to establish a connection between its findings and the existing literature.

5.2 Summary of Findings

I was helped in addressing the objectives and research questions by the themes and subthemes discussed in Chapter Four. The findings showed that in their mainstream inclusive classrooms, the educators who received training in the RtL approach between 2017 and 2023 continued to use it to teach reading and writing. The findings also showed that the illiterate students made scholastic

progress and enhanced their reading abilities. The findings showed that despite the pedagogy's problem of requiring more time the difficulties did not outweigh the achievements.

5.2.1 Research question one:

In what way have the BEd English Language teaching (in-service) educators been able to apply the RtL pedagogy in their classroom practice after graduation?

The findings from the semi-structured interviews and focus groups revealed that the teachers kept using the RtL curriculum in their classes even after they graduated. Each participant admitted that their classes continued to employ the strategy. Teachers in the JTG region of the Northern Cape expressed gratitude for the pedagogy's introduction in section 4.4.1. They had previously found it challenging to instruct children who had reading challenges in their inclusive English language lessons. Based on the results of the interviews and focus groups, the educators confirmed that the RtL approach was the foundation upon which they taught reading and writing in their inclusive classrooms since it resulted in favourable outcomes for the children who had reading difficulties.

Lesson observations made it clear that the JTG District teachers were still applying this strategy to enhance reading instruction in their inclusive classrooms, even though they were applying different stages of the six-step cycle approach (see Figure 4.1). The cycle's three most often used phases were detailed reading, preparing before writing, and preparing before reading.

5.2.2 Research Question Two

How do they describe their successes and challenges in applying the pedagogy?

It was evident from the research findings that there were both advantages and disadvantages to the RtL pedagogy. It was clear from the research findings that the advantages of the RtL pedagogy outweighed the disadvantages. The findings demonstrated that the approach has aided in providing educators with the resources they required to assist children in inclusive classrooms who were encountering a variety of reading challenges. Before being taught to use RtL, teachers found it challenging to instruct children with learning challenges, according to the interviews. When they eventually did, though, they discovered that teaching was easy and effective, and also gave them more faith in their capacity to instruct pupils, academically inclined or not. The findings also

indicate that by using the RtL, the students who were struggling with reading gained confidence in their ability to read.

The findings also demonstrated that while proficient readers improved in pace and became excellent readers, learners with hurdles also profited from the strategy. The findings showed that learners' reading competencies increased when they received strong pedagogical support and that the RtL approach enhanced the pupils' reading confidence and their academic proficiency. Teachers asserted that RtL increased student engagement and participation in teaching and learning regardless of whether a student was academically challenged or not. The findings demonstrate that RtL benefits students with a range of behavioral problems in addition to helping them with their reading impairments. Using collaborative teaching and learning strategies, the RtL pedagogy lessens classroom inequities and promotes a learning environment where all children may learn and grow securely. The findings clearly show that student-centered instruction and learning are central to the RtL pedagogy, which democratizes the classroom. Throughout the lesson observations, it was clear that the students were actively participating in the instruction because of the various scaffolding strategies. The teacher's teaching not only gave the pupils a framework to work within but also empowered them to help each other achieve the desired results. The findings showed that the RtL approach improves students' reading abilities, is not teacher-centered, and allows students to fully participate.

The findings highlighted that although the RtL approach had certain challenges, they were insignificant in comparison to the pedagogy's successes. The findings demonstrated to me that, despite its duration, the RtL is consistent with the ATP and CAPS. It was also observed that the pedagogy took a lot of time to teach as well as prepare materials for different stages. The findings led to the conclusion that several issues prevented RtL from being successfully implemented in inclusive classrooms. It was clear that the teachers struggled to keep their classrooms organized, which made it difficult to separate the students into groups while implementing some of the steps of the RtL approach. Teachers also struggled to prepare the lessons due to a lack of materials. However, based on the observations, it appeared that these issues had no impact on the effectiveness of implementing RtL in inclusive classrooms.

5.2.3 Research Question Three

To what extent have the learners with reading barriers improved their reading abilities and academic performances when comprehensively engaged in reading complemented with the RtL pedagogy?

