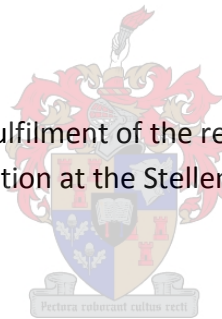


# **A LEVELLED LITERACY INTERVENTION FOR FOUNDATION PHASE LEARNERS**

**Nita Kidd**

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Education at the Stellenbosch University



**Supervisor:**

**Dr R.R. Nathanson**

**March 2011**

## **DECLARATION**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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## ABSTRACT

It is clear from a recent study done by the Western Cape Education Department that the quality of literacy instruction in primary schools is not up to standard (WCED, 2006; Kruizinga, 2010). Therefore, countless learners struggle with the acquisition of literacy skills, such as reading and writing (WCED, 2006). One of the numerous reasons for South Africa's poor literacy levels is stated in the National Reading Strategy (Department of Education, 2008:10): "Learners who experience barriers to learning often do not receive the support needed to become fluent readers." Despite the policies of inclusive education that recognise the special needs of learners in all sectors of education (Department of Education, 2008:10), countless children find it impossible to decipher and make sense of the unfamiliar texts they encounter in school. For this reason, many learners struggle with feelings of frustration, inadequacy and a sense of failure.

As a result of the poor literacy levels, a literacy intervention programme was developed that was used to improve the literacy levels of learners who needed individualised instruction in the specific areas of reading and writing. This intervention programme was based on the principles of Reading Recovery®, a New Zealand literacy intervention programme developed by Clay (1993). Her Observation Survey assessment tasks (Clay, 2002) were used as the main research instrument within a pre-test, mid-test and post-test design. In addition to quantitative data, the Observation Survey yielded qualitative, descriptive data on children's literacy-processing behaviours, which were used to monitor learner progress and provide a source of feedback to guide teachers' instructional decision-making. Three struggling grade three learners were chosen for the intervention, together with a control group consisting of four average-performing learners to which the intervention group was compared. The comparison was done in order to gain knowledge of the intervention group's improvement and to see whether they progressed to the level of the control group as a result of the intervention. This programme was designed to accelerate the learning process of struggling learners, firstly by using levelled texts, and secondly by teaching the learners to apply the comprehension strategies needed for successful reading and writing. The results indicate that the intervention group reached the average performance level of the control group and therefore the intervention proved to be successful. Towards the end of the intervention it became clear that the project merited further research and support.

## OPSOMMING

'n Onlangse studie wat deur die Wes-Kaapse Onderwysdepartement voltooi is, het aangetoon dat die kwaliteit van geletterdheidsonderrig nie op standaard is nie. Gevolglik is daar baie leerders wat geletterdheidsprobleme ervaar (WCED, 2006). Een van die vele redes vir Suid-Afrika se lae geletterdheidsvlakke word in die Nasionale Leesstrategie (Department of Education, 2008:10) weergegee: "Leerders wat struikelblokke tot leer ervaar, ontvang gewoonlik nie die ondersteuning wat hul benodig om suksesvolle lesers te word nie." Ten spyte van die Inklusiewe Onderwysriglyne wat die spesiale behoeftes van alle leerders in alle sektore van onderwys erken (Department of Education, 2008:100), is daar steeds vele kinders wat dit feitlik onmoontlik vind om sin te maak van onbekende tekste waarmee hul in die skool te doen kry. Vir hierdie redes sukkel baie leerders met gevoelens van frustrasie, ontoereikendheid en mislukking.

As gevolg van die geletterdheidsprobleme onder jong leerders, het ek 'n intervensieprogram ontwikkel wat gebruik is om die geletterdheidsvlakke van leerders wat spesifiek geletterdheidsprobleme ervaar op te stoot. Die intervensie is gebaseer op beginsels van Reading Recovery®, 'n Nieu-Seelandse Geletterdheidsprogram wat deur Clay (2002) ontwikkel is. Die bykomende "Observation Survey" assesseringstake is gebruik as die hoof navorsingsinstrument binne die raamwerk van 'n voortoets, middel-toets, natoets-navorsingsontwerp. Bo en behalwe die kwantitatiewe data wat die "Observation Survey" take opgelewer het, het die assesseringsinstrument ook kwalitatiewe data verskaf ten opsigte van die leerders se geletterdheids-prosesseringsgedrag. Hierdie data het my gehelp om die leerders se vordering te monitor, asook om my onderrigsbesluite te rig. Drie graad drie leerders wat geletterdheidsprobleme ervaar het, is gekies om deel te neem aan die intervensie. Vier graad drie leerders wat gemiddeld presteer, is vir die kontrolegroep gekies waarteen die intervensiegroep gemeet is. Een van die doele van die intervensie was om te sien of die intervensiegroep binne die gegewe tydperk die gemiddelde vlak van die kontrolegroep kon bereik. Die program is ontwerp om op die een-tot-een vlak sukkelende leerders se leerproses te versnel deur eerstens gebruik te maak van tekste wat in vlakke van 'n progressiewe moeilikheidsgraad opgedeel is. Tweedens is die intervensieleerders geleer om 'n verskeidenheid begripstrategieë toe te pas wat enige leser nodig het om met sukses te kan lees en skryf. Die assesseringsresultate het getoon dat die intervensieleerders na verloop van die intervensie die gemiddelde lees- en skryfvlakke van die kontrole groep bereik het. Dus was die studie 'n sukses. Aan die einde van die intervensie het dit duidelik geword dat die projek verdere navorsing in hierdie veld vereis.

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# CHAPTER 1

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, RATIONALE FOR, AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Modern society deems the ability to read one of the most essential skills to gain success to school and work. The *Commission on Reading, National Academy of Education* (1985:6) states that, “without the ability to read, excellence in high school and beyond is unattainable”. Likewise, the *Report of the Review Committee on the Curriculum 2005* (2000:vi) states that the new curriculum places high value on literacy for personal development and for the country’s economic progress and success.

Despite national aspirations to create a literate society, research reveals that children’s literacy and numeracy skills in South African primary schools are not up to standard (Flanagan, 1995:xii; Report of the Review Committee on Curriculum 2005, 2000:44, Nathanson, 2008:2). Recent research done on grade three learners in the Western Cape revealed that only 36% of learners attained the specified literacy and numeracy outcomes set out in the *Revised Curriculum Statement* (WCED, 2006:4). Shockingly, the majority of learners in grade 3 achieved two to three years below their expected level of performance (WCED, 2006:4).

It is clear from the discussion above that something should be done to improve literacy instruction in our schools. The discussion in the rest of this chapter will focus mainly on traditional approaches to literacy instruction, which are currently used in many mainstream and learning support classrooms. Emphasis will also be placed on the need for the early detection of reading difficulties and for the implementation of early intervention programmes to improve the literacy skills of struggling readers and writers.

### 1.2 AN OVERVIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

In the past, struggling learners in South Africa with varying degrees of disabilities were tested by school psychologists and, according to their intelligence quotient (IQ) score, they either received instruction in a “special or adaptation class” at a mainstream school or at special schools. Therefore children with special needs were measured mainly according to their intellectual

ability, while ignoring other facets of their total development and capabilities. As a result of this lopsided assessment, many children were believed to be intellectually challenged and excluded from receiving quality education (Landsberg, Kruger & Nel, 2005:15).

Today, all learners, regardless of their disabilities, are entitled to free public education. New approaches to assessment have also arisen in research and education circles, where external and internal barriers to learning are taken into account when testing struggling learners (Landsberg *et al.*, 2005:10). In the *Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education* (Department of Education, 2001:16), inclusive education is described as:

- Acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support.
- Accepting and respecting that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs, which are equally valued and an ordinary part of our human experience.
- Enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners.
- Changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners.
- Maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and the curricula of educational institutions and uncovering and minimising barriers to learning.
- Empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning.

This intervention programme supports the basic principles of inclusive education, but I also agree with Clay (1993:8), DeFord (1991:77) and Peterson (1991:119) that the lowest achieving children need finely-tuned, one-on-one instruction that can help them progress at faster rates in order to reach the grade-level performance.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Despite the high educational ideals set out in the *White Paper 6*, illiteracy rates in South Africa remain very high. Our education system is characterised by diversity and our schools vary greatly in terms of quality, financial resources and size (Information of South Africa, 2010). Countless learners experience barriers to learning or drop out, primarily because of the inability of the system to recognise and accommodate the diverse range of learning needs. The education system's inability to meet learner needs is partly due to inaccessible schools, rigid

curricula and assessment procedures, as well as inflexible learning materials and instructional methodologies (Yeh, 2004). The South African government spends approximately 20% of the nation's annual budget on education, but the resources still are not sufficient to provide all learners with opportunities to become competent readers and writers (Yeh, 2004). Further causes of low literacy rates are the "lack of supplementary materials in African languages, disparities in school fees, insufficient teacher training, choice of language used as educational medium and an absence of access to books" (Yeh, 2004). In addition to the high illiteracy rates, the drop-out rates are above 50% in some provinces. Thousands of parents are not schooled and, as a result, fail to see the importance of encouraging their children to complete their school career (Yeh, 2004). Therefore it is clear that there are countless learners in South African schools who are in need of one-on-one learning support. For that reason I will focus on piloting an intervention programme that is focused on the early prevention of reading and writing difficulties in individual children.

#### **1.4 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RESEARCH**

The approach advocated in the *White Paper 6* (Department of Education, 2001) is the current national guideline for South African education and the framework within which to improve the low literacy rates. Moreover, this inclusive approach to education is fundamentally different from the traditional approaches, mentioned in 1.2, which assume that barriers to learning reside primarily within the learner (e.g. IQ), and that learner support should primarily take on the form of specialist and medical interventions. Inclusive education, on the other hand, supports the approach that external and internal factors cause barriers to learning (Landsberg *et al.*, 2005:10). Therefore, instead of providing learners mainly with extra specialist learning support, changes to the mainstream education, methodologies and curricula (external factors) should rather be implemented so that learners experiencing barriers to learning can be identified early and the appropriate support can be provided (Department of Education, 2001:20).

The design of a literacy intervention programme discussed in this thesis meets the criteria mentioned above in a number of ways. First of all, it agrees with the following objectives, mentioned in the White Paper (see 1.2), namely that education structures should change to meet the needs of all learners, and that methodologies, attitudes and the curriculum should be adapted to accommodate their difficulties. The Western Cape Education Department (Vinjevold, 2004:1) also supports this view. It states that the teaching of reading should accommodate different learning styles and equip learners with various strategies to help them read at their

level of competency “for information and enjoyment”, as specified in the *Revised National Curriculum Statement* (2003). That is why the content of and methodologies in the intervention are adapted to the specific needs, strengths and weaknesses of each child. In this way, children’s barriers to learning are decreased by maximising the participation of the learners involved and simultaneously equipping them with strategies that empower them to read and write with understanding.

More specifically, this intervention, conducted in English, will aim to improve the level of literacy of three first additional language learners in grade 3 who struggle with reading and writing. The reason why I chose to work with first additional language learners was because I wanted to see how Afrikaans-speaking children, who have already acquired a first language, will cope with the acquisition of their first additional language through this intervention. These three learners attend an Afrikaans-medium primary school in the Western Cape. In this specific school, the learners are only introduced formally to English in grade three.

Furthermore, the programme I designed for the intervention is based on the principles of Reading Recovery® and uses Clay’s (2002) assessment tasks, which will serve as the main data collection instrument. Reading Recovery® is an early literacy intervention designed to drastically reduce the number of children having difficulty making the transition from an informal learning environment to formal education (Hill, Matczuk & Severyn, 2008:2). For my intervention programme, the teacher has to be trained to facilitate the child’s learning in order to produce the desired outcomes. This programme was conducted until the learners reached a stage at which they were able to read at or above the average level of their peers. The tutoring emphasises learning to read by reading (Clay, 2002:24). The lessons in the intervention programme are one-on-one and instructionally based and include reading known stories, reading a story that was read once the day before, writing a story, doing word work, and reading a new book.

The Reading Recovery® programme’s observational and instructional methodology has been researched and tested in various countries for more than thirty years and has proven to be highly successful (Clay, 1991a:56; Clay, 2002:59-65; Slavin, 2005:44). Likewise, an independent assessment conducted by What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), a division of the United States’ Institute of Education Sciences, clearly establishes that Reading Recovery® is an effective intervention based on scientific evidence (US Department of Education, 2008. Hill *et al.* (2008:2) go on to state that “Reading Recovery® is a preventative, research based, data driven intervention and internationally recognised for its high standard of professional development”.

This approach was found to be highly successful with the lowest achievers in the classroom, who are “further classified as learning disabled by professionals prior to placement in the program” (Lyons, 1991:206).

A hypothesis is made that, within the South African context, an intervention based on Reading Recovery® principles will work efficiently, seeing that Reading Recovery® in itself claims to help the lowest achievers, regardless of the curriculum and methodology used (Clay, 1991b:3). The principles of Reading Recovery® are:

- Individualised instruction;
- Continuous assessments;
- Systematic observation of reading and writing behaviour;
- Use of levelled texts;
- Teaching for comprehension strategies;
- Reading continuous texts;
- Interactive writing; and
- Focusing on the child’s proficiency (Clay, 1993:18).

These principles therefore will be included in the programme to finally conclude whether success was achieved with the struggling, first additional language learners or not (Lyons, 1991:220-229). Furthermore, this programme seeks to re-engage children who have disengaged from classroom instruction with the aim of accelerating their learning so that they can return to the classroom after twelve weeks. Hence, the teacher’s load is lightened by helping the lowest performing children outside of the classroom situation, and in this way also preventing school drop-outs. Dahl and Freppon’s (1998:272) research indicates that the long-term prognosis for children who disengage from literacy instruction in the early grades is not good, and that personal engagement in literacy, or lack thereof, can make the critical difference for individual learners (Nathanson, 2008). My study also aims to make connections between one-on-one instruction and classroom instruction, and attempts to find ways in which the techniques and materials used in this intervention can benefit classroom teachers (Pinnell, 2001:218).

## **1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

In Chapter 3 a detailed description of the design and methodology of the intervention will be provided. In short, this research was a pilot study that stretched over a three-month period and

aimed to test the effectiveness of this type of intervention within the South African educational context. More specifically, I wanted to test whether the Reading Recovery® principles used in this program would work in a one-on-one, small-scale pilot study within the South African context. Therefore, seven learner participants and four teacher participants were chosen to participate in the study. Furthermore, the school in which the intervention was conducted allowed very limited time slots to work with the participants. For this reason I could only accommodate three learners in the intervention. The other four learners served as a control group.

The case study was based on Clay's (2002) cognitive processing approach, which is a balanced combination between the transmission and transactional models of language acquisition. It emphasises learning to read through reading continuous texts, and learning to read and write simultaneously by engaging in authentic reading and writing activities. Through these activities the learners acquire phonics knowledge, as well as valuable comprehension strategies within the whole language framework (Clay, 2002; Cazden & Clay, 1992; Fountas & Pinnell, 2006b).

Furthermore, my research aimed to address the following research question: *How does an intervention programme using levelled books help improve struggling learners' comprehension skills and strategies in reading and writing?* The sub-questions were:

- Do levelled books help learners to improve their reading and comprehension skills and develop comprehension strategies?
- How do the six assessment tasks in Clay's (2002) assessment survey, *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*, contribute to the effective assessment, identification and monitoring of each individual child? Why/why not?
- Does this intervention interfere with or advance the schedule, curriculum and methodology used by the educator in the classroom?

In order to answer these research questions I did assessments of both the control and intervention groups at three time intervals, namely a baseline assessment/pre-test, a mid-test assessment and a post-test assessment. I also did daily assessments of the intervention group's reading in the form of Running Records (see 3.3.4.1.i) and undertook close observation of their reading and writing improvement. The main data collection tool was the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay, 2002). These Observation Survey tasks were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data of the learners' literacy behaviours. In addition, I also



collected data by conducting interviews with the intervention learners, as well as with the teachers, in order to answer the research questions more effectively.

## 1.6 DEFINING IMPORTANT TERMINOLOGY

*Literacy* has its roots in social interaction (Flanagan, 1995). Hence, Scribner and Cole (1981:95) describe literacy as “a set of socially organized practices that make use of a symbol system and a technology for producing and disseminating it.” Literacy is therefore, not simply knowing how to read and write a particular script, but applying this knowledge for specific purposes in specific contexts of use. Scribner and Cole (1981:236) also stress the need for readers to attain reading strategies that can be applied to any text they might encounter at their level of competency.

To be literate, refers to the ability to read, write and communicate in a language. Therefore reading is directly linked to literacy. Scholars adhere to diverse views of reading and these views are accompanied by various definitions (Weaver, 1994:3). These definitions of reading in turn influence one’s approach to reading. A child’s definition of reading is mostly a reflection of how he experiences and understands reading which is greatly influenced by what and how he was taught to read. As a result, the way in which the child defines reading may also contribute to his reading problems (Lyons, 1991:215).

Weaver (1994:5) deems the following definition of *reading* important: “Reading means constructing meaning, and using everything you know to do so.” Flanagan (1995:3) concurs with this definition when saying that “learning to read involves learning how to make meaning of texts and symbols. Whatever a person’s goal is in learning to read, it must inevitably include comprehension of text.” Clay (1991:6) agrees with their definitions by defining reading as a message-getting, problem-solving activity which increases in power and flexibility the more it is practiced. In her definition she further states that:

“within the directional constraints of the printer’s code, language and visual perception responses are purposefully directed by the reader in some integrated way to the problem of extracting meaning from cues in a text, in sequence, so that the reader brings a maximum of understanding to the author’s message” (Clay, 1991:6).

Therefore, in the process of reading for meaning, the reader needs to extract information from different sources, such as knowledge of how the world works, sentence structure, the alphabet,

possible meanings of the text, special features of sound, shape and layout, visual information and words often used in the language in an integrated way (Clay, 2002:14). This means that readers need to use various integrated strategies to be able to extract the necessary information from the different sources and make sense from the text.

To quote Weaver (1994:42): “Reading means bringing meaning to a text in order to get meaning from it.” This is done successfully by the application of reading strategies. Bringing meaning to a text to gain meaning from it is a difficult task for many young readers. Unfortunately many instructional approaches used in South African schools today tend to teach words and limited strategies in isolation, instead of teaching learners to apply useful strategies to read for meaning. The problem with such an approach is that low-progress readers especially struggle to make sense of the reading process, because they become more focused on the isolated items of knowledge and rules of phonics, rather than comprehending what they are reading. Consequently these low-progress readers tend to operate on undeveloped, weak strategies and fall further and further behind their average peers (Clay, 1991:21).

*Reading comprehension* is the meaning gained from what is written. Comprehension involves the development and application of strategies, such as prediction, self-correction, using picture cues, sentence structure or meaning to solve words and gain understanding (Hornsby, 2000:33). Pinnell (2001:5), Strickland (2004:87), Dorn (1998:14) and Balajthy, Lipa-Wade (2003:3) take the strong position that “to read is, in fact, to comprehend.” A person may be seeing and responding to graphic symbols on a page or, as they say “bark at print”, but that does not mean the person understands the text and therefore can read. Children come to school having acquired a great deal of language and concepts of print from their home environment, but many of the concepts and strategies which help with reading comprehension have still to be developed during formal schooling (Flanagan, 1995:xiii). The more children work and play with language, the more new concepts of print is formed and as a result their understanding improves.

*Foundation phase*, as referred to in the thesis title, is the first phase of the General Education and Training band and consists of grades R, 1, 2 and 3 (Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2003).

The word “*levelled*”, as referred to in the thesis title, demotes to finely graded levelling of text difficulty and is used to match the correctly levelled text to a reader (Pitcher, Fang, 2007:43).

## **1.7 SUMMARY OF THE REMAINING CHAPTERS**

Chapter 2, the literature review, will provide the theoretical underpinnings of the study and will present an argument for the approaches underlying the intervention programme. Chapter 3 will explain the research design, methods used and ethical aspects of the study. Chapter 4 will focus on the analysis and interpretation of the qualitative as well as the quantitative data, which was collected over the three-month research period. In this chapter, the three intervention participants' observations and results will be analysed and interpreted. Thereafter, reoccurring themes will be highlighted and discussed. A statistical analysis and interpretation of participant performance (Section B) will be included at the end of Chapter 4. Finally, Chapter 5 will provide concluding reflections and recommendations, as well as the ethical aspects of the study and possible options for further study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION: SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF LITERATURE REVIEW**

The aim of the literature review is to sketch a theoretical and conceptual framework of theories regarding reading and writing acquisition. Contrasting theories will be compared and also applied to the South African educational situation to test their relevance and efficiency in the South African context.

Firstly, an outline of the South African educational situation will be provided in Section 2.2, after which the need for an effective intervention will be established (see 2.3). The rest of the chapter will be presented as follows:

In Section 2.4 the basic key terms of the intervention, namely literacy, reading and comprehension, will be defined, followed by a comparison of the transmission (behaviouristic) and transactional (socio-constructivistic) models of learning (see 2.5). The reason for this comparison is to find a learning model and reading approach that best supports the intervention programme used in this study. In Section 2.6 I will take an in-depth look at the role of emotional and cognitive brain functioning in the acquisition of reading. Next, the reading process and the importance of a child's oral language as the foundation for learning to read and write will be explained (see 2.7). Typical difficulties experienced by at-risk learners in the reading process and the possible causes of these reading difficulties will be discussed in Section 2.8.