The study discovered that although some teachers in the JTG District's normal schools faced difficulties with teaching reading and writing to learners with reading barriers, they then opted to use the RtL approach because they were unprepared to deal with these children. Based on the findings, it was concluded that using the RtL pedagogy helped students who struggled with reading to improve both their academic performance and reading ability. The pupils' understanding and reading speed both increased, according to the data. The research's conclusions from the interviews showed that learners' reading skills had improved from before the intervention, and they also showed that this standard of specificity was attributable to the use of RtL pedagogy. Furthermore, it was clear that the RtL approach had a positive effect on all students, academically gifted or not, and enhanced learning for all of them. Therefore, the teachers continued to use the RtL technique because it yielded positive results in their inclusive classrooms. The outcomes also demonstrated how the RtL cycle helped struggling readers acquire academic success techniques. For students who struggled with reading, providing scaffolding support helped them strengthen their sentence-building, spelling, and rewriting abilities.

5.2.4 Research question four

How effective could the RtL pedagogy be in teaching reading in inclusive grade 9 English FAL classes?

The results of the interviews with the participants, all of whom were teaching English language as an additional second language, showed that the teachers kept using the RtL to teach the grade 9 classes because it was helpful to them. It was clear to me from my observations that the ninth-grade pupils were engaged in their studies. A great deal of learner participation was shown by how most pupils responded to inquiries from their teachers. I also saw that the children were having in-depth conversations as they were participating in group activities. I was able to assess the effectiveness of using RtL to teach reading in grade 9 classes because of this discovery. Even

though some learners in various groups had trouble reading at first, they received help from the teacher and their peers during the class, and at the conclusion, they showed that they were engaged in the material and having fun. The teachers assisted learners in developing their capacity to recognize patterns in language and to evaluate language patterns in a variety of texts by providing regular guided practice. I observed closely the children who were successfully engaged in the activities, and whose teachers had stated that they were facing a range of learning challenges. During the interviews, the teachers acknowledged that the RtL pedagogy helped their ninth-grade students become more proficient writers and readers. Based on the findings, a participant described how a student went from being a very low-ability reader to an excellent reader, showing how the RtL pedagogy enhanced the reading skills of ninth-grade pupils. The RtL approach also helped the teachers teach literacy more effectively, and they reported that most of their grade 9 pupils could rewrite the story in their own words and respond to questions. It was also found that there had been a notable improvement in the comprehension skills of the grade 9 students. The learners showed to have improved in answering the comprehension questions even the complex questions which often challenged them. The educators who initially felt overwhelmed to teach learners with barriers felt at ease using the pedagogy.

5.3 Study's Contribution

In the South African context, this research will contribute immensely to the curriculum development of the English language and inclusive education by assisting educational policymakers and curricula developers with insight into what is needed in the classroom. This study contributes to the discussions of teaching methods that are suitable for inclusive classes. The research findings suggest that RtL can be used as one of the preferred methods in inclusive classes, and this can be included in in-service teacher workshops and discussions. It will also help pre-service teacher training institutions to prepare pre-service teachers for teaching in inclusive classes.

5.4 Recommendations for Practice

The purpose of this study was to increase knowledge about the difficulties faced by English teachers in South Africa, especially those who teach English to students as a first language. The project's goal was to raise teachers' awareness of inclusive education and practical approaches to teaching writing and reading in inclusive environments. The RtL pedagogy should be implemented

by the Department of Higher Education and Training, and teacher applicants should receive training on how to teach students with learning disabilities in inclusive classroom settings without isolating them.

The study suggests providing teachers with an introduction to the RtL pedagogy to equip them for inclusive classrooms. The district's Learning Area Managers should be prepared to support children who are experiencing learning challenges, and grade teachers should receive training on RtL pedagogical approaches. The JTG District should have dedicated resource teachers for inclusive education, and the Department of Education should think about assigning qualified learner support teachers to each school. Psychologists ought to help educators recognize the different learning barriers that pupils face. Lastly, the RtL pedagogy should be explained to individuals who are making yearly lesson plans so that the six steps of the pedagogy can be incorporated into the planning process.

5.5 Recommendation for Further Research

Given that there were just four participants in this study, which was conducted on a small scale, I suggest the following research topics:

- For study findings to apply to a larger context, a larger sample size should be used.
- Use the same subject but give the learners' and curriculum developers' perspectives.
- Examine the opinions and experiences of students regarding the application of the RtL pedagogy to improve their writing and reading skills.

5.5 Limitations of the Research

I had intended to use four volunteers in this study, one from each of the four schools. Fortunately, every participant who was chosen participated as planned. However, gathering information was difficult for me, especially for observation. Although I had originally promised to observe each participant twice, I only observed each one of them once. Because the teachers were constantly preoccupied with either their academic work or athletics, I ended up doing observation work in three different schools. After conducting lesson observations, I was unable to interview the participants because they had to rush back to their classes to attend to other students. As a teacher,

I was unable to continue requesting leave from the principal because that would have negatively impacted my students. Instead, I decided to give each participant one lesson. Finally, due to our diverging hectic schedules, I was unable to do in-person interviews with my participants during the focus group interviews. Instead, we chose to use Zoom sessions, which produced findings that were just as good.

5.6 Personal Reflections

I had to spend much time reading a lot of books, journals, and papers as a first-time academic researcher, which made it difficult but also eye-opening to find the minute information that would differentiate my work from previous studies. These readings improved my knowledge and understanding of the subject I was studying as well as my ability to write academically. This research helped me identify my strengths and shortcomings and areas for growth in my instruction of children with disabilities and barriers in inclusive classrooms. My love for tutoring students who struggle with reading and writing has grown because of this study. Thus, to help children who encounter difficulties not just in English FAL but also in other subjects, I will support and encourage other teachers to implement the RtL pedagogy.

5.7 Chapter Summary

To tackle the research inquiries presented in Chapter One, this chapter has cited the results I reached in Chapter Four. In this chapter, I provided an overview of the key findings, the study's shortcomings, its contribution, my suggestions, and potential areas for further research. My reflections marked the conclusion of this research study. An action research study was conducted in four schools in the Northern Cape Province's JTG District to examine the benefits and drawbacks of the pedagogy used in grade 9 English FAL-inclusive classrooms. Through its six-step scaffolding interaction cycle, the RtL pedagogy, according to the study, provided reading-impaired children with the abilities they needed to read, read with meaning, and grow as readers and writers. In addition, the study demonstrated that both teachers' and students' trust in teaching and learning was raised by the RtL pedagogy.

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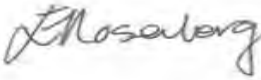
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance

 RHODES UNIVERSITY <i>Where leaders learn</i>	Rhodes University, Education Faculty Research Ethics Committee PO Box 94, Makhanda, 6140, South Africa Tel: +27 (0) 46 603 8393 Fax: +27 (0) 46 603 8028 email: e.rosenberg@ru.ac.za https://www.ru.ac.za/researchgateway/ethics/
8 May 2023 sheron moyo ISEA g15m0035@campus.ru.ac.za Dear Ms Sheron Moyo Re: The Reading to Learn pedagogy in South African inclusive English First Additional Language classrooms: Successes and failures. APPLICATION NUMBER: 2023-7019-7480 This letter confirms that your research ethics application has been reviewed and APPROVED by the Education Faculty Research Ethics Committee (EF-REC). Your permission letter(s) where applicable have been received and you are free to proceed with your study. Approval is granted for 1 year. An annual progress report is required in order to renew approval for an additional period. You will receive an email notifying you when the progress report is due. Should any substantive change(s) be made during the research process, that may have ethical implications, you should notify the Education Faculty REC Chair via email. This includes changes in investigators. The REC Chair will advise as to whether a new application is necessary. Do keep this clearance letter secure and accessible throughout your study and after its completion. It will be needed when a thesis is examined and when publications are submitted to journals. Please also submit a brief report to the REC Chair on the completion of the research. This can be done via email. The purpose of this report is to indicate whether the research was conducted successfully and whether any ethics-related matters arose that the committee should be aware of, in order to guide future studies. Sincerely,  Prof Eureka Rosenberg Chair, Education Faculty Research Ethics Committee	
Page 1 of 1	

Appendix 2: Gatekeeper Permission: Northern Cape Department of Education



PERMISSION LETTER – DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION NORTHERN CAPE

From: Sheron Moyo

Cell: 0848510471

949 Lotlhakeng section

Batlharos

Kuruman

8476

To: The Director of Education

DBE Northern Cape

Private Bag

Kimberly

Date

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN EDUCATIONAL STUDY AT 4 SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS FROM MAY 2023 – JULY 2023.