In the last section of the literature review (see 2.10), a possible solution to the literacy problems experienced by struggling learners will be presented, namely the provision of a literacy intervention based on Clay's cognitive processing model of learning, which is used in this research study. This early literacy intervention serves to develop inherent reading and writing strategies in learners that would enable them to read and write competently. The various theoretical aspects undergirding the intervention, such as the use of guided reading, the acquisition of comprehension strategies, the importance of levelled books, observation and assessment, and interactive writing, will be discussed to confirm the programme's foundational research base and consequent efficiency.

## 2.2 STRUGGLING LEARNERS AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY

It is clear from the *South African Schools Act* (Act no. 84 of 1996) that all learners are entitled to quality education and support services in public schools. The Act states that the Member of the Executive Council for each province must, “where reasonably practicable, provide education for learners who experience barriers to learning at ordinary public schools and also provide relevant educational support services for such learners” (Department of Education, 1996).

Consistent with the *South African Schools Act*, the National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training (NCSET) and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS) released their final report in November 1997 in which quality education for all was emphasised, rather than special needs and support in mere isolation (Landsberg, 2005:62). Schools were then required to undergo a mind shift and become “inclusive” in order to meet the needs of struggling learners in the classroom and, if needed, to provide extra, individualised support for such children outside of the classroom context. The South African education policy supports this view because its overarching goal is to enable all learners to feel valued, have access to and succeed in lifelong education and training of good quality (Department of Education, 2002:93).

Regardless of inclusive education policies that extol quality education and support services for all, the reality is that inclusivity remains an idealistic guideline and a standard that most South African schools cannot attain (Department of Education, 2008:10). For the past fifteen years, education in South Africa has been challenged with the exceptionally low levels of literacy in schools throughout the country (see 1.1). One of many reasons for the poor literacy levels in South African schools is explained in the *National Reading Strategy* (Department of Education, 2008:10): “Learners who experience barriers to learning often do not receive the support needed (at home or in school) to become fluent readers. This is despite the policies of Inclusive Education that recognise the special needs of learners in all sectors of education.”

The *South African Schools Act* and the National Department of Education do answer the question of “what” struggling learners in the education system need. Their answer is the provision of relevant support services in the form of a school-based support team, which is responsible for the provision of learning support for struggling learners (Landsberg, 2005:61, 66; Department of Education, 1996). Yet the question of “how” support is to be provided is not answered clearly. There is not a strong enough emphasis on the provision of intensive, professional interventions by trained learning support professionals outside of the classroom

situation as a means of remediating the problems of these struggling learners. Thus, the necessity for an effective intervention programme that meets the needs of low achievers is great. There is much support in the literature to substantiate the view of intensive learning support for those who struggle to cope in the mainstream classroom (Clay, 2001; Fountas & Pinnell, 2001; DeFord, 1991:77; Weaver, 1994; Hornsby, 2000; Clay, 1991a:56; Block & Duffy, 2008), but many researchers differ in theory concerning learning and learning support. These contrasting views and approaches will be discussed in Section 2.5 to investigate which theory would best support the intervention programme conducted in this research study. However, a closer look first will be taken at traditional remedial programmes currently used in the South African education system. Thereafter, the need for a more effective intervention, that better addresses the diverse needs and literacy problems experienced by children, will be elucidated.

### **2.3 TRADITIONAL REMEDIAL PROGRAMMES AND THE NEED FOR CHANGE**

In the past, most theories regarding the teaching of low achievers was guided by a deficit theory focusing mainly on what the child could not do (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006b:364). Accordingly, most research done within the deficit model paradigm focused on questions such as (Pinnell & Fountas, 2006:364):

- What is happening when readers are in difficulty?
- Why are children failing to read?
- What are the causes of reading difficulties?
- What treatment will work best?
- What is wrong with children who struggle in reading?

Within the deficiency model of remedial support, children are assessed in order to identify their weaknesses. Instruction is guided by what they do not know. As a result, many children following such a programme form a dependency relationship with the teacher, because the learner is dependent on receiving instruction in what he cannot do. Consequently, the child struggles to work as effectively without the support of the remedial teacher. Programmes based on these “deficit” theories are still being used in South African schools, but luckily a more effective form of intervention is available. This was designed by the most influential scholar and educational researcher of the last three decades, namely Dr M. Clay (Pinnell & Fountas, 2006:365).

In the time when most research focused on the deficiency model of learning, Clay decided to study the effective reading behaviours of proficient readers and based her research on the following questions (Pinnell & Fountas, 2006:364):

- What is happening when readers process text successfully?
- What sources of information do successful readers use?
- What are the paths of progress for readers as they change across time?
- How can struggling readers make faster progress than average readers?

Clay used these questions as an information source to inform her research on and teaching of struggling readers (Pinnell & Fountas, 2006:364). Further to the proficiency model of learning, Clay (2002:27) also did extensive research on various remedial programmes that focused on the deficit theory of learning and found that the majority of learners that discontinued “deficiency” remedial programmes did not stay at the same level as when remediation was received, but rather regressed. Clay (2002:27) states that “the children usually did not continue to progress without the remedial teacher”.

Another problem with the traditional deficiency model of remedial support is that of delayed intervention (Mceneaney, Lose & Schwartz, 2006:122). Delayed intervention refers to the practice of assessing learners and providing them with remedial help after three or more years of formal schooling, which can be too late. Mceneaney *et al.* (2006:122) argue that “delaying the intervention, as was often the case with discrepancy models for identification, dramatically increases the gap between an at-risk child and more normally progressing peers”. In relation to this issue, opposing researchers have discovered that if children do not attain success within the first three years of formal schooling they will find it harder to catch up to their peers in later years (Dorn, French & Jones, 1998:1; Clay, 1993; Fountas & Pinnell, 2001). The reason for this is that younger learners have less to unlearn than older children with more established faulty behaviours (Clay, 2002:37,48). In addition, younger children have more confidence in their own ability, since their experiences of failure are much less than those of older children receiving learning support (Clay, 2002:27). For these reasons, regular monitoring of children’s reading and writing behaviours at an early stage is of high importance in order to prevent wrong behaviours from forming habits.

Therefore, the development of a preventative learning support programme that focuses on the development of reading strategies may prove to solve this dependency problem, seeing that learners are taught to become independent readers and writers who are proficient at applying

their comprehension strategies to authentic texts. A more detailed explanation of the proficiency model of intervention will be provided in Section 2.10. Having explained the need for more effective intervention programs, a discussion on the different learning theories and models of reading instruction will follow.

## **2.4 LEARNING THEORIES AND READING APPROACHES**

It is widely agreed that reading involves deriving meaning from a text, but scholars differ vastly on the methodologies for teaching reading. There are different views about the reading process and how it is to be taught (Flanagan, 1995:11). In the 1980s and 1990s there was a major shift in our understanding of the teaching of reading, which was brought about as the instructional focus shifted to meeting the needs of children and having them construct their own knowledge. These shifts influenced assessment, as well as instructional procedures (Balajthy *et al.*, 2003:3), but rather than lead us to clear explanations of teaching reading, our present theories compete for support (Hornsby, 2000:8). Therefore, the various theoretical approaches to reading acquisition that have dominated our thinking for decades will be discussed. The reading approaches will be explained within the framework of the two major contrasting learning theories, namely behaviourism and socio-constructivism. The reason for so doing is to contrast the different views of reading acquisition and to strengthen the argument for socio-constructivism and the socio-cognitive processing model of reading. This section will be concluded with a debate between scholars supporting the transactional reading approach and those supporting the transmission approach (see 2.5.3).

### **2.4.1 Behaviourist learning theory**

The term 'behaviourist' is derived from the discipline of psychology in which children's early learning behaviours are studied. According to these studies, children's social development occurs primarily through a process of reinforcement and imitation as they learn through observing others (Block & Duffy, 2008:26, 27). The focus is on how the environment shapes the child, rather than on the child's feelings or personal experiences. This theory of learning led to teachers following the same approach to reading and writing. A few of the aspects of the behaviourist approach to reading will be explained next, but a more detailed layout will be provided in Section 2.5.1.1.1 in the discussion of the phonics approach, which is an example of a behaviourist approach to reading.

According to the behaviourist view of reading there are important skills that need to be acquired, such as word solving, word identification and knowledge of the alphabet, before a child is ready



to read. Reading readiness therefore is an important aspect of the behaviourist learning model, whereas theorists supporting the socio-constructivist model of reading (see 2.5.2) do not support the idea of reading readiness. Socio-constructivist scholars rather emphasise reading continuous texts from the beginning, within authentic contexts to which the child can relate (Weaver, 1994:140; Cazden & Clay, 1992:131). Furthermore, behaviourists place great emphasis on the sounding out of words (phonics) and sight word recognition (flashcards). Therefore, learners are encouraged to memorise words in isolation (Clay, 2002:35). Clay (2002:49) states that meaning rather lies in stretches of text, not in isolated words. In addition, comprehension within the behaviourist view is seen as a set of questions asked after reading a piece of text. A child's reading ability is measured by the number of individual words he can pronounce/read correctly and his success with letter-sound combinations. Therefore, children who want to become successful readers would have to learn many strategies by themselves that the teacher is not explicitly teaching (Clay, 2002:32).

As research into reading acquisition increased, there was a realisation that the behaviourist approach to reading (transmission model and phonics approach) was insufficient. This framework lacked recognition of the various aspects of reading that are crucially important for the successful development of the reading process. These aspects will be discussed under the transactional model of learning (see 2.5.2.1), as well as under the whole language (see 2.5.2.1.1) and cognitive processing approaches to reading (see 2.5.2.1.2).

#### *2.4.1.1 Transmission model of reading*

Hornsby (2000:9) describes the transmission model of reading as "a process proceeding from surface to deep structure; from what's on the page to what's in our heads. Meaning comes from the text to the reader, whereas the transaction model emphasises the reader bringing meaning to the text in order to get meaning from it." Therefore, it is a process of mastering isolated symbols of letters and their sounds and systematically building letter-by-letter, word-by-word and sentence-by-sentence until one can read fluently.

Therefore, the transmission model of reading is a pure form of the behaviourist learning theory. More specifically, children are taught to memorise words in isolation, imitate reading behaviours and repeatedly apply phonics-decoding skills until a large sight-word lexicon is developed (Vadasy, Sanders & Abbott, 2008:51).

Before the 1960s, the most predominant learning theory was the transmission model of learning. This model of learning is characterised by drilling, memorising facts, and forming

habits. According to this model, the emphasis lies on what learners cannot yet do rather than on their strengths. As mentioned, this approach has become inaccurate and outdated when compared with the latest research on reading acquisition. The phonics approach remains useful to the field of early literacy acquisition, but only with the addition of the works of Clay (2002), Fountas and Pinnell (2001, 2006), Block and Duffy (2008), DeFord (1991), Hornsby (2000), etc., which now have wider and more effective application.

The phonics approach is an example of how the behaviourist learning theory has led to the transmission model of reading.

#### 2.4.1.1.1 Phonics approach

According to the phonics approach (which resulted in the transmission model of learning), reading is a matter of learning letter-sound relationships, and reading and memorising words in isolation (Ekwall & Shanker, 1993:1,7; Clay, 1991b; Weaver, 1994, Adams, 1990). Phonics, as described by Adams (1990:50), refers to “a system of teaching reading that builds on the alphabetic principle, a system of which a central component is the teaching of correspondences between letters or groups of letters and their pronunciations”. Therefore, small units like letters and short words, along with spelling and punctuation rules, are taught in isolation, devoid of meaning. Behaviourist scholars argue that when children learn to pronounce words correctly, meaning will follow automatically (Weaver, 1994:3,15).

Vadasy *et al.* (2008:51) believe that at-risk learners should receive explicit phonemic decoding skills, rather than being taught these incidentally (as claimed to be the case in the whole language approach – see 2.5.2.1.1). However, in Vadasy *et al.*'s article there is reference to a study that showed that two years after learners received explicit phonemic reading instruction, they scored a mere 50% on decoding and reading fluency, near 40% on word reading and comprehension and close to 30% on spelling. The study further reveals that 24 months after receiving the reading instruction, the learners did not maintain strong rates of growth in word reading skills and that their reading pace was very poor. According to Vadasy *et al.* (2008:52), “a large portion of the trained students continued to perform in the lowest 20<sup>th</sup> percentile on reading measures”. Therefore, the results of this study indicate that the phonics approach does not always work as effectively with all learners, especially with those who struggle.

A large majority of primary schools in South Africa focus on the basic letter-sound correspondences and syllable types and, when learners reach the intermediate grades, they are expected to decode multisyllabic words and words with prefixes and suffixes (Cunningham,

1998:189). Many learners can bridge this gap with little effort, but learners with reading difficulties find it extremely challenging to make this transition. They need more explicit instruction in comprehension strategies and vocabulary in order to acquire the reading skills needed to attain success in the higher grades.

Even the intervention programmes provided for at-risk learners in the South African context focus primarily on phonological awareness, which equips children with isolated decoding skills but not necessarily sufficient fluency and comprehension skills (Berninger *et al.*, 1999, Torgesen & Hudson, 2006). Palincsar and Brown (1984b:121) noted that poor readers do not read with the purpose of searching for meaning. Poor readers who are taught through the phonics approach focus all their attention on word-by-word reading and the memorisation of phonics rules in order to read successfully, instead of applying reading strategies to attain meaning (Ekwall & Shanker, 1993:7). The problem with phonics is that it looks obvious to people who can read. You start with parts of the whole and, after learning individual letters and letter combinations, these letters are combined to form words and later sentences, but this process is, in fact, a highly abstract task for young readers.

#### **2.4.2 Socio-constructivist learning theory**

Socio-constructivism stands in stark contrast to the behaviourist approach to learning. Socio-constructivism can be traced back to Vygotsky (1978), who focused on the roles that society plays in the development of an individual. Socio-constructivism incorporates influences traditionally associated with sociology and anthropology and emphasises the importance of assistance and support in learning (Schneider, 2007). This central notion in socio-constructivism also refers to the well-known zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). Assisted learning occurs in the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), where a more competent adult would help scaffold the individual's knowledge to a level that the individual could not reach on his own (Schneider, 2007). The social world of a child includes the people who directly affect him, including teachers, friends, students, administrators and participants in all forms of activities. Accordingly, learning designs should enhance collaboration and dialogue between the parties involved in the learning process (Schneider, 2007).

##### *2.4.2.1 Transactional learning model*

After the 1960s, views in academic circles shifted as theories developed and changed over time. Learners were increasingly seen as active participants who are able to construct their own

learning and contribute to learning opportunities, as opposed to being mere 'tabula rasa' - empty vessels that waited to be filled with knowledge.

The transactional model of learning is one of the most useful theories for understanding reading difficulties and planning instructional strategies for struggling readers. This theory does not assume that struggling readers approach the processing of print in the same way efficient readers, but that they still can acquire and use strategies that efficient readers use (Balajthy *et al.*, 2003:4).

The transactional model supports comprehension instruction in an integrated way. According to this model, reading, writing and listening skills are developed simultaneously and not in isolation or ranked order, for this model supports the idea that one process complements and strengthens the other. Learners are allowed to draw upon their own knowledge in a learning situation and make mistakes as they learn, as this forms part of the learning process, and teachers are called to respond to learners' needs and build upon their strengths (Hornsby, 2000:8). Learners also read to improve and investigate authentic problems, as well as read for enjoyment (Barchers, 1998:191).

#### 2.4.2.1.1 Whole language approach

Whole language is a socio-psycholinguistic approach (Weaver, 1994:42). When reading and writing within this approach, learners are viewed as constructing meaning for themselves within familiar contexts in which interaction between them and other role players takes place. There is also a central focus on reading and writing for meaning. In order to determine the meanings of words, various contexts are used, for example the grammatical context, semantic context, pragmatic context and schematic context (Weaver, 1994:17). In this way, learners experience both reading and writing as being purposeful and valuable.

However, whole language has developed a negative connotation over the years. Some critiques of this theory would be the following: Firstly, learning to read is not a natural process, as many whole language theorists believe (Moats, 2000:9). The written language is an acquired skill that requires children to be taught to read through an unnatural process in which they are made aware of sounds and the symbols that represent the sounds, and then learn to apply these skills automatically and attend to meaning (Moats, 2000:9). Secondly, the alphabetic principle is not learned through mere exposure to print. Children can understand the alphabetic writing system if they have acquired the more fundamental understanding, called phonological awareness (Hempenstall, 2005; Moats, 2000:10). In other words, for children to read new words, they must

be able to match the speech sounds in spoken words to the correct symbols. This skill is not simply a by-product of exposure to print. Thirdly, the ability to decode and read single words accurately (phonics) is necessary for reading with fluency (Moats, 2000:9). Many whole language scholars, such as Chomsky and Goodman (1967), argue that this fundamental aspect of reading acquisition is not essential. The last argument against the whole language approach would be that context is not the primary factor in word recognition (Moats, 2000:10; Hempenstall, 2005). The over-emphasis on context within the whole language approach has resulted in learners guessing from the context what the word might be, and this amounts to unnecessary errors. Context is valuable for deciphering meaning, but precise decoding skills are also necessary to decode meaning successfully (Moats, 2000:9).

As stated by Adams (1990:25), “to some it [the whole language approach] has come to mean an ‘uninformed and irresponsible effort to finesse necessary instruction with ‘touchy’ classroom gratification”. Even though this was not the intention with the whole language approach, many educators did not grasp the total meaning of this language approach and therefore implemented it in the wrong way, which produced undesirable results. It is for this reason that Clay rather refers to her theory of reading as “whole language plus” or the cognitive processing approach, as described below (Cazden & Clay, 1992:114).

#### 2.4.2.1.2 Socio-cognitive processing approach

Clay developed a powerful theory of literacy learning, one that is hard to categorise as belonging to a “camp” within the divided field of research on reading (Pinnell & Fountas, 2006:364). Clay’s cognitive processing approach to reading is a combination of the transmission and transactional approaches (Clay, 2002). According to Clay (2002:325), there are valuable aspects to both approaches to reading that can be combined in a more balanced approach to literacy. Phonics is necessary in the reading process, but not sufficient to develop readers who truly comprehend texts (Pinnell & Fountas, 2006:364). Reading, in this model, proceeds from part to whole, but also from whole to part, from the bottom up, but also from the top down. Reading Recovery® is an example of instruction that focuses on parts of the whole within the context of whole language and, therefore, is a combination of the two above-stated approaches, thus “whole language plus” (Cazden & Clay, 1992:114).

The “whole language plus” theory or cognitive processing theory entails that young learners engage in authentic, constructive reading and writing activities and, through this, develop a

network of strategies or competencies that empowers them to solve problems in texts in order to derive meaning. Adams (1990:3, 6) confirms this by stating that “reading is not a unitary skill. It is a whole complex system of skills and knowledge. The knowledge and activities involved in reading are useless in and of themselves. They must be linked and developed together in the very act of acquisition”.

Why does this theory prove to be so successful (Clay, 1991b:342)? It is a theory of generic learning, i.e. learning that generates further learning (Clay, 1991b:342). In other words, the generic strategies acquired to solve different texts become more effective every time the child reads or writes. This approach is also valuable in the field of research, since it stimulated much further research in the specific field of literacy acquisition (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006b:364). Furthermore, Clay’s cognitive processing approach will serve as the theory on which this research intervention is based. In Section D, where the learning support intervention programme is explained, more detailed aspects of the cognitive processing model will be discussed, such as guided reading, teaching for comprehension strategies, and the use of levelled texts, assessment and interactive writing.

### **2.4.3 Summary - the transmission/transactional debate**

Both transactional models, such as the cognitive processing approach, and transmission models, such as the phonics approach, accept that reading consists of many components, strategies and behaviours. However, even though both models agree on all that has to be learned, they differ in the manner in which the skills and knowledge should be acquired (Hornsby, 2000:8).

Clay (1991:314, 320-325) makes the point that many education systems tend to deliver curricula to low achievers that are based on phonics theory, which is made up of “item learning and/or skills relating to how to ‘attack’ new items”. In contrast, my understanding of the literature suggests that a complex theory is needed to deal with the diverse needs of low achievers. It is critically important for such learners to engage with continuous text, because richer texts provide supporting structures that help learners construct complex and interwoven mental networks (Clay, 2001:113). Many of the sparse texts and materials used in mainstream and traditional remedial classrooms do not facilitate this kind of learning (Clay, 2001; Hornsby, 2000; Calkins, Hartman & White, 2005). The lowest literacy achievers will have extreme difficulty bridging any gaps in the teaching programme and linking together things that have been taught separately (Clay, 2002:32; Adams, 1990:10; Ekwall & Shanker, 1993:47).