My name is Sheron Moyo, currently a registered MEd student (full thesis) at the ISEA Department (student number: 15M0035) at Rhodes University, in South Africa. I am an English Educator at KP Toto Technical and Commercial High School. I am requesting permission to conduct research at four different high schools in John Taolo Gaetsewe District from May to July 2023. The title of my proposed study is The Reading to Learn Pedagogy in South African Inclusive English First Additional Language Classrooms: Successes and Challenges. This requires me to interview and observe four English First Additional Language educators at four schools in the JTG District for three weeks. The research will be conducted under the supervision of Dr Rethabile Mawela: r.mawela@ru.ac.za.

The research requires me to work with experienced grade 9 English First Additional Language (FAL) teachers. Firstly, I intend to observe them twice each for a 40-60 minute (lesson Depending on the school timetable) and audio record them in the classroom while they teach. Secondly, I intend to meet with the teachers for two 30-minute interviews each to discuss the successes and challenges of using the Reading to Learn methodology in their inclusive classroom. It also requires me to meet with all four participants at once to conduct a focus group discussion for 45 minutes. I will not directly

interact with learners; however, I will observe the educators while the learners are in class. I assure the participants of confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any time. I also intend to send letters to the teachers concerned should I be allowed by your office to go ahead with the research. Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact me at +27848510471/sheron.moyobhebhe@gmail.com. Should you have any queries regarding my request please contact the ethics committee on the following details:

Rhodes University Research Office

Ethics Co-ordinator: ethicscommittee@ru.ac.za

t: +27 (0) 46 603 7727

Room 220, Main Admin Building

Drostdy Road, Makhanda, 6139

Yours sincerely

Sheron Moyo

Appendix 3: Approval Letter from the Northern Cape Department of Education



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Enquiries: J N Horne
Contact No.: (053) 839 6757
Reference: L2.10.2.4.3
Date: 11 April 2023

949 Lotlhakeng Section
Batlharos
Kuruman
8476

Dear Ms S Moyo

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The aforesaid matter with, Ref: L2.10.2.4.3, bears reference.

This letter serves to indicate that approval is granted to conduct research for the dissertation titled: **"The Reading to Learn pedagogy in South African inclusive English First Additional Language classrooms: Successes and failures"**.

The onus rests with you as the researcher to arrange appropriate and relevant time schedules with the sampled teachers in order to conduct the research. A copy of this approval letter must be presented to the school (Principal and SGB) and the District Director as proof that permission for the research has been granted.

The following conditions must be strictly applied during the conduct of your research in the Northern Cape Department of Education (NCDoE). Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted.

Criteria for approval	Comment
Value of the proposed research	The research topic covers a policy position of the Basic Education Sector and thus has value. The study aims to establish whether B.ED English Language Teaching (in-service) educators have been able to apply the Read to Learn (RtL) pedagogy in their classroom practice after graduation.
Policy and Strategic Alignment	The research is aligned to policy and to the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF). The outcome of the research serves to assist in teacher development which falls within the ambit of the priorities of the Basic Education Sector.



Approval to Conduct Research: Ms S Moyo

Page 1 of 2

Potential benefits to the NCDoE	The NCDoE would benefit from the research as empirical evidence would be available that is derived from the Northern Cape experiences.
Contribution to the knowledge base and literature in the Basic Education Sector	The Research Report findings will contribute to the knowledge base and literature of the Basic Education Sector as it seeks to extend the existing literature on the implementation of the Read to Learn (RtL) pedagogy in inclusive classrooms.
Appropriateness of the methodology adopted	The researcher will make use of an exploratory case study that is underpinned by an Interpretive paradigm.
Ethical Considerations	Ethics approval has been granted by the Education Faculty Research Ethics Committee of Rhodes University provided that permission is granted by the NCDoE. The research study will adhere to ethical principles namely voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, no harm to participants, confirmation that the study is free of plagiarism and that results are accurately represented.
Accountability	The accountability is as per NCDoE Research Guidelines.
Conditions to be agreed by the applicant	The conditions to be adhered to are as per NCDoE Research Guidelines.
Types of Research	Class observations and semi-structured interviews will be conducted to gain in depth data from 4 teachers in the John Taolo Gaetsewe District.
Datasets	The following access was requested by the researcher: Progress in International Reading Literacy Study ("PIRLS") and The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality ("SACMEQ").

The Northern Cape Education Department wishes you well in this important undertaking and is looking forward to examine the findings of your research study.

Kind regards


MS M MARAIS
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

20.04.2023
DATE



Approval to Conduct Research: Ms S Moyo

Page 2 of 2

Appendix 4: Gatekeeper Permission: School Principals



PERMISSION LETTER – PRINCIPAL OF XXX SCHOOL

From: Sheron Moyo

Cell: 0848510471

949 Lotlhakeng section

Batlharos

Kuruman

8476

The principal

Xxx high school

Box

Kuruman

REF: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT XXX SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL.

I am Sheron Moyo, a part-time Master of Education degree student at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. I hereby request for permission to conduct research at your school. The title of my proposed study is The Reading to Learn Pedagogy in South African Inclusive English First Additional Language Classrooms: Successes and Challenges. This requires me to interview and observe one of your educators teaching grade 9 English First Additional Language from your school for three weeks. The research will be conducted under the supervision of Dr Rethabile Mawela: r.mawela@ru.ac.za. The collection of data will be between May and July 2023. This letter serves to seek permission to approach Ms/Mr XXX who will be participants in this research. For this research, I am requesting permission to visit your school in May and June 2023. Firstly, I intend to observe him/her twice for a 40-60 minute (lesson Depending on the school timetable) and audio record him/her. Secondly, I intend to meet with the teacher for two 30-minute interviews to discuss the successes and challenges of using the Reading to Learn methodology in their inclusive classroom. I will not directly interact with the learners; however, I will observe the educator while they are in class. I assure the participants of confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any time.

I attach a copy of my research proposal which includes a copy of the permission letter from the District Director of JTG District. I have also attached a letter of approval from the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Education. As part of this, I undertake to ensure that the name of the school and the participant will be replaced by pseudonyms and that all the collected materials will be only accessible to myself and the supervisor. I also intend to send a letter to the teacher concerned should I be allowed by your office to go ahead with the research. Should you have any queries regarding my request please contact me or my supervisor on the following details:

Rhodes University Research Office

Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Education. As part of this I undertake to ensure that the name of the school and the participant will be replaced by pseudonyms and that all the collected materials will be only accessible to myself and the supervisor. I also intend to send a letter to the teacher concerned should I be allowed by your office to go ahead with the research. Should you have any queries regarding my request please contact me or my supervisor on the following details:

Rhodes University Research Office

Ethics Co-ordinator: ethicscommittee@ru.ac.za

t: +27 (0) 46 603 7727

Room 220, Main Admin Building

Drostdy Road, Makhanda, 6139

Student name: Sheron Moyo

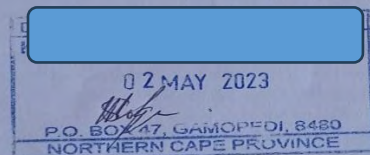
Email: sheron.moyobhebhe@gmail.com

Supervisor name: Dr Rethabile Mawela

Email: r.mawela@ru.ac.za

Yours sincerely

Sheron Moyo



Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Education. As part of this I undertake to ensure that the name of the school and the participant will be replaced by pseudonyms and that all the collected materials will be only accessible to myself and the supervisor. I also intend to send a letter to the teacher concerned should I be allowed by your office to go ahead with the research. Should you have any queries regarding my request please contact me or my supervisor on the following details:

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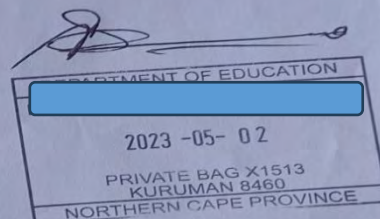
Email: sheron.moyobhebhe@gmail.com