Moreover, the phonics approach tends to ignore the valuable information, language patterns and reading strategies children bring to the reading experience, as well as reading and writing simultaneously. Therefore, the children struggle to learn how to use their acquired knowledge when approaching a text during reading. They have to focus on lists of phonics words and rules they have memorised, whereas applying strategies focuses more on the process behind reading than on specific items.

It is important that children should learn to spell correctly and know their “phonics rules”, but this should rather be acquired while they are actively engaged in reading and writing (Adams, 1990:426, 430; Calkins, 2001:199; Clay, 1991b; Flanagan, 1995). When children are taught specific items it causes them to become more dependent on teachers to give them the next item to learn (Clay, 2002:24). To spend time only doing pre-reading activities does not help children who find reading difficult, and it may well stunt their cognitive development. For these reasons, Clay (1991) had difficulty accepting the transmission model, in which reading is viewed an exact process of seeing and saying words.

Even though a lot of progress has been made in the research field of literacy acquisition, the debate about the teaching of reading is still continuing and will remain a challenging one. Next, the role of cognition in learning and the influence of emotion on the learning process will be discussed.

## **2.5 COGNITIVE BRAIN FUNCTIONING, EMOTION AND THE ACQUISITION OF READING**

### **2.5.1 Cognitive development**

Recent discoveries in neuroscience have revealed that culture, social interaction and context for learning play major roles in who we are, how we feel, what we learn and how our brains develop (Lyons, 2003:9). Neurologists have also found convincing evidence of neural networks in the brain (Newberger, 1997; Edgell & Gaddes, 1994; Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007). According to Lyons (2001:35):

“These networks support and provide the foundation for cognitive processing and are also associated with emotions. The connections between cognitive processing and emotions emerge from the unique experiences of individuals. It is therefore not only the brain that makes up the unified whole of thinking, but the totality of the mind and body.”

Neuroscientists (Goswami, 2004; Villarreal & Steinmets, 2005) and neuropsychologists (Edgell & Gaddes, 1994; Immordino-Yang *et al.*, 2007) have found that the experiences that a child has

after birth have dramatic impacts on the child's development, because they determine the actual wiring of the child's brain (Lyons, 2001:12). In the following sections the process of how learning takes place in the brain will be discussed.

Most individuals are born with approximately the same number of neurons and the same capacity to learn. Neurons or nerve cells are the functioning core of the brain and central nervous system that determines behaviour (Edgell & Gaddes, 1994). Each neuron has one axon and as many as 100 000 dendrites. Dendrites are the main way by which neurons receive information. They receive electrical impulses from other neurons and transmit them along the axon. The axons then send the electrical signal to another neuron through synapses. In the synaptic gap an electrical signal is briefly transformed into a chemical. This chemical either inhibits or excites the neighbouring neuron and enhances or prevents further transmission to other neurons (Lyons, 2003:13).

It is now known that neural development is an unending process (Lyons, 2003:13). This means that an individual's brain does not stop learning at a certain age, but has the capacity to gain new information at any given age. At birth the brain of a child has millions of neurons that have the potential to connect to other neurons when new things are experienced. The brain grows as neurons are stimulated through new experiences. New information strengthens the synapses so that the message-receiving dendrites develop new dendrite-spines. If neurons fail to develop synapses, the dendrites fail to grow (Geake & Cooper, 2003). To connect this to reading, Pinnell (2001:6) adds that "hundreds of connections and actions are taking place in the brain while reading and reflecting". Therefore it is true what Clay (2002:24) stated, that "once a certain command of reading is attained one's reading improves every time one reads".

Thus, the brain grows through strengthening some connections and discarding weakened synaptic connections. The fewer neural connections are formed through experiences during childhood, the less the brain is developed and the more its capacity to perceive and understand is diminished (Clay, 2002:17,18). Therefore when a child is not attending to things around him and is not exposed to different learning experiences, he will not learn. The important thing to notice is that when educators make tasks too difficult, children tend to switch off and not attend to the task at hand.

### **2.5.2 *Emotion, memory and learning (Lyons, 2003:58-65)***

The term emotion is derived from the Latin word 'movere' – to move. Emotions are defined as "a state of consciousness having to do with arousal of feelings and is distinguished from other



cognitive states such as volition or awareness of any physical sensation” (Lyons, 2003:58). It is through emotions that individuals communicate their most important internal states to other people. There is a close connection between cognition, emotion and social development, as each aspect of the children’s functioning is expected to affect the other (Immordino-Yang et al., 2007; Geake & Cooper, 2003; Newberger, 1997). Therefore, emotions play a critical role in learning. They can either create positive learning opportunities to help children become independent learners, or negative learning experiences that will impair the child’s learning, thinking and memory. It is important that teachers know that emotions drive what children remember or do not remember (Damasio *et al.*, 2007). Emotion drives attention and attention drives learning and problem-solving. An example of the influence of negative experiences in a child would be if a child who has not yet been granted opportunities to acquire the necessary strategies to read, might come to the intervention programme charged with negative emotion and have little will to try (Lyons, 2001, Damasio *et al.*, 2007). Once comforted, the child may be able to control his emotions because the brain is able to adjust perception and reorganise neural networks to form new positive connections in the brain. When these emotions of the child are counteracted with experiences of success, his emotional well-being and willingness to try would be built further. This will help the child in becoming independent and self-regulated.

Furthermore, a child’s emotions are portrayed through his facial expressions and body language. Teachers know that each individual’s emotional response to a situation differs. Therefore, observing the body language of a child reveals reliable clues to the child’s inner feelings and state of mind. Emotional support and encouragement should, therefore, be provided for a child that has had bad experiences with reading. Encouragement and positive feedback stimulate feelings of success within the child and, in turn, connect positive feelings to the reading process.

Negative experiences release chemical signals in the body that makes the heart race and blood flow faster so that stress or fear is experienced. The trigger could simply be a single sentence from an angry teacher or a mark on a test paper and, in turn, these negative emotions create negative memories. Stanovich (1986:121) describes how certain approaches have a negative influence on some readers: “persistent word reading and comprehension problems negatively affect motivation, self-esteem, and productive engagement with written texts”. This indicates that negative experiences creates negative memories and vice versa. According to Clay (1991:22), there is a vital connection between a struggling learner’s cognitive confusions and his negative emotions toward failure. Therefore, a child should feel competent when reading and it

should be fairly easy for him to acquire new knowledge from texts and to use what he knows to solve unknown words. A good introduction to a book may also help children to learn how to use visual information to anticipate meaning.

Fortunately, a young child's brain is flexible and is able to reorganise information. For example, a child who once had difficulty learning can change his brain activity to become a good reader and writer. This has proven to be possible (US Department of Education, 2008). Educators generally agree that the end goal of reading instruction is to produce independent readers and writers who read increasingly more complex texts with fluency and understanding. Positive emotions play a big role in achieving this goal.

Hence, as described above, brain functioning and the reading process are directly linked. Next, a more detailed description of the reading and writing processes will be provided.

## **2.6 READING PROCESS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL LANGUAGE**

### ***2.6.1 General structure of the reading process***

It is of the utmost importance for research purposes to gain an understanding of the reading process and how the brain and the accompanying emotions function in this process. The reading process is the main theoretical foundation on which the research intervention is based (see 2.7.2). Thorough knowledge of the reading process will enable the educator to identify more accurately where the reader is at and what reading difficulties the struggling reader might be experiencing. Furthermore, an understanding of the reading process will ensure informed decision making when teaching during the intervention.

Furthermore, in this section I will also discuss the importance of a child's oral language for reading, considering that oral language plays a foundational and supportive role in the literacy acquisition process. This will be followed by an important section on the typical changes most readers and writers go through as part of their reading and writing development (see 2.7.3 and 2.7.4). In closing, an important discussion of the typical difficulties struggling readers experience during the reading process and possible general causes of these difficulties will be provided (see 2.8).

### **2.6.2 Oral language as a useful foundation for reading and writing**

A child's language acquisition usually starts with the spoken language, followed at a later stage by reading and writing. Therefore a young school entrant has a store of knowledge that he brings to the classroom, consisting of how to communicate, how to construct correct sentence structures and how to use the correct wording to convey a certain message (Clay, 2002:9). This linguistic knowledge is a useful foundation to use in the reading and writing process (Dorn et al., 1998:8). Educators should not discard this valuable knowledge base of the child and rather allow children to speak in the classroom and discuss topics amongst each other during the literacy hour. This will increase their language vocabulary and, in turn, make it easier for them to start reading and writing (Clay, 2002:9). What children learn from listening and talking contributes to their ability to read and write. So children who have a backlog in oral language development would more likely struggle with the acquisition of reading and writing (Strickland, 2004:86). Furthermore, if a child is not stimulated at home and exposed to various literacy texts, the child might not know the "how to" of reading and writing (DeFord, 1991:78).

### **2.6.3 Reading process**

The reading process will be discussed under the following sub-headings that each serve as a building block for the next consecutive aspect of the reading process that a reader needs to acquire.

#### *2.6.3.1 Know the whole alphabet before reading?*

Many scholars supporting the transmission model of reading (e.g. phonics approach) argue that a child needs to know the whole alphabet before he is ready to start reading (Weaver, 1994:3; Vadasy *et al.*, 2008; Barchers, 1998; Adams, 1990). The phonics method also teaches children to identify the individual "sounds" letters make, e.g. this letter says /b/ or /b/ for bat, rather than identifying sounds in words that are part of a context (Clay, 2002:111). Clay (1991:263) differs from this approach and states that children do not need to learn all the letters of the alphabet before they can proceed to read a story. Once they have learnt a few letters they are already capable of widening their knowledge range and have the procedure for learning letters and can learn the rest while reading and writing (Clay, 1991b:263); "once a certain command of reading is attained one's reading improves every time one reads" (Clay, 2002:24).

Clay (2002:111) further points out that the ability to hear and listen to sounds in words is a real-world task. This method teaches children to make the connection between phonemes in their own speech streams and the letters that represent those sounds. Since school entrants already

know how to speak and use the sounds of their language, this method enables them to draw on one of the most valuable resources they already possess, namely their oral language. In addition, writing one's own messages contribute to the analysis of words sound by sound and letter by letter, while simultaneously providing experience with the whole word within its language context (Clay, 2002:20).

### *2.6.3.2 Concepts of print*

Reading also involves learning certain concepts of print (Clay, 1991b:234). Concepts of print refer to “the reader’s understanding or knowledge of the conventions used to read and write text. It is an awareness of how print works, letters forming words. It includes recognition that print in English starts from left and moves to right, return sweep and that words are organised into sentences” (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2007). When children enter formal schooling their concepts of print are learnt through reading and writing activities over a year or more. The child must teach himself many things about the language, “for example he has to discover features of print that govern discrimination of letters, learn to use eye movements which jump across print in just the right sequence of moves to make smooth reading of the message possible” (Clay, 1991b:319). Children coming from stimulating literacy backgrounds come to school having an idea of the rules and conventions of print and might be familiar with specifics, such as the directionality of print, how to hold a book, how illustrations confirm the message, where to begin reading, as well as a sense of predicting what might happen next.

The reality in South Africa is that many children entering school do not possess the necessary knowledge of print, because of a lack of exposure to books, and they therefore might need intervention to address this problem. Within the transactional model of reading (socio-constructivist paradigm) one would start where the young reader is at and work with what he does know, instead of simply labelling the child a poor reader and placing him in the lowest reading group with little belief that he can improve – which is the case in most South African schools today.

### *2.6.3.3 Reading for comprehension*

All readers, be they five-year-old or adult readers, need to use information revealed on the page and somehow connect it to prior experiences with language. They use information, such as knowledge of how the world works, possible meanings of the text, sentence structure, the alphabet and words used often in the language, in order to make meaning of the text (Clay,

2002:14). Concerning the meaning-making process, Pinnell (2001:6) adds that “we use imagination, imagery, memory, reflection and connection” when we comprehend. As our minds focus on the text we are reading, it branches out to our memories, to other texts we have read and to what we have previously learned concerning that topic (Pinnell, 2001:6).

#### 2.6.3.4 *Accumulation of reading strategies*

In the reading process, beginner readers are engaged in a task that is very similar to what more experienced readers are doing when they read. From the start, beginner readers accumulate different comprehension strategies through reading easy texts. Hornsby (2000) aptly argues that children can only learn to read through reading. Some of the skills that children learn in the first year of school are illustrated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Emerging reading skills (Clay, 1991b:226; Calkins *et al.*, 2005:93)

<b>Emerging reading skills</b>
- directional control, how to draw on your background knowledge,
- using visual cues to help with reading, using some conventions of print,
- searching for meaning, learning to take risks, word-by-word reading,
- rereading and self-correcting, cross-checking two types of cues,
- using some letter-sound relationships, using first letters and word endings, correcting medial sounds, using letter clusters,
- getting to new words by analogy with known words, and
- building a vocabulary of high-frequency reading and writing words

If beginner readers are taught to use these abovementioned reading strategies to gain meaning, they might read materials that are supposedly far beyond their ability to understand, as they use their schemas and different context cues within what they are reading and get most of the essential meaning of stories, even when they do not know many of the words (Weaver, 1994:41). Reading therefore could be described as a complex system of cognitive strategies, and the development of these self-extending reading strategies in the beginner reader is of crucial importance (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:6).

When children start to develop more inner control in the reading process, they start to become independent in some areas and learn to make meaning on their own (Clay, 1991b:254). They develop in independence until they become advanced readers who are able to read almost any texts they are given. This process of change that takes place from a beginner to an advanced reader will be discussed below.

#### **2.6.4 Changes in readers over time**

With regard to reading, children exhibit specific behaviours at certain times in their schooling that tend to cluster into so-called “stages”, but these “stages” of reading are not concrete, as they differ from learner to learner (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:6). Each stage is also accompanied by cognitive challenges that the child has to be ready to conquer. This information is important to this study, because the criteria describing each reading “stage” will be used to identify where each intervention participant is at in the reading process. Subsequently, this knowledge will enable educators to make accurate decisions concerning their teaching. In short, the different stages are: beginning – emergent – early – transitional – and self-extending readers, and each “stage” will be discussed in brief.

##### *2.6.4.1 Emergent stage*

Emergent readers rely strongly on oral language and meaning as they read. They do not always understand the language process fully, but already use it to generate their own language learning, which is innovative and rule-governed. They read simple texts with one or two lines per page and are just beginning to control early reading behaviours, such as matching spoken words with written words on the page, and recognising how print is arranged in books and the direction of print. Emergent readers are also becoming acquainted with what a word is and how each letter differs from others and is combined to form words. They are able to recognise a few familiar, high-frequency words that help them solve a text on their level with more fluency and accuracy. They rely strongly on visual illustrations for information and one-to-one matching as they read (Fountas & Pinnel, 2006:6).

##### *2.6.4.2 Early stage*

Early readers can control early reading behaviours fairly well, such as directionality and word-by-word matching. They start to do some of their reading without pointing, because their eyes are beginning to control the process of reading. They have acquired a core of high-frequency words that they can read and write, and these words are used to monitor their reading. Early readers are reading books with several lines of print and are able to use some comprehension strategies to solve words. They also use several sources of information, like syntactic, semantic and visual cues, to solve the meaning of the text (Fountas & Pinnel, 2006:6).

##### *2.6.4.3 Transitional stage*

Transitional readers have total control over early reading behaviours. They can read a variety of texts with many lines of print. They do not rely too heavily on illustrations any longer and start to

read fluently, with some expression in their tone of voice. They use multiple sources of information to gain meaning. Transitional readers are also able to solve more complex words and use language structures to anticipate the text.

#### *2.6.4.4 Self-extending stage*

Self-extending readers read in a smoothly orchestrated system. They apply multiple strategies to read longer, more complex texts. These readers have a large core of high-frequency words and many other words that are recognised automatically when reading. Self-extending readers learn more about the reading process and improve their reading skills every time they read (Fountas & Pinnel, 2006:6). They start to solve multisyllabic words while building their background knowledge, and learn how to apply what they know as they encounter more difficult texts.

#### *2.6.4.5 Advanced stage*

According to Fountas and Pinnell (2006:6), readers who are advanced in reading have moved beyond the early phases of reading. They are still developing a complex network of strategies while they read various texts. There is no text the advanced reader cannot “read”, but his prior knowledge, complex word-solving actions and understanding of all the literary aspects of texts are still under development. It is important to compare the efficient behaviours of skilful readers to those of struggling readers in order to see in what manner they differ and how this gap can be remediated.

Knowledge of these stages is important for research and educational purposes, as it provides specific guidelines and criteria for identifying where a child is at in the reading process, and also to guide one’s teaching and help with informed decision making.

### **2.6.5 Change in writers over time**

As readers go through different stages or phases of development during the reading process, so also the same learners, when writing, experience different changes in the writing process over time. The strategies acquired within each of the stages/phases during the writing process strengthen the learners’ strategies and reading ability and vice versa.

According to Clay (2002:21), “writing involves language but also visual information, sound sequence information, word knowledge, composing, and motor control over the production of symbols and sequences”. The goal of writing is to communicate a message through putting conventional marks on paper. During interaction with the teacher, children acquire important

skills and knowledge on how to convey a message in a readable way (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:13). However, struggling writers often find it hard to take risks when writing. Their stories are often controlled by the few words and sentence structures they know and they are unable to break out of that mould and share the actual message they want to convey. Therefore, these children need trained educators to help them acquire problem-solving strategies that they can use to expand their own knowledge and writing vocabulary (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:13). The different stages that young writers go through in becoming good writers are the emergent, early and transitional stages (Dorn & Soffos, 2001:5). These stages will be discussed below:

#### *2.6.5.1 Emergent writers*

For the emergent writer, one of the most challenging tasks is to find the right words to express the idea or story he wants to convey. These writers also struggle to hear individual letters in words and then to write these words or letters on paper. One very valuable resource they do possess is that of their already acquired oral language that is used as a scaffold for written language. Their oral language makes sense to them and, therefore, they expect the written language to also make sense. The teacher plays an important role in this process in guiding the child to use the available resources, such as a word chart, name chart, previously read books, his oral language, etc. to solve texts.

#### *2.6.5.2 Early writers*

These writers have acquired more skills with print, including good sentences, more descriptive nouns and verbs, and a sense of beginning and closure, and therefore can attend more closely to the composing process. They begin to think about the length of their stories and use repetitive phrases that signify the books they are reading at this stage. The act of writing increases the child's attention to print, thus the young writer learns more about the visual information portrayed before him every time he reads. They also begin editing and self-monitoring their work.

#### *2.6.5.3 Transitional writers*

The transitional writer's writing skills have become more automatic. Because of his controlled writing vocabulary and skills he does not have to think actively about the act of writing as much, but rather attends to the craft of writing. These writers are able to compose multiple drafts and revise them by rearranging sentences, substituting richer vocabulary and using strong descriptive words to make texts more alive.



Now that the general reading process and the accompanying stages or phases of reading and writing are known and understood, possible learning disabilities and common difficulties that learners experience within the field of literacy will be discussed.

## **2.7 LEARNING DISABILITIES AND READING DIFFICULTIES**

The field of learning disabilities has been marked by contradictions and confusion for the past twenty-five years. According to Lyons (1991:205) there is no single definition that is widely accepted in all academic circles. Until the mid-1970s, literacy educators defined reading disabilities as factors internal to readers (deficit-oriented view). In the past brain dysfunctionality was usually linked to reading difficulties and readers were assessed and judged according to their visual perception, word recognition and phonemic analysis (Mceneaney *et al.*, 2006:118). This approach falls under the discrepancy or deficit-oriented view.

Nowadays, this belief has shifted to a broader transactional perspective that views reading difficulties as situated in variable social and cognitive contexts. Concerning learning disabilities, Clay (1991:342) mentions that many children whose reading skills are below the average of their peers generally do not benefit from classroom instruction, because the teaching methods used in the classroom are not helping them to improve in reading. As a result, their reading and writing difficulties get worse when untreated and these pupils fall further and further behind their classmates.

Research done by Bloch (2006) and Nathanson (2008) revealed that learners labelled as learning-disabled often received the most inappropriate special instruction, focussing only on developing limited reading strategies. Hill *et al.* (2008:1) also do not adhere to such practice and put forward the alternative, that “children with the most needs deserve the benefit of the most expert highly trained teachers (and therefore intervention) in our education system”. Reading Recovery® supports this approach by using highly trained, professional teachers who provide individualised instruction designed to accelerate learning by teaching from what the learners already know. The aim is for each child to develop the full range of reading strategies in order to become a successful reader (Lyons, 1991:206).

### **2.7.1 Poor readers with reading difficulties**

Poor readers all struggle with different aspects of the reading process, but for the purpose of this study a few general areas of difficulty will be pointed out in order to make the identification of the poor reader easier. Clay (1991:323) explains that struggling readers are those who

remain at the emergent level of literacy, despite consistent instruction from the classroom teacher. As a result, they quite frequently do not fully participate in the literacy experiences that are provided. They read texts with basic familiar story lines and natural language. Poor readers usually have meagre writing and reading vocabularies and are more rigid in what they can do with their limited language knowledge (Clay, 1991b:250; Ekwall & Shanker, 1993:113). They might also know a few basic sight words, but do not apply this knowledge to learn new words.

More often than not, at-risk readers have difficulty learning letter names and discriminating between letters. Typically, they might not be aware of print concepts, like spoken words differing from one another, print directionality, and print conveying a message, or that words are separated by spaces (Clay, 2002:29). Low-progress readers have few resources to fall back on, because they operate on a narrow set of manipulations. They tend to rely on their memory of texts previously read or words memorised. They may be looking so hard for words that they miss the main message behind the text. They may also have become habituated in their negative responses to texts, which makes it hard to provide support that will bring about positive change (Clay, 1991b:313).

### ***2.7.2 Possible causes of reading difficulties***

According to Balajthy and Lipa-Wade (2003:14, 15) and Prinsloo (2005:27), there are further factors that might play a role in causing reading difficulties in a child, such as:

- maturational or developmental delays, which refers to a specific delay in visual, auditory, neurological, social-emotional, or cognitive development that can interfere with a child's literacy acquisition,
- phonological problems, which lead to failed decoding abilities,
- inadequate instruction, which causes misunderstandings and error behaviours in children that in time become negative habits,
- language of instruction - if the child's language differs from the language of instruction it might cause reading disabilities, as the child does not fully grasp what is being taught in the class,
- home and preschool experiences, disadvantaged backgrounds, physical and health problems,
- lack of exposure to print or underdeveloped oral vocabulary, and
- moral confusion and uncertainty about values, disintegration of families and cultural differences (Hall, 2006:425).

Most learners are affected negatively by some of these factors at some stage of their early development, but luckily there are ways and means to deal with the reading or learning difficulties that result from exposure to these factors. These will be described in Section 2.10.

## 2.8 SUMMARY

In Sections 2.2 and 2.3 I sketched the educational situation in South Africa in order to realise the need for an effective learning support intervention. In Section 2.4, after defining literacy, reading and comprehension (see 2.3), I conducted a discussion on opposing learning theories and reading approaches to gain knowledge of the most effective current models in research/educational circles today (see 2.5). The following section (2.6) then focused on the importance of understanding the role of cognitive brain functioning and emotion in the reading process (see 2.7), and possible difficulties that struggling readers might experience within this process, as a foundation on which the intervention is based (see 2.8). Section 2.10 then forms the crux of the research study, seeing that a possible solution to the stated problems in South African education will be discussed. This possible solution is an effective intervention based on Clay's cognitive processing model of reading.

## 2.9 EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION PROGRAMME BASED ON CLAY'S COGNITIVE PROCESSING MODEL

With regard to the provision of learning support, the National Education Department (NED) suggests that the procedures mentioned in Table 2.2 form the core of an efficient learning support programme:

**Table 2.2: Important aspects of a support program (Landsberg & Dednam, 1999:24)**

<b>Important aspects of a support programme (NED)</b>
- "Assess the learner to determine what he has already mastered
- Formulate the outcomes
- Select the contents of the curriculum or program
- Choose the learning support strategies and methods
- Assess the learner's progress"

With these procedures in mind, a specific intervention programme is needed that incorporates all the abovementioned procedures and strives towards the goal of helping learners to become strategic, analytic and engaged readers who can read with understanding (Katz & Carlisle, 2009:326; Brown, 2008:540). Reading Recovery® has proven to be an example of such a

programme that incorporates all the procedures (set out by the National Department of Education (see Table 2.2)). Reading Recovery® has shown long-term effectiveness through multiple research studies in terms of its alphabetical, fluency and comprehension development and general achievement (US Department of Education, 2008:4-6). A short explanation of what Reading Recovery® entails is provided in Chapter 1 (see 1.4). However, in this research study I did not use a Reading Recovery® intervention programme. The research intervention was simply based on the principles of Reading Recovery® (Clay, 2001:218).

The Reading Recovery® principles used in the intervention, which will be discussed individually, were: accelerated learning (2.10.1); guided reading (2.10.2); acquisition of comprehension strategies (2.10.3); using levelled texts (2.10.4); systematic observation and assessment (2.10.5); learning to read and write simultaneously (2.10.6) and interactive writing (2.10.7). These principles were combined in a balanced literacy intervention through which learners learned to apply their comprehension strategies to levelled texts and authentic writing activities. Through ample opportunities provided on a daily basis, the learners' improvement is inevitable. The principles mentioned form part of Clay's socio-cognitive processing approach (see 2.5.2.1.2.). Concerning the cognitive processing model, Clay (2002:6,17) has mentioned that "the more experience one is exposed to the more the brain develops cognitively".

### **2.9.1 Accelerated learning**

One of Clay's Reading Recovery® principles is that of accelerated learning. Marie Clay (2002) studied the behaviours of children with high academic achievement and gathered that they receive more opportunities to learn and expand their existing knowledge than low achievers, and therefore high achievers increase their knowledge at a faster rate. As a result, in order for slow-progress learners to increase their pace of learning, they have to be presented with more opportunities to catch up to their average-levelled peers (Clay, 2002:4). Sadly, in the numerous schools where I have done practical teaching in the Western Cape, lessons and lesson material for slow-progress learners are usually simplified or scaled down, when they in actual fact need more learning opportunities. Bloch (2000) reports that South African teachers devote the least amount of direct instructional time to poor and working-class children, whereas they devote more time to children from high socio-economic backgrounds. Therefore, one of the aims of this intervention was to provide daily learning opportunities for the participants in which accelerated learning could take place. In the daily intervention sessions, accelerated learning took place by using both guided reading (2.10.2) and interactive writing to teach the learners to read and write in English (2.10.7). Within the guided reading approach I focused specifically on the teaching of

comprehension strategies so that the learners were equipped with useful tools to solve texts and attain meaning, independent of the teacher. Furthermore, guided reading stresses the importance of using levelled texts in the teaching of reading. The reasons for the use of levelled texts will be explained in Section 2.10.4. Lastly, within the guided reading approach, continuous assessment and observation to monitor the learners' progress is also emphasised (see 2.10.5). The intervention was also based on the simultaneous acquisition of reading and writing skills, seeing that the skills acquired during these two processes strengthen each other. Therefore, the learners read familiar and new texts in each of the intervention sessions, as well as wrote authentic messages.

What follows is an elucidation of the purpose of guided reading, the role of the teacher in guided reading, and a typical guided reading lesson.

## **2.9.2 Why guided reading?**

### *2.9.2.1 Purpose and value of guided reading*

There are various approaches to the instruction of reading, such as shared reading, interactive reading, independent reading, silent reading and guided reading. For this specific research study, which focuses on individualised instruction, guided reading will work best within the one-on-one intervention sessions. What follows are the reasons for using guided reading as part of the intervention.

Guided reading, according to Fountas and Pinnell (1996:2), is “a context in which a teacher supports each reader’s development of effective strategies for processing novel texts at increasingly challenging levels of difficulty. The teacher introduces a text to the child and may select one or two teaching points to present after the child read the book”. The text offers minimum new challenges, so the child can apply strategies he has already learned with success. Therefore, the guided reading approach allows children to enjoy the story, because they can understand and relate to it (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:2). The goal therefore is to teach learners how to apply reading strategies independently and successfully (see 2.10.3) to texts of their competency level to attain meaning. In the reading process, guided reading also helps children to acquire reading strategies and valuable knowledge about concepts of print, word spelling and vocabulary (Dorn et al., 1998:41).

### 2.9.2.2 *Teacher's role in guided reading and Vygotsky's role of proximal development*

Guided reading can be conducted in small groups or with individuals. In guided reading the teacher's role is to predict the type and amount of support the child needs in order to be able to read and understand the book (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). Prompting the learners with questions while they read is of importance in order to guide the learners to use their reading strategies to solve unknown words. The teacher only intervenes when she sees that the learner has stopped completely and is unable to solve the problem at hand, or has lost the meaning of the story. Interventions take place in the form of prompts or guided questions, hence the name of the approach (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). In guided reading, complete texts are used that can be read in one session, i.e. the story has a beginning and an end. Each child reads the whole text. The goal is for readers to read independently and silently and read increasingly challenging books. Teachers should also make a point of discussing the purpose of reading with the child and, after each reading, they can talk about the meaning of the book and the author's intended purpose in writing the book. This makes children aware that reading and writing have a purpose. If educators also engage children in purposeful activities, the children will automatically learn that there is purpose behind reading and writing.

According to Vygotsky (1978), the most powerful teacher/child interactions occur within the zone of proximal development, where the teacher guides the child to make connections between what he already knows and the new knowledge he is confronted with (Short, 1991:98, Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, the educator should support the child to use what he does know to get to what he does not know (Fountas & Pinnell, 2000:4). Later, as the development process goes on, the teacher can step back completely in the reading task to see how the child makes sense of the reading process on his own (Hornsby, 2000:11; Dorn *et al.*, 1998:3). Vygotsky refers to this phenomenon as scaffolding. Scaffolding is "the gradual movement from teacher control of an explanation of how to apply a strategy, to learners' control of the strategy as they apply it independently" (Block & Duffy, 2008:27). The reason for scaffolding in reading would be to broaden learners' knowledge and skills to be able to use more strategies to make meaning of a text. The problem comes in when, instead of learning to connect new knowledge to previous experiences, children view each new learning experience as a totally new experience (Lyons, 2001:35). That is why at-risk learners especially need the help of teachers to structure literacy events, and need informative, guiding conversations that emphasise the different connections they can make with previous experiences and knowledge (Dorn, 1998:2, 3).

Furthermore, teachers using guided reading should have a sound knowledge-base of the accompanying observation procedures and theory supporting guided reading. Based on the teachers' theoretical perspective, they select reading materials and analyse texts so that they are able to match learners to the appropriate texts on their level (Nathanson, 2008; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:7; Hornsby, 2000:54). Consequently, teachers applying guided reading in their classes face a number of challenges, such as becoming familiar with assessment and guided reading practices, obtaining a range of suitably levelled books, becoming expert at matching learners to books and doing effective book introductions (Nathanson, 2008; Calkins, 2001:118,121). Guided reading cannot be executed effectively without a sound theoretical knowledge-base for instruction, knowledge of systematic observation procedures, informed decision making and a wide range of levelled books (Clay, 1991b; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Hornsby, 2000).

For these reasons, careful consideration was given to the texts chosen for each participant taking part in the intervention, decisions made regarding specific teaching points and the conducting of the Observation Survey of Early Literacy achievement procedures.

### *2.9.2.3 Typical structure of a guided reading lesson (Dorn, 1998:42-45; Fountas & Pinnell, 2001)*

As guided reading will form part of the daily intervention sessions of the research study, a brief layout of the five different aspects of a guided reading session will be provided to explain why each aspect is meaningful and essential.

#### a) Selecting the text

Books need to be chosen based on the child's interests, prior knowledge and competency (Balajthy *et al.*, 2003:15). The teacher should also pay special attention to the layout of the book and its potential to apply problem-solving strategies to figure out the words he is unlikely to know. A carefully selected book will help the child to learn more about reading every time he reads (Clay, 2002:24). Before moving on to a next level of books, the child needs to read that book at 90 percent accuracy or above. For the child to read the book with success it has to contain more supportive features than challenging ones.

#### b) Introducing the text

It is important to notice that the focus of the lesson is determined by the child's strengths and needs. Before reading a new book the teacher introduces the book. The introduction serves as a supportive context within which the child will read the new book. It provides him with familiar language phrases, words, experiences and pictures to help him understand the text as he reads. The teacher prompts the child to make predictions from the pictures and to integrate visual, meaning and structural cues while doing a picture walk through the book. She also sets the purpose for reading and explains how to overcome possible challenges the text might pose.

#### c) Reading the text

The first reading is an opportunity for the child to apply the skills and strategies he knows with close support from the teacher. The child is encouraged to read at his own pace and instructional assistance is varied according to each child's needs. As the child becomes more competent he will be asked to do the first reading of the book silently.

#### d) Revisiting and discussing the text

After the reading the teacher selects one or two teaching points that she carefully observed as being most important for the child to learn from. The main goal is teaching for strategies, so the teacher will guide the conversation through effective questions regarding the child's application of strategies.

Successful guided reading interactions depend on the teacher's ability to carefully observe the child while reading, select appropriate texts for reading and use effective language prompts at the most appropriate times that direct the child's attention towards the use of comprehension strategies.

#### e) Assessment and observation

Guided reading also involves ongoing assessment and observation that guides the teacher's instruction. Assessment continually informs the teacher's decision making, it systematically assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the child and, in this way, the teacher can find out what the child can and cannot do. Assessment begins with what the child can do and already knows.

*"The main goal of assessment is to gather data to inform teaching. Assessment includes systematic observation that will provide a continually updated profile of the child's current*



*ways of responding; provides reliable information about the progress of children; is multidimensional and provides reliable and valid information on children's progress; provides feedback to improve the instruction program and curriculum and it identifies and directs steps to meet the needs of students who do not achieve despite excellent classroom instruction" (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:3,73).*

A more detailed section on assessment and observation will follow in 2.10.5.

Since the various aspects of guided reading have been explained, the importance of the acquisition of reading strategies within the guided reading framework will follow next.

### **2.9.3 Importance of teaching for strategies**

#### *2.9.3.1 Defining comprehension strategies*

A child has in-the-head strategies that he uses when reading that one cannot observe from the outside. Clay (1991:330, 331) defines strategies as "ways of working to locate information, or to work on information, or to relate it to things already known. Strategies also explain the work we do to shift from uncertainty to certainty when we look at an object which is hard to identify." These in-the-head strategies can only be identified through close observation by the teacher (Clay, 1991b:330; Dorn *et al.*, 1998:25, Adams, 1990:153). These "in-the-head-problem-solving processes" are used to search for and construct meaning from a text (Clay, 1985; Pinnell, 2001:6). Dorn *et al.* (1998:25) explain that a child needs strategies to help him improve his reading by detecting errors and correcting them.

#### *2.9.3.2 Views of the past and present*

When reading comprehension first started to make an upheaval in research circles, researchers began to identify what comprehension strategies are and which comprehension strategies are most useful for readers to attain an understanding of a text. Initially, researchers from 1978 to 2000 agreed that young readers had to learn to apply 45 comprehension strategies before being able to become successful readers, whereas results from the last ten years, after intensive research, show that only nine strategies were validated to be successful and essential comprehension strategies (Block & Duffy, 2008:22). According to Block and Duffy (2008:22), the nine strategies that have been scientifically validated since 2000 as the most important strategies for young readers are the following: 1. Predicting, 2. Monitoring, 3. Questioning, 4. Imagining/creating mental pictures, 5. Rereading and self-correcting, 6. Inferring – connecting text to experience, 7. Summarising, 8. Evaluating and 9. Synthesising. Weaver (1994:133),

Brown (2008:538) and Palincsar and Brown (1984b:120) choose to organise these nine most essential strategies into the following categories:

a) Strategies for reading with a purpose and drawing upon prior knowledge, for example:

Inferring and making connections, which refer to linking what is read to their existing world knowledge, text knowledge, personal experiences or other texts they have read (Pinnell, 2001:11).

b) Strategies for predicting

Predicting refers to anticipating what might follow. It may take place at sentence, paragraph or text level. Prediction is a powerful tool in helping children to attain a fuller understanding of the text (Liang & Galda, 2009:330). Prediction does not only refer to the next word that will occur, it means the “prior elimination of unlikely alternatives” (Clay, 1991b:336). Understanding of the text at large and having knowledge of syntactic, semantic and language rules all support this strategy of prediction (Clay, 1991b:336).

c) Strategies for using all the language cue systems together - semantic, syntactic and visual cues, for example

Solving words - there are a range of strategies that can be used to solve words, like predicting, considering semantic, syntactic or visual cues or the breaking up of unfamiliar words (Clay, 1991b:330,331). Base words, letter clusters and word parts can be used to solve new words (Lyons, 2001). Solving words should happen within the context of grasping the meaning of the story as a whole (Pinnell, 2001:6; Dorn, 1998:25; Calkins *et al.*, 2005:94, 96, 98; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

d) Rereading, self-correcting and monitoring comprehension

Monitoring and correcting refers to readers checking on their reading progress and understanding. Children learn to self-correct their reading errors as they realise that a text does not make sense. They do this by rereading a piece of text (Pinnell, 2001:7). Self-correction strategies strengthen a child's inner control.

e) Strategies for summarising, questioning and clarifying

Summarising refers to the reader finding the most important information in the text and then forming a concise message to remember the gist of a story. It also refers to ongoing summarising of information during reading (Pinnell, 2001:6).

### *2.9.3.3 Importance of teaching for strategies*

Many teachers work within an approach that is very limited with regard to the accumulation of self-extending strategies. Children are taught to acquire a few strategies, such as the “word-attack” skill and predicting, in isolation. Consequently, the children who struggle the most are usually the ones who do only what the teacher emphasises. As a result they concentrate on just one or two strategies, rather than on the several strategies that must be integrated in order to read successfully (Weaver, 1994:3). When readers come to an unfamiliar word, they have to be able to use one of multiple strategies to make meaning of the text (Short, 1991:100). They also have to become independent in this process (DeFord, 1991:86). The reason why educators should strive to teach learners reading strategies is to “produce self-regulated, autonomous readers who come to their own interpretation of texts” and become independent readers (Pressley & El-Dinary, 1997:487). When learners are taught to use all the comprehension strategies successfully they will be able to become independent readers and writers.

Block and Duffy (1008:29) argue that “comprehension is more a matter of being strategic than of knowing individual strategies. Comprehension will not occur if the child only knows how to predict or how to monitor”. All texts require the integrated use of all strategies (Calkins *et al.*, 2005:96). Therefore, readers have to get exposure to as many texts as possible in order to learn how to integrate these strategies. Hornsby (2000:40) supports the belief that literature itself will do more to motivate reading than any other single factor. Literature must therefore be the heart of the reading programme. The theory supporting levelled texts will now be argued for.

## **2.9.4 Theory supporting levelled texts**

### *2.9.4.1 Availability of levelled texts in South Africa*

Unsuitable texts or a lack thereof in classrooms is a stark reality in most South African schools. Texts used in the classrooms are usually not matched to the competency levels of individual learners, and the range of books available is generally very limited (Nathanson, 2008; Bloch, 2006). As a result, many struggling learners experience failure in reading because of their inability to make sense of texts. There therefore is a great need for the effective training of South African educators to gain knowledge of and skills in how to select books for individual learners along a continuum of difficulty (Peterson, 1991:123; Adams, 1990:133; Hornsby, 2000).

Furthermore, the selection and use of levelled texts on a daily basis forms a crucially integrated part of the research intervention and, therefore, a lengthy discussion will be dedicated to this foundational aspect.

#### 2.9.4.2 *Defining levelled texts (gradient)*

A level or gradient of text, as formally defined by Fountas and Pinnell (2006:8), is “a defined continuum of characteristics related to the level of support and challenge that a reader meets in a text. It is an arrangement of books from easiest to hardest, defined by a set of characteristics”. All the books in each group are at a certain level according to specific characteristics, which will be described in Section 2.10.4.3 (Peterson, 1991:120). The reason why texts are grouped into categories along a continuum is because texts on each level offer readers a similar level of support and challenge. Fountas and Pinnell (2006:9, 10) further state that the gradient is a tool for matching books to readers and a guide for making good instructional decisions. It therefore is not a complete reading programme, a set of books that every learner must read or a rigid set of books that defines reading progress. Clay (1991:337) adds that

*“when children read texts of appropriate difficulty for their present skills this gives enough support from the familiar features of text for attention to shift to novel features of text, enough time for reading work, without losing the meaning. These active constructing and checking processes ensure that readers will learn more every time they read, independent of instruction.”*

#### 2.9.4.3 *Reading Recovery® levels*

Using Reading Recovery® levels as a basis for grouping books into levels has become common practice in most English-speaking countries, because these levels have been field-tested extensively (Nathanson, 2008; Clay, 2002; Hornsby, 2000). Unfortunately, we do not have a reliable, levelled book series available in South Africa that meet the needs of struggling readers and writers. Observations in South African classrooms rather indicate the opposite - that children have to read books that do not support their current proficiencies (Nathanson, 2008). Our children have a great need for finely levelled texts that will match their competencies and support their development of reading more efficiently (Hornsby, 2000; Lyons, 2003). Peterson (1991:121) corroborates this statement by mentioning that children who are exposed to texts that reflect the language they speak fluently have more opportunity to develop useful reading strategies when they read. The need for levelled texts therefore is clear, and a good programme cannot work without these levelled texts (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:1,2007:2).

Fountas and Pinnell (1996:113) recommend that foundation phase teachers need a text gradient of at least sixteen levels, i.e. nine levels through reception and first grade, four levels across second grade and three levels for third grade. Beginner readers' books, for example, are characterised by predictable features such as clear illustrations that depict the message in the written text, commonly used spoken language structures, repetition of phrases, content that describes familiar experiences and print laid out in a consistent location. As children progress in reading, they need to move to longer, more complex stories with less patterned language and more varied vocabulary (Peterson, 1991:123).