Supervisor name: Dr Rethabile Mawela

Email: r.mawela@ru.ac.za

Yours sincerely

Sheron Moyo



Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Education. As part of this I undertake to ensure that the name of the school and the participant will be replaced by pseudonyms and that all the collected materials will be only accessible to myself and the supervisor. I also intend to send a letter to the teacher concerned should I be allowed by your office to go ahead with the research. Should you have any queries regarding my request please contact me or my supervisor on the following details:

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Student name: Sheron Moyo

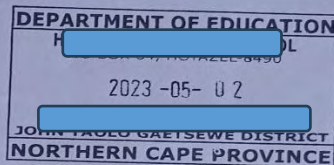
Email: sheron.moyobhebhe@gmail.com

Supervisor name: Dr Rethabile Mawela

Email: r.mawela@ru.ac.za

Yours sincerely

Sheron Moyo



Appendix 5: Learner Assent Forms



REQUEST FOR PERMISSION – ASSENT LETTER TO LEARNER

To:.....

Date

Subject: Request for permission to observe the teacher while you are in the class observed

Grade.....

Name of learner.....

Name of school.....

Dear Learner

I am Sheron Moyo, a part-time Master of Education degree student at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. The title of my proposed study is The Reading to Learn Pedagogy in South African Inclusive English First Additional Language Classrooms: Successes and Challenges. My research requires me to observe your teacher while she/he teaches you. May I assure you that my presence in the class will not cause any harm to you or your teacher? I will sit quietly at the back and observe the lesson. I plan to audio record the lessons only for my use as the researcher. The collection of data will be between May and July 2023. The research will be conducted under the supervision of Dr Rethabile Mawela. If any concerns arise during the data collection process, the Rhodes University Research Office can be contacted at:

Rhodes University Research Office

Ethics Co-ordinator: ethicscommittee@ru.ac.za

t: +27 (0) 46 603 7727

Room 220, Main Admin Building

Drostdy Road, Makhanda, 6139

Yours sincerely

Student name: Sheron Moyo

Signature:

Email: sheron.moyobhebhe@gmail.com

Supervisor name: Dr Rethabile Mawela

Email: r.mawela@ru.ac.za

Appendix 6: Parents' Consent Forms



REQUEST FOR PERMISSION – PARENT/GUARDIAN

To: The Parent/guardian

Date

Subject: Request for permission to observe the teacher while your child is in the class observed

The parent/guardian of:

Name of parent/Guardian.....

Name of learner.....

Name of school.....

Dear Parent

I am Sheron Moyo, a part-time Master of Education degree student at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. The title of my proposed study is The Reading to Learn Pedagogy in South African Inclusive English First Additional Language Classrooms: Successes and Challenges. This requires me to observe four English First Additional Language educators from four schools in the JTG District for three weeks. That means that your child will be in one of the classes which will be observed. The purpose of this letter is to make you aware that I will be in the class where your child is a learner. May I assure you that my presence in the class will not cause any harm to your child? I will observe the teacher's teaching and how the teaching approach helps the learners to improve their reading and writing skills. The lessons will be audio-recorded only for my use as the researcher. The observations will take place during the normal school timetable, so there will be no inconvenience incurred by your child or the teacher. The collection of data will be between May and July 2023. The research will be conducted under the supervision of Dr Rethabile Mawela. If any concerns arise during the data collection process, the Rhodes University Research Office can be contacted at

Rhodes University Research Office

Ethics Co-ordinator: ethicscommittee@ru.ac.za

t: +27 (0) 46 603 7727

Room 220, Main Admin Building

Drostdy Road, Makhanda, 6139

Yours sincerely

Student name: Sheron Moyo

Signature: **s Moyo**

Email: sheron.moyobhebhe@gmail.com

Supervisor name: Dr Rethabile Mawela

Email: r.mawela@ru.ac.za

Appendix 7: Participants' Request Form



CONSENT LETTER – PARTICIPANT

From: Sheron Moyo

Cell: 0848510471

949 Lotlhakeng section

Batlharos

Kuruman

8476

Mr/Ms X

P.O Box

Kuruman

Date

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Sheron Moyo and I am a student at Rhodes University student number 15M0035. I invite you to take part in the research study titled, “The Reading to Learn Pedagogy in South African Inclusive English First Additional Language classrooms: Successes and Challenges.” This study aims to find out if the Reading to Learn pedagogy can enhance the reading skills of learners with reading barriers in inclusive classrooms. Your participation is important because you know about the RtL pedagogy.

The research will be undertaken through classroom observations, interviews as well as focus group discussions. Firstly, I intend to observe you twice for a 40-60 minute lesson (Depending on the school timetable) and audio record the lesson while you teach. Secondly, I intend to meet with you for two 30-minute interviews to discuss the successes and challenges of using the Reading to Learn pedagogy in your inclusive classroom. Lastly, I would like to meet you and three other participants for a focus group discussion for 45 minutes. Your participation in the research will be voluntary and your identity will not be

revealed. The collection of the data will be between May and July 2023. Your participation will be required for afterschool interviews at mutually agreed times during this period. Participation in this research is voluntary and an appositive response to this letter DBEs not oblige you to take part in this research. If you agree to participate, I will organize a meeting with you where I will explain in detail what would be expected of you. This research has met the standards laid down by Rhodes University. If concerns arise during the data collection process, the Rhodes University Research Office can be contacted at

Rhodes University Research Office

Ethics Co-ordinator: ethicscommittee@ru.ac.za

t: +27 (0) 46 603 7727

Room 220, Main Admin Building

Drostdy Road, Makhanda, 6139

Rhodes Research Office email: ethics-committee@ru.ac.za

Yours sincerely

Student name: Sheron Moyo

Email: sheron.moyobhebhe@gmail.com Signature: **SMoyo**

Supervisor name: Dr Rethabile Mawela Email: r.mawela@ru.ac.za



INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Research Title	The Reading to Learn pedagogy in South African inclusive English First Addition Language classrooms: Successes and challenges
Principal Investigator	Sheron Moyo

Participation Information
● I understand the purpose of the research study and my involvement in it. ● I understand the risks and the benefits of participating in this research study. ● I understand that I may withdraw from the research study at any stage without any penalty ● I understand that participating in this research study is done voluntarily. ● I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will remain anonymous and reference will be made to me by name or student number. ● I understand that data collection requirements particularly for this research e.g. interviews, and voice recording will be used ● I understand and agree that the interviews will be recorded electronically. ● I understand I will be allowed to read and comment on the transcribed interview notes. ● I confirm that I am not participating in this study for any financial gains. ● I understand my details will not be revealed

Information Explanation
The above explanation was explained to me by Sheron Moyo
The above information was explained in English and I am in command of this language.

Voluntary Consent
I, hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the above-mentioned research

Signature:	Date: / /
------------	-----------

Investigator Declaration	
I, Sheron Moyo declare that I have explained all the participant information to the participant and have truly answered all her questions asked by the participant.	
Signature: <i>S Moyo</i>	Date: / /

Appendix 8: Reading to Learn: Observation Tool



RESEARCHERS OBSERVATION SHEET

Student _____ Observer _____

Supervising Teacher _____ School and District _____

Grade _____ Date _____ Time _____ to _____

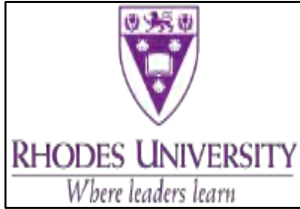
Lesson Activity _____ Number of Students _____

Instruction, Interactional Sequences	Yes/No	Comment
1. Evidence of the use of Reading to Learn pedagogy to introduce the lesson .Provides lesson opening (e.g., reviews prior learning; activates background knowledge; reviews academic/social goals; makes connections to prior learning; signals lesson and gains the attention of students)		
2. evidence of using the Reading to Learn stages to teach Purpose Setting Clear directions and and explanations States purpose - Tells students what, how, when, and why for task or Strategy checks for understanding Create authentic purposes, audiences, goals, and performances Lesson Presentation/Teaching a. Steps to teach/lead students in the acquisition of new knowledge, language, processes, and strategies • Models statements that help students self-instruct, self-monitor, or evaluate		