Within each level there also is some variation - one text may offer a challenge because of its long sentences, and another at the same level because of its technical language. It is important that the educator should start where the learners are at and not place children on a certain level because of the grade they are in (Block & Duffy, 2008:25). Lyons (2001:34) states that in every experience a child has in reading, he should experience some success and find the activity meaningful. If the teacher's desired reason is to bring all her children up to grade level, the only way is to begin the teaching where the children are at and take them from there. Children also do not have to read all the books on a specific level. If they show that they read the texts with 90% plus accuracy (one error in 10 words), they are ready to move to the next level.

Table 2.3 shows the various text characteristics to consider when grouping texts.

**Table 2.3: Characteristics for grouping texts (Fountas & Pinnell, 2007:48; Peterson, 1991:124)**

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**Characteristics for grouping texts:**

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- All books are identified by genre and content
  - Font size varies from easy-to-read to medium or small
  - Approximate number of pages affect the amount of time the reader should sustain reading
  - Vocabulary demands are indicated
  - Illustrations
  - Sentence complexity
  - Words used in each book level
  - Book and print features, such as layout, length, punctuation
  - Themes and ideas
  - Text structure
  - Language and literary features
  - Lastly, but importantly, educators should choose books that bring pleasure and enjoyment to the reader
- 

It is important to notice that, for learning to occur, it is important to ensure that the text does not pose too many challenges for the learner (Clay, 2002:24), and is not so easy that the child gains

nothing new from the book. If a book is too difficult it disorganises the child's knowledge and leaves him feeling demotivated and unable to succeed. If children in a low reading group are unable to make sense of the text they are reading and are merely "barking at print", they should be taken back to a level where they can coordinate all the skills they have attained to solve texts in a smooth, meaningful process. Children should work their way up the gradient of difficulty as they gradually come to control the grammar of the language (Clay, 1991b:177).

#### *2.9.4.4 Exposure to a variety of texts*

It is important to notice that children have to be exposed to a variety of texts, so that they can learn to apply their strategies to any kind of text. Fountas and Pinnell (2007) and Clay (1991) add that the more children read, the better they get at reading. Clay (2002:24) further states that "progress has more to do with engagement in large quantities of successful reading than with exercises in decoding texts which are hard to read". Peterson (1991:120) confirms this idea by reasoning that children need access to a large variety of reading materials that have been developed on a sound research base and have been designed to support readers on all levels, especially beginner readers. A diet of texts with one style of writing may prevent children from developing the flexible reading strategies they need for dealing with a variety of different texts (Clay, 1991b; Flanagan, 1995). However, South African classrooms are often characterised by a lack of levelled books that make sense to children (Calkins, 2001; Bloch, 2006; Nathanson, 2008). From her research in South African classrooms, Bloch (2000:25-30) concludes that skill-based literacy instruction is practised everywhere in schools and that the heavy emphasis on phonics takes "so much time and energy that learners become frustrated and never get to the point of reading authentic texts". Those who do read often "do not become fluent because they get stuck with decoding" (Bloch, 2000:25). Consequently, children who have little prior experiences with print do not develop a "sense of story" that makes learning to read a stimulating and productive experience. To quote Adams (1990:5): "if reading seems aversive, the individual will avoid it altogether".

#### *2.9.4.5 Purpose of levelled texts*

The ultimate goal why levelled texts are used is to develop independent readers and writers through lots of exposure to different authentic texts. Therefore, graded texts can increase the amount of independent reading children do (Nathanson, 2008). The stage of independence is reached when children learn to use a string of comprehension strategies to solve texts with fluency and accuracy. Strategic readers and writers are able to monitor their own learning and they have developed self-improving systems so that every time they read, their reading skills

improve and their application of strategies become more effective. This allows them to learn more about reading every time they read independent of instruction (Clay, 2002:24; Cazden & Clay, 1992). It is important to note that educators need gradients of difficulty to make good instructional decisions about materials they select for children, but “all gradients are inevitably fallible. ...They cannot be right for individual children and yet a program cannot work efficiently without them” (Clay, 1991b:201).

### **2.9.5 Systematic observation and assessment**

Apart from teaching for strategies and the use of levelled texts, systematic observation and assessment is one of the crucial aspects of this intervention. The importance of systematic observation and continual assessment is underrated in both research and educational circles today. Therefore, in this section, assessment will be defined in its broader sense and two opposing stances towards assessment will be contrasted. Lastly, Clay’s (2002) view on assessment will be highlighted to support the view of assessment taken in this study.

#### *2.9.5.1 Defining assessment*

Johnston (1997:2) reminds us that the word “assessment” derives from the Latin word “assidere”, which means to “sit alongside”. He therefore argues that assessment data should be gathered while the child is engaged in reading a new book, for example. Assessment should also help children become more reflective about their learning process. Johnston (1997:2) states further that children should be assessed on activities that are similar to the work they do on an average day, or that the assessment procedures should at least be somewhat familiar to the learners. As a result, children would feel more comfortable and stress would be eradicated from the assessment situation.

#### *2.9.5.2 Opposing views on assessment*

The transmission view of assessment suggests that learners need to be assessed on individual items of knowledge that are memorised (Lyons, 1991:206; Cazden & Clay, 1992:343). Teachers agreeing with this view generally conduct readiness tests to tell whether or not a child is ready for the school programme (Lyons, 1991:206). School or reading readiness tests imply that learners have to be at a certain level before they enter school, but the problem with these concepts are that the teachers expect the children to meet the standards of the programme, instead of the programme meeting the needs of each child.

Standardised readiness tests that intend to measure the abilities of learners’ intelligence and language skills result in the prior judgment of the learner according to a numeric score on a test.

This causes educators to label children and group them according to their ability, before they have had a chance to prove themselves. Other standardised assessment tests take place after instruction, which often defeats the purpose of the assessment, seeing that it is too late for the educator to adjust her instruction to help the child with his specific problems. Secondly, the results are a mere numeric indication of the child's development thus far and are "stripped of the very information that is required for evaluating sound instruction" (Clay, 2002:3). The observation survey assessment tasks used in this intervention are more descriptive, as they provide both quantitative (numeric) and qualitative results and interpretations. Thirdly, standardised assessments are not adjusted to accommodate the individual. At most, the teacher would provide three levels of assessments for the low, middle and high progress groups in the class. Such test predictions have often proven to be wrong for individual children. That is why systematic observation, like the observation survey of early literacy achievement, is a better form of assessment to use, especially with low-progress learners. The observation survey (OS) assessments are done on a continual basis to monitor the development of individual learners, indicate the specific strengths and the areas where the learners still struggle, and indicate the necessary instructional objectives that might lead to that growth (Balajthy *et al.*, 2003:3). In this way, teachers can adjust their teaching to remediate the specific problems of the child. Another reason for the effective working of the OS assessments is "if the learner is presented with different opportunities to learn, the child might perform very differently to the predictions of prior tests" (Clay, 2002:9).

Clay (2002:27) did research on children's performance before and after traditional remedial intervention and the results were almost always the same. Progress was made while the child received remedial attention, but as soon as the child was back in the classroom and had to work on his own, little progress occurred. The children tended not to progress without the help of the remedial teacher. They were not learning the way successful readers learn. Successful readers learn systems of strategies they can apply to a text to make meaning of the jumble of words in front of them, and the more they read, the more skills they accumulate (Clay, 2002:27). Clay (2002:5) says that all children have the capacity to learn new things, but each at different levels. All children do not become ready to learn at one specific point in time, but the power lies in the hand of the teacher to meet each child where he is at and create learning from there (Dorn *et al.*, 1998:25).



### **2.9.5.3 Systematic assessment according to Clay (2002)**

The observation and assessment of children's literacy strengths and weaknesses are essential in order to design a personalised intervention programme that will meet children's needs (Lyons, 1991:207). Assessment, according to Clay's observation survey (2002), is done through close observation and doing specific assessment tasks and Running Records with the readers. Observation involves more than hearing children read every day. It involves being a teacher who, after observation, responds to the behaviour of the child and attends to the meaning of the story and also to how the child is working on print to gain those understandings (Clay, 1993:4). Assessment is a continuous process, not an event. It is important to assess whether children are beginner, emergent or early readers, and to identify their strengths and needs, reading strategies and behaviours for effective teaching and to select specific texts for them at the right level of support.

All children learn differently and it therefore is logical that children will take different learning routes to reach the same outcomes (Clay, 2002:7). With this research intervention, each child is evaluated and an individualised learning path is developed to increase each learner's pace of development and understanding to their maximum potential within the given research period. A more detailed explanation of how each of the observation survey assessment tasks works is provided in the chapter on the research theory and design (see 3.3.4.1).

### **2.9.6 Learning to read and write simultaneously**

As mentioned above, reading and writing are complementary and interrelated processes (Clay, 1991b:20), which is another unique principle that forms part of the intervention. Skills and knowledge attained through writing can be used to strengthen reading development and vice versa (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:13). All readers and writers use the same strategies and behaviours from the beginning of the reading and writing process. These strategies do not increase or become more complex, but are rather fine-tuned by reading increasingly difficult texts. In the intervention sessions I conducted, reading and writing activities simultaneously, with the aim of teaching the participants that both processes are interrelated and that the one process reinforces the other.

### **2.9.7 Use of interactive writing**

One form of assisted writing is called interactive writing. Interactive writing is one of the most powerful tools in helping children acquire reading and writing concepts. Through interactive writing children develop certain writing behaviours (see Table 2.4).

**Table 2.4: Writing behaviour developed through interactive writing (Fountas & Pinnell, 2000:xv)**

<b>Typical writing behaviour:</b>	
-	Directional movement and one-to-one matching – English print is read from top to bottom and from left to right, with a return sweep at the end of each line.
-	Concepts of letters, words and punctuation
-	Sounds in words and letter knowledge
-	Familiarity with some frequently encountered words
-	Rereading and predicting strategies.

According to Fountas and Pinnell (2000:xv), interactive writing is a

*“dynamic, collaborative literacy event in which children actively compose together, considering appropriate words, phrases, organisation of text and layout. At points selected by the teacher for instructional value, individual children take over or ‘share the pen’ with the teacher so that they can learn letter-sound relationships within words and learn how texts and words ‘work’”.*

#### *2.9.7.1 Purpose and value of interactive writing*

Within the interactive approach to writing, children’s linguistic competence is recognised and their competency is used as a springboard for their development as writers (Fountas & Pinnell, 2000:xvii). The purpose of interactive writing therefore is to show children how writing works by also incorporating them in the writing process. Children need to learn the conventions of print and how proper spelling and grammar works. Some skills must be demonstrated to the children, but other conventions they have to discover themselves (Fountas & Pinnell, 2000:3). Active participation enables the young writers to practise their writing skills in a safe learning environment, and their involvement and practice allow them to eventually become independent writers. Clay (1991:109) adds that writing provides extra opportunities for the child to gain control of literacy concepts. Interactive writing enables children to consciously think about what they want to say, and about the formation of letters, letter and word sequencing, sentence structure, spelling patterns, writing for a purpose, making letter-sound connections, i.e. transcribing what they heard into letters and words, and how to portray the message they want to convey in a clear manner (DeFord, 1991:86, 88). All these abilities help them to gain greater control over the writing process and their vocabulary (Clay, 1991b:109). Interactive writing creates a safe writing environment in which poor writers have the opportunity to see themselves as successful writers. The teacher is there to provide support, but the children still have a sense of ownership and control over their own writing process. Within the interactive writing process,

children gain knowledge that can be used to read new texts and create other written work. Lastly, but most importantly, interactive writing makes the act of writing enjoyable and makes learners feel proud of their own work.

#### *2.9.7.2 Process of interactive writing*

Firstly, a writer needs a purpose for writing. He must decide who will be his audience or readers and must decide on a form of writing, like a letter, a story, a list or directions (DeFord, 1991:90). The teacher acts as the scribe and facilitator. She helps him to write down his dictated sentences. Children and the teacher work together to produce a text and in the end these texts/books can be read again and again (DeFord, 1991:90). This type of writing is mainly designed for pre-primary and grade one learners, but can also be used for older learners up to grade three who need stronger support in writing. After the message is composed, the writer should reflect upon it and revise or correct errors (DeFord, 1991:90). The child must also be taught that there are different sources available in the classroom to help with the writing process, for example the word wall, his own acquired knowledge, and print around the room (DeFord, 1991:90). The focus is always on the construction of the children's own messages, rather than on the practicing of isolated skills. Authentic writing activities allow children to communicate their own message in their own language that makes sense to them. In fill-in-the-blank or other isolated copying tasks, used in most South African classrooms, the child's first purpose may be to produce the correct answer, rather than trying to understand the language relationships (DeFord, 1991:87). Therefore, authentic writing activities need to be purposeful. A good way to make an activity purposeful for the writer is when it can be used again and again. If a child writes a short story book, the book can be used to read again in the future. The child will most probably be able to read the text with almost 100% fluency, as he constructed the message himself. In this way, writing is linked to the reading process.

## **2.10 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, a detailed description of various theoretical approaches was provided to form a firm theoretical foundation to build on throughout my research (see 2.5, 2.6). Problems within the South African educational context were also described and compared to academic literature (see 2.2, 2.3). A more detailed focus was placed on the reading and writing processes (see 2.6, 2.7), as well as reading difficulties learners might experience within these processes of acquiring reading and writing strategies (see 2.8). Towards the end, a comprehensive depiction of an effective intervention programme was presented in answer to the needs of struggling

readers and writers (see 2.10). Clarification of the different aspects of such an intervention programme was provided to enlighten the reader on what such a programme entails. In conclusion, the main arguments of this review will be summarised below.

### ***2.10.1 Importance of teaching for strategies***

The acquisition of reading strategies is key in the child's development to become an independent reader and writer. It is essential for teachers to have a thorough understanding of the reading process and to carry sufficient knowledge of methods for teaching reading strategies to develop a sense of independence in the learners. If children, especially those who struggle, are limited to what the teacher teaches, they most probably will not become independent readers, and neither will they develop a self-improving system for reading (Flanagan, 2005:20; Lyons, 2001:1). Teaching children to read is not just a matter of method and resources. It is a responsibility the teacher takes upon herself to understand the authentic reading process, as well as to comprehend and apply appropriate instructional methods to teach learners the necessary skills and knowledge to become good readers. Moreover, children need to be encouraged to engage with multiple books every day, because these opportunities give children the chance to discover new things about print and link these new discoveries to their existing stores of language knowledge.

### ***2.10.2 Becoming independent readers and writers***

Independent readers and writers know how to monitor their own reading and writing; they search for meaning in the text using different kinds of information; they discover new knowledge by themselves; they do cross-checking to see if the different kinds of information fit together; they correct themselves and solve new words with the information provided in the book. A kind of end-point of early instruction has been reached when children have such a self-improving system of literacy behaviours (Clay, 1991b:317). They then are able to use a set of strategies that will enable them to read increasingly challenging texts. In the process they engage in problem solving by using familiar informational cues and strategies (Clay, 1991b:317). Children who once seemed to be "slow learners" can now become processors of information who teach themselves through their own efforts. When this goal is achieved, the individual has become self-regulated or independent and will experience success as a reader and writer (Clay, 1991b:325). Hornsby (2000:1) validates this view by proposing that reading programmes are only successful if they guide learners to becoming independent readers who not only can read, but choose to read and enjoy the act of reading.

**2.10.3 When is success achieved?**

A reading teacher's success should be measured according to her learners' ability to read independently and to monitor their own reading process. If the children are limited to doing only what the teacher taught, they are not developing self-extending systems for reading. Therefore, it will not be adequate to simply define an instructional model for thinking about literacy learning. "We must also consider the kinds of teacher education and professional development that will be needed to support an ongoing program of responsive contingent instruction" (Mceneaney *et al.*, 2006:123).

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH THEORY AND DESIGN**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides the theoretical base and conceptual framework that underpin the research design and process. This study was born out of an interest in the field of learning support. I have a specific interest in literacy and a passion to help raise the current low levels of literacy in South African schools. There is a great gap in our education system, as educators and learning support teachers often fail to address the educational needs of struggling learners (International association for the evaluation of educational achievement, 2008 (*PIRLS report*)). After many discussions with my supervisor I decided to design an intervention programme that is based on the principles of Reading Recovery® and to investigate whether this programme would succeed with struggling learners in the South African context. The programme entailed a twelve-week intervention period in which three struggling learners received intensive reading and writing instruction in English. These three learners were compared to a control group, consisting of four average-performing learners who did not receive the intervention. The aim was to investigate whether the intervention group would improve to the level of the control group towards the end of the intervention.

Against this background, I will now provide a brief outline of the chapter. Firstly, I will explain the theoretical approach I adopted to clarify my stance as researcher (Section 3.2). Then I will elaborate on the various aspects that form part of the research design (3.3). Within the research design section I will elaborate on the specific research design approaches followed in this study (3.3.1), as well as explain the research questions and the context within which the research took place (3.3.2). Furthermore, I will discuss the methodology (3.3.3) as well as the specific methods (3.3.4) used for data collection and interpretation. Having clarified the methodological approach that shaped the research and data collection process, I will explain the research process and a typical lesson outline is given to demonstrate how the intervention sessions were conducted (3.3.5). Next, I outline the analysis process (3.3.6) and conclude the chapter by discussing issues of validity, reliability and triangulation (3.4).

## **3.2 RESEARCH THEORY**

It is logical that a person's epistemological world view forms the theoretical basis of his experiences, his constitution of knowledge and how that knowledge is applied (Solomon, 2002:1; Walliman, 2006:27). It therefore is impossible to function within the world system without a world view, be it an extremely liberal one or a narrow-minded approach. One's epistemology is formed from birth through social interaction, and specific cultural experiences in a specified space and time. These conceptual frameworks "help us to understand our own research work, the work of others and to learn about education research" (Le Grange, 2000:194). Therefore, researchers will tend to conduct their research subject according to their personal epistemological stances. Consequently, Walliman (2006:27) advises that it is important to know with what assumptions researchers enter their specific field of research from the outset of their studies. As discussed next, this study endorses some of the assumptions underlying post-positivism and critical realism.

### **3.2.1 Post-positivism**

Post-positivism challenges the positivist and interpretivist perspectives on knowledge. Post-positivism integrates the positivist and interpretivist stances by acknowledging that an objective reality is possible, but that subjectivity shapes reality. Popper is one of the key figures in the development of post-positivism and believes that there is no certain or secure knowledge, and that knowledge is subjective to people's beliefs and world views (Popper, 1994:97; Kruizinga, 2010:41).

As mentioned above, this study adopts a post-positivist stance, as I also acknowledge that my research is shaped by subjectivity (Kruizinga, 2010:42). My own theoretical background and experience will therefore partly shape the collection and analysis of the data, but my awareness of subjectivity will remind me to consciously weigh up my findings against my own subjectivities and biases.

### **3.2.2 Critical realism**

As explained earlier, my study falls neither within the paradigms of interpretivism nor those of positivism. Positivists follow a limited, rigid approach that aims to objectively establish causes and effects in a scientific, lawful way, while interpretivists believe that all social actions are interpreted subjectively. However, Roy Baskhar has provided an alternative approach to counter the opposing arguments of positivism and interpretivism (Archer *et al.*, 1998). His approach, known as critical realism, takes on an integrationist view of the relationship between the

individual and society. According to Baskhar, the world and its structures exist, but different people interpret social phenomena in different ways. Baskhar argues that the mutual interaction between individuals and society affects a transformation in both (Archer *et al.*, 1998). Critical realism can thus be seen as a combined approach situated between the positivist and interpretivist approaches. It acknowledges the “existence of a natural order in social events and discourse, but claims that this order cannot be detected by merely observing a pattern of events” (Walliman, 2006:20). It can only be discovered “through the process of interpretation while doing theoretical and practical work in the social sciences” (Walliman, 2006:20, 21). Consistent with this world view, it is impossible for a researcher to attain a detached view of a situation and values, as he is a member of society and is motivated by personal presuppositions and beliefs.

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design refers to the conceptual framework within which the methodology and accompanying research instruments that were used to gather and interpret the data are defined and applied (Kruizinga, 2010:40). Creswell and Clark (2011:53) add that “research designs are procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies”. Therefore, it is important that the researcher must decide exactly what strategies will be most effective for obtaining the objectives and questions of the specific study (Le Compte & Preissle, 1993:30). Below I will sketch an outline of the various aspects of the research design.

#### **3.3.1 *Specific research design approaches***

##### **3.3.1.1 *Ethnographic approach***

In this study, I used principles of an ethnographic approach, such as the contextual, interpretive and organic ethnographic principles. The research is carried out in the “context in which the subjects normally live and work (contextual) and (I) carried out an interpretive analysis of the data (interpretive)” (Nunan, 1992:56). There was also an interaction between the questions, hypothesis, and the data collection and interpretation of my data (organic principle) (Nunan, 1992:56). Furthermore, I identified the learners’ ways of thinking via the observation survey assessment instrument and through general observation in the intervention to attain greater understanding of their literacy development (Robson, 2002:188). I have to clarify that, specifically whilst conducting the *observation survey* assessments I had to act as a non-participant observer (see 3.3.4.1), which meant that I did not teach or help the learners during the assessments. However, in the intervention sessions I observed each learner’s behaviours



and responses closely. In this way I was able to make efficient decisions concerning the improvement of the programme. As mentioned, one must constantly remain aware of becoming too subjective when interpreting the research findings and continuously weigh up one's findings against one's own biases (Ellis & Flaherty, 1992:1,2; Walliman, 2006:47).