3. Evidence of learner participation during the lesson Asks students to dialogue, co-construct, or collaborate on problem-solving tasks • Student-to-student interaction occurs spontaneously, and on a planned basis • Provides opportunities for students to monitor text, ideas, and meanings • Ensures that students negotiate the meaning of the text and contribute ideas • Uses thinking/problem-solving as an integral focus • Evidence within or across lessons that students are initiating, internalizing, and taking ownership of discourse, process, and strategies		
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4. Guided Practice informed by Reading to Learn • Uses peer and social collaboration throughout the acquisition, practice fluency, and generalization phases • Uses peer collaboration and interactive discourse for dynamic assessment and to support current and future instructional conversations		
5. Evidence of closure of lesson informed by Reading to Learn • Community share • Summarises lesson or has students actively summarise the lesson		
6 Evaluation/Measurement of Performance • Uses probes and independent practice to evaluate and inform instruction; • Uses instructional conversations to assess and inform instruction • Maintains records and graphs		
7. Lesson Plan/Lesson Log using the Reading to Learn frame Evidence of consistency and relatedness among goals, objectives, and activities. Quality of lesson plan/log and connections to past/future lessons is apparent.		

Appendix 9: Semi-structure Interview Provisional Questions



SEMI- STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (PROVISIONAL)

Name of participant: _____

Date: _____

A: Opening

Good afternoon Mr/Ms..... (Smile and handshake). Thank you for making time to let me interview you. As I mentioned when we first met for a meet and greet session, I'm doing this interview for my master's study which is trying to explore the efficacy of Reading to Learn to teach learners with learning barriers in inclusive classrooms. I hope to use this information to help write up my master's thesis about the importance of using Reading to Learn to teach reading in inclusive classrooms.

The interview will take about 30 minutes. Do you have any questions before we start?

B: Body

1. Since you were introduced to the Reading to Learn methodology during your in-service training at Rhodes, are you still using it to teach reading and writing in your classroom?
2. Tell me why are you still using the RtL in your classroom.
3. In your own opinion and experience how did you make use of the RtL pedagogy to enhance reading in your classroom?
4. What experiences did you gain in using the RtL pedagogy?
5. I know you are teaching in an inclusive classroom where all learners with barriers are included, do you have learners that have reading barriers in your classroom?
6. How has RtL pedagogy helped your learners in achieving their reading goals?
7. To what extent have your learners with reading barriers improved their reading abilities and academic performances when comprehensively engaged in reading complemented with the Reading to Learn Pedagogy?
8. . What do you see as different as compared to using other reading methods?

9. What experience did you gain from using the RtL pedagogy in your inclusive classroom?

10. What challenges did you experience during the use of the RtL pedagogy in teaching reading to learners with reading barriers?

These are the possible questions, but where appropriate I may ask further questions that will arise particularly responses in depth.

C: Closing

We have come to the end of our interview. Thank you very much for taking your time off to come and meet with me. Is there anyone you recommend I should speak to? Is there anything else you want to suggest or say is there anything else you want to speak about?

(Handshake) have a nice day.

Sheron Moyo

Signature SMoyo

Signature (supervisor)_____

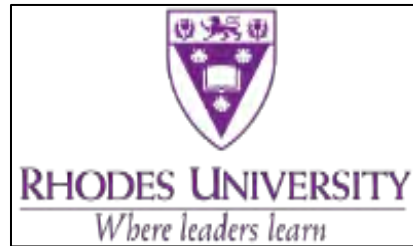
Date: / /

Date: / /

Place: Kuruman NC

Place_____

Appendix 10: Focus Group Provisional Questions



FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (PROVISIONAL)

Good afternoon colleagues and welcome to our session. Thanks for taking the time to join me to talk about the use of Reading to Learn in our inclusive classrooms. My name is Sheron Moyo a part-time student at Rhodes University. You were invited because you have participated in individual interviews, so you're familiar with what we are going to discuss today which is RtL in inclusive classrooms. Please note that there are no wrong answers but rather different points of view. I am tape-recording the session because I don't want to miss any of your comments.

1. How and when do you use the Reading to Learn pedagogy?
2. Tell me about positive experiences you've had with using the pedagogy.
3. Tell me about disappointments you've had with using the pedagogy.
4. Think back over all the years you have used the pedagogy and what is your fondest memory in using this pedagogy. (The most enjoyable memory.)
5. Please share your success in using the pedagogy in teaching learners with reading barriers.
6. Share your challenges in using the pedagogy in teaching reading to learners with reading barriers.
7. What needs improvement?
8. do you have any comments?