### *3.3.1.2 Multiple case study*

Case study design is an empirical inquiry in which the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context and boundaries (Yin, 1994). The research intervention took the form of a multiple case study design, since I was studying a small group of learners to see how they reacted to and benefited from an early intervention programme (Yin, 1994). The case study design is a flexible design to work with and refers to "how well theory can be generated and tested, using both inductive and deductive reasoning (Reddy, 2001:53; Walliman, 2006:46). Inductive thinking is going from the specific to the general and deductive thinking is from general to specific (Walliman, 2006:46). I focused more specifically on deductive reasoning, which tests theory, because I wanted to examine how well this specific intervention programme (based on Reading Recovery® principles) works within the South African context. Furthermore, both quantitative and qualitative methods are appropriate for case study designs, and both methods are often applied in case studies (Yin, 1994; Walliman, 2006:46).

### *3.3.1.3 Mixed methods design*

Miles and Huberman (1994:40) state that "numbers and words are both needed if we are to understand the world". A mixed methods design fits this description and can be defined as a design "that includes at least one quantitative and one qualitative method where neither type of method is inherently linked to any particular inquiry paradigm" (Creswell & Clark, 2011:2). In this study, the mixed methods design allowed me to collect and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data (based on research questions), but the main focus was the interpretation of the qualitative data (Creswell & Clark, 2011:5; Creswell, 2009:213).

According to Professor M. Kidd, statistician at the University of Stellenbosch (2010), using more than one research approach in this study resulted in different sources of information/evidence being used in conjunction with each other to express a judgment on the effectiveness of the intervention. Therefore, the statistical results were used to reinforce the qualitative findings of my study (Creswell, 2009:213). In this way, mixed methods research "provides strengths that offset the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative research" (Creswell & Clark, 2011:12;

Creswell, 2009:213). It also helps to answer questions that could not be answered sufficiently if one was to use only qualitative or quantitative approaches alone.

Among the challenges of the mixed methods design are that one needs enough time and resources to collect and analyse the quantitative and qualitative data effectively (Creswell & Clark, 2011:12). These two aspects were causes for concern because of time restraints and limited financial resources to conduct the study.

I used both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and interpret the qualitative and quantitative data (Purcell-Gates, 1998:2) (see 3.3.4). Therefore I will clarify the meaning of both research paradigms. Qualitative research refers to collecting, analysing and interpreting data of a phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring to it. The aim of qualitative data is to provide a complete, detailed description of the research study and qualitative data (Niel, 2007). In this study, qualitative data refers specifically to the child's individual responses to assessment and intervention. Walliman (2006:212) adds that qualitative research "relies heavily on language for the interpretation of its meaning, so data collection methods tend to involve close human involvement and a creative process of theory development rather than testing". Qualitative data is usually in the form of words, pictures or objects (Niel, 2007).

Quantitative data entails the analysis of data in terms of organised figures and numbers (Le Grange, 2000:193; Niel, 2007). Quantitative research can be statistically analysed and presented through various graphs (Kidd, 2010; Walliman, 2006:212). Within this specific case study, the scores of each individual's performance in the observation survey tasks was analysed, presented graphically and compared in order to make valuable interpretations from the graphical data presentations.

#### *3.3.1.4 Quasi-experimental design*

This study followed a quasi-experimental design, more specifically a non-equivalent control group design where two groups were chosen (a control and intervention group) that were not equivalent (Huysamen, 1994:85). The nature of the study made it impossible to fully control all the independent variables that could influence the learners' reading performance (De Wet, Monteith, Steyn, Venter, 1989). According to Creswell and Clark (2011:56) a study with a quasi-experimental design includes qualitative and quantitative research. In this study there was a greater focus on qualitative data analysis and interpretation, and the statistical analysis section served to support the qualitative findings.

For the purposes of this study, a group of three intervention learners was tested for the influence of a variable and compared with a non-identical group who had not been subjected to the variable (Mceneaney *et al.*, 2006:117; Walliman, 2006:45). The participants were categorised into two groups - one group received the treatment (treatment group), while the other group (control group) received normal classroom instruction.

Both groups underwent a pre-test, mid-test and post-test assessment, after which the results were compared with one another (see 3.3.4.2). Therefore this study was also a slight variation of the pre-test post-test design, seeing that a mid-test assessment was also conducted during the course of the intervention to monitor the progress of the participants in both groups. More specifically, the learners of both groups were asked to complete one initial pre-test (the five Observation Survey tasks) in order to gain baseline data of each learner's literacy competencies and weaknesses. During the instruction period (a month later), I conducted the mid-test with each participant and, finally, a post-test assessment was conducted at the end of the intervention. The post-test assessment consisted of the same five Observation Survey tasks and was conducted to gain the final outcome of the progress made by the control group in the mainstream classroom and of the progress made by the treatment group after receiving the intervention. Because the intervention group was the main focus of my study, I took daily Running Records of their reading behaviours to see how they progressed on increasingly difficult texts. The purpose of Running Records is explained in Section 3.3.4.1.

### **3.3.2 Context of research**

#### *3.3.2.1 Contextualising the research*

As mentioned, South African schools are struggling to improve the exceptionally low levels of literacy in the country. One of the numerous reasons for the poor literacy levels in South Africa is stated in the National Reading Strategy (Department of Education, 2008:10): "Learners who experience barriers to learning often do not receive the support needed (at home or in school) to become fluent readers" (see Section 2.1). This statement is true of the intervention participants. Although these learners attended a primary school serving learners from high socio-economic status backgrounds, they struggled with the acquisition of reading and writing skills in English. The school consists predominantly of Afrikaans staff members and learners and it was evident that these learners had little exposure to English in their school and home environment. With this information as background, the justification for and purpose of the design of a literacy intervention programme in this specific context will be provided.

### 3.3.2.2 Justification

The reason for the design of a literacy intervention was to improve the level of literacy of the three Afrikaans-speaking additional language learners who struggled with reading and writing in English. The programme is based on the effective principles of an internationally-renowned intervention, called Reading Recovery®, which was designed in New Zealand by Clay (1993). The reason I chose to base my study on these principles (explained in Section 2.10) was because this programme's observational and instructional methodology have been researched and tested in various countries for more than thirty years and have proven to be highly successful (DeFord, 1991:9-39; Clay, 2002:59-65; US Department of Education, 2008). Reading Recovery® is an "early literacy intervention designed to drastically reduce the number of children having difficulty making the transition to literacy learning. It is a preventative, research-based and data driven intervention and is internationally recognised for its high standard of professional development" (Hill *et al.*, 2008:2). There also is a strong focus on the use of levelled books, which enables children to read texts with success at their level of competency and coordinates all their acquired language skills to solve a text through a meaningful process. This intervention approach has been found to be highly successful with the lowest achievers in the classroom, who are "further classified as learning disabled by professionals prior to placement in the program" (Lyons, 1991:206).

Furthermore, in 2007, the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), a branch of the United States Education Department (USED), released a three-year, independent review of research on early reading interventions. Reading Recovery®, which uses data obtained from Clay's *An observation survey of early literacy achievement* (2002) to design appropriate literacy interventions, was found to be the only early intervention that had positive effects on children's reading across the following four domains: general reading achievement, alphabetic skills, comprehension and fluency.

Another unique aspect of my learner support intervention is the focus on learner proficiency instead of deficiency (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006:364). The programme focuses on what the child already knows and "takes him along his own particular route into reading and writing" (Clay, 1993:7). Fountas and Pinnell (2006:364) confirm the value of building on what children can do by stating that "children can be active constructors of their own language competencies". Therefore, within this programme there is not a major focus on learners' reading difficulties and what they cannot do. "One simply takes the child from where he is to somewhere else" (Clay, 1993:12). Clay made this transition from deficiency-based approaches to a proficiency focus,

which was a profound shift in literacy research. She started to ask questions such as: What is happening when readers process text successfully? What sources do successful readers use? How can struggling readers make faster progress than average readers? etc. She studied what successful readers do and aimed to use that information in relation to struggling learners to address their problems from a different angle (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006:364).

Since the effectiveness of an intervention based on the principles of Reading Recovery® has now been attested, I will proceed to provide the specific aims of the research intervention.

### 3.3.2.3 *Aims*

The objectives of this research study were to:

- Identify struggling learners in the first year(s) of formal schooling so that early intervention, which focuses on the development of children's comprehension strategies, can be provided.
- Gather information from the participants regarding their knowledge and definition of reading and print thus far.
- Improve each subject's literacy skills and knowledge, especially in reading and writing, to the average level of the class or above.
- Find out whether or not levelled books help learners to accelerate their rate of language development.
- See if the five Observation Survey assessment tasks effectively helped in the identification and monitoring processes of each individual.
- See whether this intervention advanced or interfered with the curriculum, schedule and methodology the educator utilises in the classroom.

### 3.3.2.4 *Research questions and sub-questions*

As mentioned in Section 3.3.2.1, a gap has been identified in the education system (Department of Education, 2008:10). This gap is the need for the early identification of struggling learners in the first year(s) of formal schooling and for providing early intervention that focuses on developing struggling children's comprehension strategies. This was the reason for the design of a literacy intervention programme that aimed to improve the level of literacy of the lowest achieving children in a selected primary school in the Western Cape. The identification of this gap in the education system led me to identify clear and researchable research questions and to then decide on the most appropriate methods (see 3.3.4) and procedures (see 3.3.5) for obtaining answers to those questions (Fogelman, 2002:96). The primary research question was:

*How does an intervention programme using levelled books help improve struggling learners' comprehension skills and strategies in reading and writing?*

Sub-questions were also formulated in order to finally answer the main question in a more detailed manner:

- a) How do learners define reading before and after the intervention?
- b) How do levelled books help learners to improve their reading and comprehension skills and to develop comprehension strategies?
- c) How do the five assessment tasks in the Observation Survey contribute to the effective assessment, identification and monitoring of each individual child? Why/why not?
- d) Does this intervention interfere with or advance the schedule, curriculum and methodology the educator utilises in the classroom?

#### *3.3.2.5 Rationale for conducting the intervention in English*

I decided to conduct the intervention in English at an Afrikaans-medium school for the following reasons. First of all, Clay (1991:2) states that Reading Recovery® is suitable “for children learning about literacy in any country or language, or in any program of instruction”. According to this statement, the intervention, based on Reading Recovery® principles, would therefore be appropriate for grade three additional language learners. Moreover, the programme adapts to the child’s learning needs. The intervention is not an inflexible, sequenced system, but an adjustable programme that aims to help struggling learners acquire reading strategies and language knowledge so that they can become independent readers and writers.

Secondly, there is a lack of appropriately levelled Afrikaans reading materials on a reliable gradient of difficulty, which is essential for conducting the intervention effectively and evaluating learner progress (Fountas & Pinnell, 2007; Nathanson, 2008). Finely levelled texts support children’s reading development more efficiently, because levelled texts are designed to meet the child where he is at and provide him with familiar words and structures that he is able to read with success. At the same time, these texts should also present a bit of a challenge to the reader so that he learns more every time he reads (Hornsby, 2000; Lyons, 2003). Peterson (1991:121) corroborates this statement by mentioning that children who are exposed to texts that reflect the language they speak fluently have more opportunity to develop useful reading strategies when they read. The need for levelled texts therefore is clear, and a good programme cannot work without levelled books (Clay, 1991b; Fountas & Pinnell, 2007) (see 2.10.4).

Thirdly, the intervention programme was based on the acquisition of comprehension strategies that allow children to become independent readers and writers from the beginning of the reading process. Hornsby (2000:33) states that comprehension inherently involves the development and application of strategies such as prediction, self-correction, and using picture cues, sentence structure or meaning to gain understanding. These crucial strategies for learning to read in English transfer to learning to read in Afrikaans, seeing that these languages are both part of the same language family and share the same alphabet and similar structures and grammar rules. Therefore, learning to read and apply comprehension strategies in English is likely to benefit Afrikaans-speaking learners' first language acquisition (Clay, 1991b).

Lastly, according to the document on revised national curriculum standards, learners in grade three are expected to learn to read and write in their additional language. The intervention learners were not keeping up with their peers in this regard and were coping poorly with the transition to English. Therefore it was clear that they needed learning support that offered accelerated learning in order for them to reach the average level of performance of their peers. The learners chosen for the intervention were identified according to the following process.

#### *3.3.2.6 Participant identification process*

Clay (1993:2) states that learners should preferably be identified by teachers in an early stage of their school career so that an appropriate intervention can be done in time to help them. My intervention situation differed slightly from Clay's (1993:2) above-mentioned suggestion, seeing that I had to work with grade three learners who were being taught formally to read and write in English for the first time. The reason for this is that the school started teaching English formally from grade three onwards and only introduced the additional language informally in the lower grades (see 3.3.2.1). Therefore, grade one or two learners focused mainly on the acquisition of their first language, Afrikaans, and consequently I chose to work with grade three learners who were starting to read and write continuous English texts.

Seven learners were chosen for the research project, three of whom were low-progress intervention participants and four average-performing control group participants. Initially, the deputy head of the participating school gave me a time limitation within which to conduct my daily intervention sessions. This limitation did not allow me to see all the learners in school hours and consequently forced me to work with after-care learners who stayed at school after school hours. Therefore, initially I conducted a baseline assessment (pre-test), consisting of the five Observation Survey assessment tasks (Clay, 2002), on all the grade three after-care

learners. The assessments served as an initial identification tool by which the four average learners for the control group and three learners needing intervention were identified. From the representative group of learners I chose three intervention and four control group participants.

The learners had to comply with certain criteria to qualify as intervention and control group participants. Learners who tested low on the assessment tasks and demonstrated below-average reading were recruited to partake in the intervention (Katz & Carlisle, 2009:328). According to the educators and previous records, the three learners chosen for the intervention struggled to learn in the mainstream classroom and found learning to read difficult (Clay, 1993:2) (see Addendum 3.1.i, ii). These intervention participants were not able to monitor their own reading, which is an essential strategy for comprehending text. They also needed the most help from the teacher in the class (see Addendum 3.1.i, ii). Therefore, helping to improve the literacy levels of the lower performing learners in the class could free up valuable teaching time for the educator (Clay, 1993:2).

The four average learners chosen for the control group had to achieve average results on the initial Observation Survey assessment tasks. These results were double-checked by the grade three teachers and compared to their previous school records. The control group served as an average measure against which to compare the intervention group. This was done in order to see whether the intervention participants improved to the average level of the control group, who served as a representation of the average-performing learners in the classroom. On this issue, Clay (1993:8) proposes that, in order for low achievers to become average-progress learners, they would have to make accelerated progress, faster than their classmates, in order to attain the average or higher level of performance. Logically, accelerated learning would take place best in a one-on-one teaching situation where the focus is placed on the learner's already acquired knowledge and capabilities and, proceeding from there, to build new structures of literacy knowledge on what the child already knows. This was the case in my specific research intervention.

Lastly, I could only work with seven learners, of which only three received the intervention, because of the individualistic nature of the intervention and because of time constraints on conducting the research. This was another reason why a case study design fitted my investigation best. Next, the methodological framework and research instruments will be discussed.



### **3.3.3 Research methodology**

Harding (1987:2) describes methodology as "...a theory of knowledge and an interpretive framework that guides a particular research project". Hence, methodology is concerned with comprehending the research theories and overarching strategy underlying specific methods and approaches (Lambert, 2003:246). Therefore, in practice, method and methodology are closely and inextricably bound (Le Grange, 2001:423). The methodological framework includes the goals of the research, data collection and analysis (Lambert, 2003:246). The purposes of a research methodology is "to collect ideas on how to gather data, to investigate methods of data analysis, to study instrumentation which has been used and to assess the success of the various research designs of the studies already undertaken" (Walliman, 2006:33).

### **3.3.4 Research methods**

As mentioned, I will be using both qualitative and quantitative research instruments. It is commonly found that "quantitative methods have been used in some qualitative research, and analysis of quantitative and qualitative studies can be carried out using the opposite approaches" (Walliman, 2006:37). In particular, I will be using observation, interviews and the Observation Survey assessment tasks as the main instruments of data collection. They will be discussed below:

#### *3.3.4.1 Assessment tasks of an Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2002)*

The programme I designed made use of Clay's (2002) assessment tasks in *An observation survey of early literacy achievement* as the core data collection instrument. Five Observation Survey assessment tasks were used to assess the two groups of learners at three different times during the intervention. These were:

- e) Letter Identification. This task measures how many letters the child knows and what letters he does not yet recognise. There is a choice of correct responses that learners can make. The alphabet response refers to the learner identifying the correct alphabet name of the letters; and the letter-sound response refers to the child making the correct sound when seeing the letter or if he says a word that starts with the letter he identified, for example "*apple*" for "*a*." All these responses can be taken as correct.
- f) Word Reading, which requires of the child to read a word list compiled of high frequency words that the child has used and seen before.
- g) Writing Vocabulary. The child is required to write down all the words he already knows how to write from his personal knowledge store.

- h) Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words. The child is asked to write down the words in a dictated sentence by using sound-to-letter relationships. This task assesses the child's ability to hear and record words that are being dictated, as well as individual sounds within the words.
- i) Running Records. This task provides an assessment of the child orally reading a text. Running Records capture what the reader says and does while reading books. Through the record, teachers can judge what the reader already knows, what the reader attended to, and what the reader overlooked. The Running Records therefore assess how well the child is using his/her strategies and knowledge about letters, sounds and words in order to attain meaning. Teachers take Running Records to guide teaching, to assess whether learners are working on appropriately levelled texts, to monitor the progress of the learners, and to plan and bring about changes in instruction (Clay, 2002:79; Clay, 2000; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:76, 77).
- j) Concepts of Print. This test was only used in the baseline assessment, when I realised that the participants had already developed the basic concepts of print that this test aims to assess. I therefore did not include this task in the mid-test and post-test assessments.

These tasks gave a clear overall description of the progress that each individual had made and what his specific competencies and weaknesses were. Furthermore, the Observation Survey assessment tasks help researchers and teachers to observe (Clay, 2002:1):

- the use of oral language;
- the child's concepts about print;
- the reading of continuous texts (Running Records);
- the child's letter knowledge;
- the child's vocabulary (what words the child knows when reading and writing), his phonemic awareness and the link between phonemes and letters.

*An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay, 2002) is based on theoretically sound arguments for preventing reading failure (Nathanson, 2008). The data received from these assessments enables researchers to make assumptions about learners' cognitive brain functioning and literacy behaviours (Nathanson, 2008; Clay, 2001; Scharer, 2001). The assessment tasks encourage a constructive approach to literacy learning, because they assume that the child is creating inter-connected cognitive pathways between reading and writing

strategies in ways that "extend both the searching and linking processes as well as items knowledge repertoires" (Clay, 2001:224).

Alternatives to traditional data collection methods, such as those used in the Observation Survey, emphasise the importance of responsive teaching on an individual basis and endorse a "transactional view of ability" (Mceneaney *et al.*, 2006:122). The latter view assumes that effective teachers base their instruction on what knowledge the child has control over and which skills and knowledge the child does not yet possess (Clay, 2001:222; Nathanson, 2008). By using information captured in the records, a teacher can guide the child's learning by helping him to engage in reading and writing activities and by increasing the level of challenge in texts in a way that gradually lifts a child's literacy performance (Nathanson, 2008). Thus, the use of the Observation Survey tasks contributes to the overall soundness of the study (Nathanson, 2008). These tasks also fulfil the criterion of the new South African assessment system in that they represent a shift away from traditional assessment testing (i.e. standardised, norm-referenced tests) to continuous, criterion-referenced assessments that correlate with outcomes-based education's continuous assessment (WCED, 2006:13; Naicker, 1999b). For these reasons, the Observation Survey is particularly relevant to the educational situation in South Africa, with its low levels of literacy, because countless learners in South African classrooms need individual interventions that focus on the crucial aspects of reading acquisition, as explained above.

The Observation Survey tasks will be used in a pre-test, mid-test and post-test design to obtain quantitative data in the form of test scores that record the individual children's progress (Nathanson, 2008), and qualitative data on transformational variables, for example each learner's development of personal control over various literacy concepts (see 3.3.1.4).

#### 3.3.4.2 *Observation*

Observation is an essential part of the intervention process. It is a method of recording conditions through looking and listening rather than asking (Walliman, 2006:95). Observation is also "the immersion of the researcher into the social setting for an extended period in order to observe, question, listen and experience the situation in order to gain an understanding of processes and meanings" (Walliman, 2006:131). The intervention sessions consisted partly of observation and partly of teaching. The intention is that non-participant observation and participatory observation form part of the intervention. During the intervention I took the position of a non-participant observer, specifically when conducting the Observation Survey tasks, which meant that I aimed to have as little interaction as possible with the participants (Kruizinga,

2010:49; Slavin 2007:130). Non-participant observation generally enables us to “step back” and uncover some of our own, incorrect assumptions (Clay, 2002:9), and also shows what the child can do independently of help (see Section 3.3.1.1). However, during the intervention sessions I was a participant observer with the responsibility of correcting mistakes and teaching for strategies whilst observing.

Clay (1993:4) explains that observation within the intervention sessions “involves more than hearing children read every day. It involves being a teacher who observes the child who is reading, attending not only to the story and its meaning, but also to how the child is working on print to attain those understandings. The teacher must, therefore, be reflective and responsive towards the actions of the child”. The observation of children’s responses to reading and writing is a useful research tool, as it provides one with information concerning their competencies, confusions, strengths and weaknesses, and their use of strategic activities (Clay, 2002:7). Short (1991:104) adds that, as one observes and records what you see, you will improve in your ability to observe more closely and respond more accurately to children. Systematic observation of the learning process of individual learners therefore is of high importance, because it makes it possible for researchers to “provide detailed feedback” about the adjustment of instruction to more effectively meet the needs of the child (Clay, 2002:4). In addition, systematic observation, as opposed to casual observation based on fleeting impressions, provides researchers with a standard measurement task and a standard way of administering the task, which makes observations reliable and valid (Clay, 2002; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

To strengthen this tool, Mudre (2001) states that a valuable method that teachers/researchers can use to help demonstrate important reading and writing behaviours is that of modelling the specific reading and writing behaviours to learners who seem confused about how to tackle reading. By demonstrating and helping the learners to see how sources such as visual, contextual and meaning-based sources in the text can be used, one can enhance their ability to understand and interpret what they are reading. It also provides feedback for researchers to improve reading interventions and classroom programmes.

In addition to *An observation survey of early literacy achievement* tasks and non-participant observation, the third research instrument used in this intervention was interviews.

#### 3.3.4.3 Interviews

Interviewing is asking questions and prompting conversation in order to gain information and understanding of social phenomena and attitudes (Kvale, 1996:1). The purpose of interviews is

to understand the experiences of other people and the meaning they add to that experience (Seidman, 1998:3). Interviews are a very flexible tool to use in the research process. I conducted face-to-face, semi-structured interviews that contained structured and unstructured questions combined with standardised and open-format questions with four teachers and three learners (Babbie & Mouton, 1990:233, 234) (see Addendum 3). As Bickman and Rog (1998:231, 247) confirm, “most commonly case study interviews are of an open-ended nature” and therefore, besides the structured questions, I made room for improvised questions. The interviews were carried out in the classrooms with the teachers and I used the tutoring room for the learners’ interviews. I conducted individual interviews that evaluated the children’s stance towards the English language – what they knew about the language and how they felt about learning to read in English. The teachers’ interviews centred on their experiences of the particular learners that were receiving intervention and their approaches to reading instruction. As the interviewer I was in a good position to judge the quality of the responses and to notice whether someone answered the question insufficiently or inappropriately for lack of understanding, and I then could rephrase the question differently or encourage the respondent to be full in his/her answers (Walliman, 2006:92).

### **3.3.5 Research process**

The research process focuses on how the intervention was conducted and highlights important aspects, such as creating a stimulating, supportive environment in which to learn to read and write (see 3.3.5.2) and outlining a typical intervention lesson (see 3.3.5.3). In Section 3.3.5.3 I will discuss all the sub-sections of a typical lesson, such as the rereading of familiar material, doing word work, writing a short message, introducing and reading a new text, and supporting all of these aspects with sound research from the literature review. The general research process will be presented first for the reader to gain an understanding of exactly how the research intervention was conducted, for the remaining aspects will be better understood within that framework.

#### *3.3.5.1 General research process*

The research process was conducted as follows:

- A group of after-care grade three learners was assessed using the five Observation Survey assessment tasks to identify three low-progress learners (intervention group) who struggled with reading and writing and four average-performing learners (control group) (Kidd, 2010) (see 3.3.4.1).

- I then conducted an individualised intervention programme with the three intervention participants for 30 minutes, four days per week. The control group received normal classroom instruction.
- Assessments (Running Records) were conducted on a daily basis to monitor the intervention groups' progress.
- Three formal assessments in the form of the five Observation Survey assessments were conducted at three different times during the intervention (pre-test, mid-test, post-test) to monitor the progress of both the intervention learners and the control group participants. The purpose was to compare the results at the end of the intervention to see whether the intervention group reached the average levels of the control group.

It was important for the entire research process to occur within a safe, supportive environment in which maximum learning could take place. In Section 3.3.5.2 I will explain how I aimed to create such an environment.

### *3.3.5.2 Creating a supportive and stimulating learning environment*

During the intervention sessions I created a stimulating environment by structuring the lessons in a specific way to enable the learners to experience success whilst reading and writing. This was accomplished by providing each learner with graded texts on his level. These levelled texts provided adequate support for the learners in terms of textual, semantic and visual cues, which enabled them to derive meaning more easily. It was important for the learners to learn how to apply their comprehension strategies and use these cue systems to derive meaning from a new text (DeFord, 1991:80). Moreover, in each session a book introduction was conducted prior to reading the text in order to familiarise the child with the context and possible new words in the book. This provided the child with a frame of reference within which to derive meaning (see Section 4.7.2). On this point, Fountas and Pinnell (1996:2) mention that the teacher should introduce the book to the reader and ensure that the new text offers minimum new challenges so that the child can apply the strategies he has already acquired.

Furthermore, alphabet charts, a word wall and a name chart were used as effective tools in helping the children with language acquisition (Calkins *et al.*, 2005:47, 51). For example, if the child wanted to write a word, he had to say it to himself, listen to his pronunciation and try to hear the first sound of the word. I then would prompt him to go to the word wall and search for the same letter or word so that he could write it himself. If the word was not on the word wall and the learner was unsure of the spelling, I would write it for him and add it to the word wall.

In addition, an atmosphere of praise and encouragement was established in the intervention sessions so as to encourage the learners in their strengths and abilities, rather than focusing mainly on their weaknesses.

Within this supportive environment I conducted structured intervention lessons on a daily basis, and these will be outlined and discussed below.

### 3.3.5.3 *Typical intervention lesson*

As mentioned briefly in Section 3.3.5.1, the intervention sessions were conducted on an individual basis and took place four times per week, when I saw each of the three intervention participants for 30 minutes, which added up to an hour and a half per day. During a typical one-on-one intervention lesson I would cover the following activities, usually in the following order (see Table 3.1):

**Table 3.1: Typical intervention lesson (Clay, 1993:14)**

<b>Typical intervention lesson:</b>
1. Rereading familiar books.
2. Rereading yesterday's new book on which I would take a running record of the book reading.
3. Word making and breaking – doing activities with building and breaking up of words.
4. Writing a short message/story he composed himself.
5. Introducing and reading a new book.

The structure of this daily, one-on-one, thirty minute intervention lesson helped to facilitate strategy development by providing the learners with opportunities to practise effective strategies on material of their level of competency (Dorn et al., 1998:31; Short, 1991:104). Furthermore, children need opportunities to reread familiar books as this helps them to strengthen and establish their linguistic knowledge of sentence structure, narrative structure and word vocabulary (Short, 1991:104). Familiar texts also “give children the chance to read with fluency, to attend to meaning, and to use strategies in an orchestrated manner” (Short, 1991:104).

After rereading familiar books, the learners worked with words in the form of different activities in order to become familiar with the sequencing of letters in English and to broaden their English vocabulary (Clay, 1993:43). Clay (1993:43) adds that “the child must learn to work actively on constructing words in writing or analysing words while reading”. Secondly, the teacher must

demonstrate to the child that what is learned through reading can be useful in writing, and vice versa (Clay, 1993:43).

Writing messages in the intervention sessions involved the generation of a topic to write about and going from this idea/topic to spoken words, hearing the sounds in the words, writing the printed message and lastly rereading that message, which showed the child that the writing activity had a purpose (Clay, 1993:28). The child wrote the message with my continuous support. Therefore, if he was unable to construct a word, I would help him to search for the word on the word wall or otherwise write it down for him.

In the last section of the lesson a new text was introduced and read. According to the child's performance on the Running Record of the previous book, I would decide, according to certain criteria, whether the child was ready to read a book on a new level or rather to read another book on the same level to strengthen his strategies and word knowledge (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:113) (see 2.10.4.3). During the introduction and reading of the book I would guide the child when he made mistakes by asking questions like: Does it make sense? Does that look right? Can we say it that way? What would you expect to see? or Try that again! These questions helped the children to focus on the "meaning of the story and on certain cue systems, strategies, and aspects of the text" (Short, 1991:107). The objective was to ensure that the child became independent of instruction and was able to read and write without any prompting from the teacher (Short, 1991:104).

In the following sections I will explain the data collection, presentation and analysis process that I followed in this study.

### ***3.3.6 Collecting and presenting data***

Walliman (2006:132) holds the view that it is important when field research is conducted to keep a critical attitude to the type and amount of data being collected, and to the assumptions and thoughts that brought one to that stage. He also states that it is easier to structure the information while the details are fresh in the mind so as to identify gaps and allow new ideas and hypotheses to develop and to challenge your assumptions and ideas. I followed this advice and wrote up my data on a daily basis as I collected it. This helped me to keep up to date and to record the data on the computer while events were still fresh in my mind.

As stated by Youngman (1979:7), all data is initially raw information retrieved by research observation that is recorded in a variety of forms, like field notes, assessments, scores, question



responses, ticks or ratings. This data has to be modified before any statistical analysis can be performed. The most widely used characterisation of data distinguishes four levels of measurement for data – nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio data. In this study I will work with nominal data.

#### 3.3.6.1 *Nominal data analysis*

Nominal data refers to observations that are differentiated by type (Youngman, 1979:7). The word “nominal” is derived from the Latin word “nomen”, which means “name”. Nominal analysis aims to “divide the data into separate categories that can then be compared with each other” (Youngman, 1979:7). By first providing names for discrete units of data, the data can be measured at the simplest level (Walliman, 2006:204). Each type is named either with letters, numbers or names. For example, the participants will each be ascribed a name and their performance on the Observation Survey assessment tasks will be discussed under these names. I continually inserted my new data gained from the Observation Survey task results into an Excel spreadsheet and, once the intervention was completed, I gave it to a professor in the Department of Statistics who used a computer coding program to create statistical graphs from the quantitative data received (Youngman, 1979:7, Walliman, 2006:55).

I not only attained statistical graphs from the quantitative data, but also coded my qualitative data in order to identify reoccurring themes that stood out from the data.

#### 3.3.6.2 *Coding*

Data analysis is the “most crucial aspect of qualitative research. Coding is one of the significant steps taken during analysis to organise and make sense of the textual data” (Walliman, 2006:204). Coding is

*“the application of labels or tags to allocate units of meaning to collected data. This is an important aspect of forming typologies and facilitates the organisation of data in the form of notes, observations, transcripts, documents, etc. It helps to prevent ‘data overload’ resulting from mountains of unprocessed data in the form of ambiguous words” (Walliman, 2006:204).*

Coding is also sometimes referred to as categorisation, which refers to certain things that belong together because of similar characteristics (Reddy, 2001:62). Such categorising makes it much easier for the researcher to gain a general understanding of the research and to generate themes and theoretical concepts for analysis (Walliman, 2006:72, Bickman & Rog, 1998:89).

The following section will explain how I analysed the raw quantitative data and categorised the coded, qualitative data that I obtained from the research study.

### 3.3.6.3 *Quantitative and qualitative data analysis*

Mouton (2001:108) states that “all fieldwork ultimately culminates in the analysis and interpretation of some set of data, be it quantitative survey data, experimental recordings, historical and literary texts, qualitative transcripts or discursive data”. It is important to make a “distinction between the types of data being collected because of the way they are collected, analysed and recorded” (Walliman, 2006:54). *Qualitative* data is defined by Walliman (2006:55,56) as

*“data that cannot be accurately measured and counted, and are generally expressed in words rather than numbers. These kinds of data are therefore descriptive in character, and rarely go beyond the nominal and ordinal levels of measurement. The study of human beings requires many qualitative observations to be made that have to do with identifying, understanding and interpreting ideas, etc. These cannot be pinned down and measured in any exact way. This does not mean that these observations are any less valuable than quantitative data. Their richness leads to great insights in understanding human behaviour”.*

*Quantitative data*, on the other hand, “can be measured, more or less exactly” (Walliman, 2006:212). This form of data is usually measured and expressed in numbers, and mathematical procedures can be applied to analyse this type of data (Walliman, 2006:212).

The qualitative and quantitative data retrieved from the three intervention learners was analysed and interpreted in order to monitor their progress over a period of two months. The control group’s performance was measured at three different times during the intervention (see 3.3.5.1) in order to compare their results with those of the intervention group to see whether they attained the same level of performance as the control group. The quantitative analysis was done to strengthen the arguments of the qualitative findings.

I first analysed the qualitative results gained through observation, interviews and the Observation Survey results (see Sections 4.6 to 4.8). The analysis involved breaking up the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. The reason for this process was to understand the various constitutive elements of the data through inspecting the various relationships between the concepts and variables in order to identify themes in the data

(Mouton, 2001:108). Thereafter, the quantitative, numerical assessment results were presented in statistical graphs in order to provide a clearer description of how the learners had progressed (see Section 4.10). Bickman and Rog (1998:528) state that “graphical displays function as descriptive information sources as well as analytic tools and presentation graphics are most often employed to describe major study findings”.

In the final section of this chapter, the important aspect of how I aimed to attain reliability and validity in this study will be discussed.

### **3.4 ETHICAL ASPECTS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY**

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (1976:335) defines ethics as: “Relating to morals, treating of moral questions; morally correct, honourable, set of principles of morals, science of morals, rules of conduct, and whole field of moral science.” Burgess (1989:1, 2) states that it is difficult for researchers to deny the ethical, moral and political questions and potential issues they are faced with in their day-to-day experience in the field of education and educational research, such as the problem of informed consent, the manner in which research data is presented and the ethical ways in which the research was conducted.

I took a critical look at the ethical aspects of my research study, in terms of its authenticity, to ensure the quality of the research done within this project (Bush, 2002:59). For this reason, I considered the following factors: validity, informed consent, reliability, generalisability and triangulation, to make sure that this study met the standards of quality and ethical research.

#### **3.4.1 Validity**

Validity refers to “the extent of matching, congruence or ‘goodness of fit’ between an operational definition and the concept it is purported to measure” (Singleton, Straits & Straits, 1993:114, 115; Bush, 2002:65). Walliman (2006:34) adds that this measuring tool tests the degree to which the research findings are true. In addition, validity is an approach that is used to identify specific threats to the study and to eradicate these where possible. A frequently occurring threat in the social research field is that of researcher bias (Bickman & Rog, 1998:91). Bias refers to “ways in which data collection or analysis are distorted by the researcher’s theory, values, or preconceptions” (Bickman & Rog, 1998:91). Any researcher is bound to influence his or her research by personal epistemological ideas and conceptions (Bickman & Rog, 1998:92) (see 3.2 & 3.3.1.1). To counteract subjectivity I took the following steps: I clarified my research paradigm and approach at the outset to reveal the world views through which I interpreted the

data (see 3.3.1.1 & 3.3.4.2). I gave a detailed account of the concepts used in the research, the measurements applied (3.3.6) and the methods employed (3.3.4). In addition, I made a conscious effort to remain aware of my own biases and subjectivities and aimed to keep these subjectivities from influencing my interpretation as little as possible (see 3.3.1.1). I tested my findings against similar, valid international studies, which is an abstract and generalising process that leads to knowledge building (Clay, 2002; Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a). Furthermore, I also conducted my study under the narrow supervision of my study leader and supervisor from the Faculty of Education at the University of Stellenbosch, as well Dr Sue Duncan, a lecturer and Reading Recovery® specialist from Ohio State University.

Below I will elaborate on the issue of informed consent for minors and how I approached the process.

### **3.4.2 *Permission to conduct research and informed consent***

To protect myself and the participants, I provided the participants with the necessary consent forms for them to know the exact research process that they agreed to be a part of. The word “voluntary” literally means “without threat or undue inducement” (Bickman & Rog, 1998:153). Therefore, I thoroughly explained to the participants what was to be expected of them and also informed them that they were free to discontinue with the study at any time they felt uncomfortable. “Informed” refers to “knowing what a reasonable person in the same situation would want to know before giving consent” (Bickman & Rog, 1998:153). The participants therefore had the right to know what they were going to experience during the intervention period. The word “consent” means “explicit agreement to participate” (Bickman & Rog, 1998:153). Therefore the forms explained the specific agreement to the participants and their parents, who had the choice of saying “yes” or “no” to taking part in the intervention.

Furthermore, specifically when working with young children in the field of research one needs to be aware of the following: a) they have a limited psychological and legal capacity to give informed consent; b) they are usually still cognitively, socially and emotionally immature; c) there are external constraints on their independent decision making; d) they have unequal power in relation to authorities, such as parents, teachers and researchers; e) their parents and certain institutions, as well as the youngsters themselves, have an interest in their research participation. It therefore is important that the consent forms should fulfil the legal requirements and they should be simplified for the participants to understand, omitting details and terminology that are unimportant and unfamiliar (Bickman & Rog, 1998:153). Lastly, I also obtained

permission from the WCED to complete my study at the specific school in Stellenbosch; the deputy headmaster of the school concerned also granted his permission to conduct the study for the full period of time and the University of Stellenbosch's Ethical Clearance Committee gave consent for me to perform my study at that school.

### **3.4.3 Triangulation**

Triangulation refers to the "integration of data using a variety of methods and sources of information so as to reduce the risk of distortions which frequently occurs when using only one method" (Bickman & Rog, 1998:88, 93). Each of the methods chosen for use in a study has "their own strengths and weaknesses, but complement each other and contribute to the validity of the study" (Bickman & Rog, 1998:93). In my study I used non-participant observation and interviews, which are tools that could allow one's own biased conceptions to infiltrate the findings and answers. Therefore, I also used the Observation Survey, which contains a number of different tasks that are scored according to an international scoring measurement. Therefore, using the Observation Survey in my study supported and strengthened the observations I made during the intervention (Bush, 2002:68; Slavin, 2007:133). Consequently, the use of several different literacy measures made the data obtained in the intervention more trustworthy.

### **3.4.4 Reliability**

Most measures of reliability and validity are expressed as complementary processes (Youngman, 1979:179). Reliability and validity are closely intertwined, for example if a study is found to be unreliable, it will not be valid. It would be rather pointless for an invalid study to be reliable. Reliability is concerned with "questions of stability and consistency. It tests whether something is consistent and dependable and if it can be repeatedly applied under similar conditions and produce consistent results" (Singleton & Straits, 1993:114, 115). Walliman (2006:34) confirms this definition by stating that reliability refers to the degree to which the results of the research are repeatable. This provides a check on the objectivity of the research findings. It requires a detailed account of the concepts used in the research, the measurements applied and the methods employed (Walliman, 2006:34). Youngman (1979:179) says that "a popular approach is to compare results obtained from applications of a test on two different occasions. If the same version of the test is used a test-retest reliability coefficient is produced by correlating the pairs of scores". This is what I aimed to do. I used the same tests, that is, the Observation Survey assessment tasks, on three different occasions – for the pre-test, mid-test and post-test assessments. This allowed me to compare the results of the control group with those of the intervention group to see whether the intervention worked successfully.

### **3.4.5 Generalisability**

Generalisability refers to the results of the research and how far they are applicable to locations and situations beyond the scope of the study. There is little point in doing research if it cannot be applied in a wider context, because then it might not be useful in the wider fields of research and education. On the other hand, especially in qualitative research, there may well be limits to the generalisability of the findings, and these should be pointed out (Walliman, 2006:35). The Observation Survey assessments I used to obtain my research results have been tested in the research field in various countries around the world for over thirty years and have been found to work successfully. Therefore, I made the deduction that these results add to the knowledge-building enterprise and would be generalisable (see 3.4.1).

## **3.5 SUMMARY**

In summary, I worked within the post-positivist paradigm and conducted a multiple case study in which close observation and monitoring of three grade three Afrikaans-speaking learners were done with the aim of improving their literacy levels. The case study was quasi-experimental in nature and provided me with qualitative and quantitative data (Purcell-Gates, 1998:2). Qualitative research refers to collecting, analysing and interpreting data of a phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring to it. In this study, qualitative data refers specifically to the child's individual responses to assessment and intervention. More specifically, the qualitative data provided me with valuable insights into the cognitive processing behaviours of the learners in relation to continuous texts (Clay, 2002:29). Quantitative data entails analysing the data, consisting of variables, in terms of organised figures and numbers (Le Grange, 2000:193). Within this specific case study the scores of each individual's performance on the Observation Survey tasks were analysed and compared in order to monitor their progress at different points in time and to gain information on each learner's developing literacy behaviours. A slight variation of the pre-test, post-test design was used (a mid-test was also conducted with both the control and the treatment groups) to measure the progress of the learners. The main data collection instrument was the Observation Survey assessment tasks, which were used to assess each child's competencies and gaps (Pinnell & Fountas, 2006:364).

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The intervention used in this study was based on the view that all learners, even the lowest in the class, can learn and need to be granted opportunities to learn. Three such learners were chosen to participate in this intervention programme, which aimed to provide one-on-one individualised instruction. One-on-one instruction is the best scenario in which struggling learners can improve (see 3.3.5.1). This intervention was based on the view that intensive, accelerated learning on a daily basis will raise the child's level of performance to that of his average class peers within a short period of time (Clay, 2002:4) (see 2.10.1).

The importance of planning and guiding the intervention sessions to suit each child's specific needs was of crucial importance in this programme. The reason is that each child was at a different level and struggled with different aspects of literacy. Therefore, their sessions had to be custom designed. Furthermore, the teacher has to be a sensitive observer of the learners' reading and writing behaviours and skilled at producing responses that advance the child's learning. Observing reading behaviour helps the teacher to grasp the cognitive processes the child is using while reading, and this improves teaching (Clay, 1991b:232).

The main instrument I used to monitor learner progress was *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (OS)* (Clay, 2002). Through this instrument, as well as close observation of reading and writing behaviours, I gained the qualitative and quantitative data that are discussed and interpreted in this chapter.

This chapter is structured as follows: First of all it is important to note that the chapter is divided into two main sections, namely a qualitative analysis and interpretation section and a quantitative analysis and interpretation section, based on a statistical analysis done by the Centre for Statistical Consultation at the University of Stellenbosch. Throughout the discussion, interpretations will be linked to theory to demonstrate their validity and soundness.

In the introduction to the qualitative data interpretation section I aim to sketch the framework within which the data was collected (see 4.1). Next, the research focus will be established, which is the reading and writing behaviours of individual participants, namely three intervention and four control group subjects (see 4.2). Then, the interpretive stance adopted in this study will be discussed briefly (see 4.3), followed by an exploration of the school context in which learning took place in order to gain insight into how the learners were taught within the school system (see 4.4). Thereafter, the learning environment during the intervention sessions will be explained in 4.5.

Following this, an individual analysis was conducted of each of the three intervention participants' literacy performance to see how they improved from baseline/pre-test to post-test assessment (see 4.6). Thereafter follows the discussion of the general themes that were obtained from the qualitative data of the intervention participants, as well as the possible influences of these themes on the fields of research and education (see 4.7). This was done in order to avoid repetitive discussions in the individual interpretations. The chapter ends with a comparative analysis of the general performance of the intervention and control groups (see 4.8). The reason for this comparison is to see whether the intervention group attained the average levels of performance of the control group. A statistical analysis and comparative study was also done between the two groups' numerical results on the three different assessment occasions, and these are discussed in the quantitative analysis and interpretation section (see 4.10.) This section will strengthen my argument in Section 4.8. The chapter concludes with a final summary in Section 4.9.

## **4.2 RESEARCH FOCUS AND GOALS**

Due to my decision to conduct an intervention programme with additional language learners, the intervention situation and some methods used differed from the normal Reading Recovery® situation, where one would work with struggling first-language learners in their first or second year of formal schooling (see 2.10). My research situation differed from Reading Recovery® in that I had to use grade three learners, because the primary school they attended only allowed them to start learning English formally in grade three. The study subjects therefore were older than those usually enrolled in the Reading Recovery® programme overseas. Moreover, English was not their first language, but an additional language. Accordingly, these factors provided extra challenges that will be discussed in Sections 4.7.1 and 4.7.10.



The research focus was the intervention programme (Babbie & Mouton, 1990:232). I used both qualitative data interpretation and statistical data analysis to portray my findings. The main research goal was to see whether the slow-progress learners reached the average reading level of the control group participants by applying effective strategies for working on texts (Clay, 1993:15). I therefore will aim to assess the effectiveness of an intervention programme based on the principles of Reading Recovery® in the South African school context.

Another goal of this research study was to merge research knowledge with classroom practice, because, as Gersten *et al.* (1997:466) say, “researchers must examine the degree to which their work adds value to the overall systematic effort to improve the quality of services to individuals (who experience difficulties) and their families”. The majority of the research findings were descriptive in nature, seeing that they presented significant patterns in the data that highlighted new discoveries and themes. These new discoveries could serve as a guide for practical improvements to this type of intervention programme in the future.

### **4.3 RATIONALE FOR INTERPRETIVE STANCE**

The Western Cape Education Department supports the idea of providing learning support for struggling learners, but the way in which learning support should be provided is debated by many scholars and educators (Landsberg, 2005:66). There are countless scholars (Hempenstall, 2000:3; Moats, 2000:4; Behrmann, 2004:1; Bedell, 2005:1-2), and the majority of South African teachers, who argue that part-centred approaches work most effectively for teaching literacy and providing learning support. I tend to disagree with this view, because a different body of research indicates that learners following this approach usually remain dependent on the remedial teacher and are unable to work as effectively on their own without the help of a professional (Clay, 2002:27; Flanagan, 1995; Fountas & Pinnell, 2006b:365).

Furthermore, these approaches to teaching or learning support seem to confuse struggling learners, since they find it hard to grasp the main message of a text because they are mainly focused on figuring out the isolated words (Weaver, 1994:41). The learner interviews I conducted revealed the validity of this statement, as none of the three intervention learners mentioned anything about gaining meaning from a text. The one learner rather answered that when reading “*you break up words into syllables. If you know words you can read it*” (see Addendum 3.2.ii). This is an indication that he only focused on solving words in isolation, rather than on comprehending the text as a whole.

I agree with those who adhere to the effectiveness of a comprehension-first, whole language-plus model for intervention that aims to develop independent learners who are empowered to learn more by themselves every time they read or write (Goodman, 1967; Clay, 1991b; Weaver, 1994:42; Clay, 2002:24; Adams, 1990:25; Nathanson, 2008). More specifically, as argued in *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay, 2002), a programme that includes effective assessment of individual learner performance has the potential to guide the teacher's daily decision making to improve her instruction in order to meet the specific needs of the learner. This aspect is stressed particularly in my programme through the use of the assessment tests in the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (see 3.3.4.1).

#### **4.4 SCHOOL LITERACY ENVIRONMENT**

##### **4.4.1 Availability of teachers to help low achievers**

From the interviews and conversations I had with the teachers it was clear that they knew that some learners were struggling specifically in the area of literacy, but they simply did not have the time to see to all their different needs, seeing that their classes consisted of 30-plus children (see Addendum 3.1.i, ii, iii).

Even though all the grade three teachers tried their best to cater for three different academic levels in their lessons by using three ability groups, there were still learners who did not receive adequate help because they were too far behind their peers. The teachers struggled to cater for their individual needs, because they could barely cover all the curriculum work and see to the needs of the three levelled groups, let alone individual needs. They also tended to focus on how little knowledge these children possessed and how difficult it would be to help them catch up. The tendency to focus on learner deficits can be traced to the clinical model of remedial intervention, through which medical and charity discourses became entrenched in the field of special needs education (Landsberg, 2005:5; Naicker, 1999a).

On this issue, Clay (2002:37) is of the opinion that it is not about how little children know, but rather how much exposure to print they have had. From this perspective, teachers should rather be encouraged to focus on what the learners can do and give them authentic reading and writing opportunities to improve their skills. In keeping with Clay's view, the intervention described in this study is based on the decision to study proficiency, rather than deficiency. Therefore, my aim was to build on each learner's current understanding and to use my knowledge of the processes that underlie effective reading and writing to help the learner make

faster progress. Unlike traditional remedial programmes that tend to focus on “items” of knowledge, this research intervention focused on gathering research-based evidence and on the acquisition of strategies for independence, rather than acquiring isolated items of knowledge that depend on memory and could also lead to dependence on the teacher.

#### **4.4.2 Influence of classroom approach**

It is true that the teaching programme being used in the classroom has a significant influence on how children acquire language, along with what they would find difficult or easy, because each teacher emphasises certain aspects of language acquisition based on their theoretical paradigm and personal beliefs about reading acquisition (Clay, 2002:47). Furthermore, one aspect may be emphasised more than another; for example, a phonics approach may emphasise fluency and correct pronunciation more than understanding (Ekwall & Shanker, 1993:7). As a result, learners might find reading with comprehension more difficult, as this is not the main focus of the literacy programme.

In the school where I conducted the research there is a strong focus on the Phonics First approach, especially in the foundation phase. Typically, after the learners have learnt the alphabet, they are required to memorise phonics word lists on which they write phonics tests every Thursday. These phonics word lists are usually obtained from their classroom reading book. Once they have memorised the word lists, they would start reading the prescribed book. The main focus of their programme is on reading with accuracy and fluency.

The intervention learners that I worked with were strongly influenced by the phonics approach. This was remarkably evident in the interviews, as well as in their reading and writing. When asked during the baseline and mid-test assessments to write down all the English words they knew, all three learners mostly wrote down words they had memorised from the phonics lists. These were usually short three- to four-letter words that had a one-letter onset, followed by the same rhyme pattern, for example ‘cat, fat, sat, rat’ (see Addendum 4.2.iii, 4.3.ii). The outcome of this type of instruction is that it produces children who think they have to remember a word and who therefore do not attempt to construct it. This effectively turns reading into a memory game rather than a constructing activity (Clay, 2001:24). The other implications of these observations will be explained in Section 4.7.6.

In the interviews, when asked what reading was, one of the three intervention participants, named William, replied that “reading makes you clever and writing means to write a sentence” Eric’s definition of reading and writing probably illustrates my point of the influence of phonics

the best, because he believes that “reading makes you clever and helps you do better in class. You break up words into syllables. If you know words you can read it. And writing is writing words with a pencil on a paper” (see Addendum 3.2.iii). Therefore, to them reading basically means reading words in isolation and applying word-attack skills when solving new words. They were most likely never taught what reading really means or that it has different purposes. The same with writing – their definition came down to writing words/sentences on a piece of paper (see Addendum 3.2.iii). There is no function and no purpose attached to it. They are just told that they have to be able to read and write to become clever and pass their grades. The problem with this limited explanation is that learners who struggle do not become enthusiastic about reading and writing, because there is no real “purpose” in doing so. Besides, if reading does not make sense, one becomes confused when working only with parts of the whole, namely letters, words and sentences. These findings are consistent with Weaver’s (1994:1) research, which indicates that the way in which children define reading influences how they approach texts, as well as with Dahl and Freppon’s (1998) study, which found that many children in phonics classrooms do not develop a sense of self as readers and writers. To develop reading strategies and develop a “sense of story”, learners need many opportunities to read short texts with complete stories that can be read from beginning to end in one reading session (Hornsby, 2000:44).

Flanagan (1995:29) aptly endorses this argument when explaining that poor readers have more often than not been taught through the phonics approach. This approach seems to confuse poor readers (see 2.5.1.1.1). As mentioned, the reason for this is that that the phonics approach encourages children to read words separately in a text and therefore not read mainly for meaning (Short, 1991:100). These learners also struggle to memorise all the phonic rules and cannot think of any other strategies outside of this approach that would help them make meaning of a text. In English “there are 79 rules which relate to all the ways that the six vowels are used in the language” (Flanagan, 1995:29). This is one of the reasons why many children become confused. Furthermore, one of the few tools they acquire through the phonics approach is to sound out words they do not know and to use visual cues to solve unknown words. This isolated strategy makes it hard for children, especially slow-progress learners, to read with understanding, because it deprives them of using other cues in the text, such as syntax and semantics. This strategy therefore slows down the process of reading. For these reasons, the phonics-first approach, in my opinion, is not the best approach to use when supporting learners with literacy problems. Clay (1991:14) agrees when she states that she has difficulty accepting

the transmission model that reading is an exact process of seeing and saying words. As mentioned in Section 2.5.1.1.1, Adams (1990:6) confirms this view that reading is not an isolated skill. It is a whole complex system of skills and knowledge which should be attained simultaneously. Therefore, I would rather aim to create the environment described below for struggling learners to learn in.

## **4.5 LITERACY ENVIRONMENT DURING INTERVENTION SESSIONS**

### ***4.5.1 Creating a stimulating environment***

The environment in which the child learns to read plays an important role in the reading process. This environment therefore should be stimulating, yet supportive, so that the child does not feel intimidated or overwhelmed by the reading or writing task. For this reason I used a big word wall that the child could refer to when writing; an alphabet chart to help him guess what a word might start or end with; magnetic letters to build and break up new words; a mini whiteboard and felt pen to practise writing new words; lots of levelled books to reread at any time; electronic texts that stimulate ideas for interactive writing; as well as short experiments that I did with the learners as stimuli for activating their creative thinking to start writing.

### ***4.5.2 Use of levelled texts***

Most learning support programmes do not make use of levelled texts with natural language patterns and interesting stories or content, which is to the disadvantage of struggling learners (Clay, 1991b; Calkins, 2001:119). These learners are expected to read texts that are either too difficult or too easy for them, because many educators do not know how to choose appropriate texts for their learners (Peterson, 1991:120; Calkins, 2001:118). They then fail to provide the just-right challenge that would improve the child's reading skills, but at the same time also boost his confidence.

Continuous texts, like story books, are important for learners to practise their reading strategies and fluency (Clay, 1991b:199, Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:3, 4) (see 2.10.4). In this specific intervention, texts that were levelled according to Reading Recovery® standards were the most critical tools, because they are finely graded to support the developmental stages of any reader. A text is suitable for a child if he can read it with more than 90% accuracy, which is measured by taking a running record (Clay, 1993:13). On each level there should be at least three to five books that the child can read before he is moved up to the next level. This prevents the child from memorising a text and encourages him to practise reading strategies on different texts at

the same level. In addition to levelled texts, beginner readers should be provided with many different experiences with a variety of books (Peterson, 1991:120). This primes the learners' minds for the flexibility needed to read a variety of text types, and prevents them from becoming locked into behaviours that work well with only one kind of text (Clay, 191:181). One of my biggest challenges was to find stimulating and intriguing books for grade three boys that would also be at their appropriate level. In the end, I had to turn to international publishers to find the right books. The benefit of working with books that are levelled according to international studies is that it enables me to compare the findings of my study with findings of similar studies internationally. De Vos (2005) makes the point that linking one's own study to instances of similar research conducted elsewhere is an important research endeavour, because it leads to theory building.

#### ***4.5.3 Build on what learners know***

My role as teacher/facilitator was crucially important in creating a supportive, uplifting atmosphere during the intervention sessions. I aimed to build each learner's confidence and praise him when he applied a new strategy correctly or read a new book with understanding and enthusiasm. It was my role to believe in and encourage them when, at stages, they did not believe in themselves or felt discouraged and tired. Furthermore, I also built on what each learner already knew and, in this way, affirmed their ability to be successful. More importantly was my role as a scaffolding teacher. The close teacher-learner interaction during the intervention sessions provided the perfect place in which the learner could acquire new knowledge with my help as facilitator. Within the one-on-one relationship I chose how to respond to what the learners gave me. I achieved this through using teaching points, prompting questions and making informed decisions to guide the learning process, which helped the child to acquire independent strategies. Block and Duffy (2008:23) confirm this role by stating that if children do not receive "intensive scaffolding assistance, many struggling readers (will) fail to comprehend". This implies that the kinds of interactions teachers have with their learners play a critical role in learner success or failure.

#### ***4.5.4 Teach reading and writing together***

Because many educators still follow a behaviourist instructional approach, they choose to teach reading and writing separately, as they are convinced that the two processes will confuse children in their learning processes (Caccamise, Snyder & Kintsch, 2008:82; Clay, 2001:12). Reading Recovery® educators teach reading and writing simultaneously because they have found that the one process supports the other and accelerates learning (Clay, 2002:14, Fountas

& Pinnell, 1996:13). A writing piece is written to convey a message and reading is done to gain a message from the text. Moreover, one's reading vocabulary strengthens one's writing vocabulary and vice versa (Clay, 1991b:19, 20).

#### **4.5.5 Reflection**

Learners must realise the importance of reflecting on the meaning of the text, on the strategies they used, and on where they struggled or experienced success. The reason for this is that "when a learner is using new strategies of techniques, reflection is needed before they become part of that learner's repertoire of strategies" (Short, 1991:114). Reflection consequently is a crucial part of the reading process. According to Caccamise *et al.* (2008:80-82), it is the reader's ability to think about and monitor his own reading that builds the reader's network of strategies and enables him to transfer such knowledge to new texts.

#### **4.5.6 Observation and assessment**

Another critical aspect of this intervention programme was the close observation that was done to monitor progress and to inform the educator on where the child's weak and strong points lie. Observation and assessment are tools that can be used to guide the teacher's decision making and empower her to improve her teaching that is aimed mainly at meeting the learners' needs by providing quality instruction. In this intervention programme the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* was used to assess the intervention group and control group at three different stages of the research project in order to monitor how each individual and each group was improving and how the intervention group could be assisted to make maximum progress towards the end goal of reaching the average literacy level of their class. During the assessments I took in a neutral stance, which meant that I did not do any teaching or intervention at these times.

#### **4.5.7 Becoming independent**

It is interesting to note that the children who struggle most in class are usually the ones who do just what the teacher emphasises. Weaver (1994:3) says that they concentrate on just one or two strategies rather than on the several strategies that must be integrated in order to read successfully (see 2.10.4). The main aim of this intervention programme was to create independent readers and writers who are able to improve their comprehension strategies every time they read and write. Therefore, during the sessions I tried to teach the learners to solve their own word problems and to look hard for the meaning of the text, before I simply gave them the answers. They were encouraged to apply their acquired strategies by themselves, and

monitor their own reading and writing processes, with the support of the teacher where necessary. As stated in Section 2.10.4, Pressley and El-Dinary (1997:487) confirm that the main goal of an intervention should be to “produce self-regulated, autonomous readers who come to their own interpretation of texts” and become independent through this process.

## **SECTION A: QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION**

In this section I will firstly analyse the individual performances of the three intervention participants with the aim of monitoring each learner’s progress and discovering valuable reoccurring themes and patterns in the data that could help improve research and teaching practices (see Section 4.6). The reason for analysing the performance of each individual participant is that I conducted a one-on-one intervention that aimed to improve the individual literacy levels of each participant (Clay, 1995:3) (see Section 1.4). The three grade three learners that were chosen for the intervention were William, Cameron and Eric. William was seven years and seven months at the baseline assessment, Cameron was eight years and six months and Eric was eight years and 11 months at baseline. Please note that pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of the participants.

Secondly, to avoid repetitive discussions, the major themes that appeared throughout the data (see 4.7) will be discussed. These central themes may serve as guidelines for further possible research and for improving current teaching practices.

After the discussion of the major themes a comparison will be done between the general performance on five *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement Tasks* (see Section 4.8) by the control group (four learners) and the intervention group (three learners). This comparison will be done in order to see whether the intervention group attained the goal of achieving the same or higher levels of performance than that of the control group. This is followed by a concluding summary of the research results (4.9).

### **4.6 INTERPRETATION OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNER PERFORMANCES: QUALITATIVE DATA FROM OBSERVATION SURVEY OF EARLY LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT AND INTERVENTION SESSIONS**

In this section I will discuss the intervention learners’ qualitative data obtained from a series of three tests, i.e. a pre-test (March 2010), a mid-test (April 2010) and a post-test (June 2010). Data was also obtained through observation of the intervention sessions over a period of 12



weeks. According to Clay (2002:138), in a good intervention it is possible to lift a child's performance within a period of 15 to 20 weeks.

#### **4.6.1 Background information on learners participating in the intervention**

It is important to note that all three intervention learners were in grade three in a predominantly Afrikaans-speaking primary school in the Western Cape. Their mother tongue was Afrikaans and they had already learned to converse, read and write in their first language. It was clear that Afrikaans helped them with the acquisition of English, their additional language, seeing that Afrikaans and English are both Germanic languages and share the same alphabet, as well as similar linguistic structures and grammar rules. Generally, all three learners were more competent at understanding English than in communicating in this language. Initially, they were barely able to write in English and they started off with reading level three Reading Recovery® texts that are suitable for grade one learners (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:5). Their lack of exposure to English books and English-speaking persons in their immediate environment also affected their knowledge of the English language.

#### **4.6.2 Structure: Interpretation of individual performances**

In the individual analysis of the three intervention learners, each learner will be described in short to introduce him to the reader. Thereafter each learner's performance will be analysed according to his improvement in reading and writing from baseline assessment to mid-test and post-test assessment. Within these discussions there will be a strong focus on the acquisition and use of reading strategies, since current research emphasises the importance of acquiring comprehension strategies in order to read and write with understanding (Clay, 1991b; Dorn, 1998; Adams, 1990; Pinnell, 2001; Block & Duffy, 2008; Weaver, 1994:133; Palincsar & Brown, 1984b). The discussion of each participant will end with possible implications for research and teaching.

A description of the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement Tasks* that were used for the baseline, mid-test and post-test assessments can be found in Chapter 3 (see 3.3.4.2).

### **4.6.3 William<sup>1</sup>**

#### *4.6.3.1 Short description of participant*

From the intervention sessions it was evident that William had a laid-back personality and did not seem to stress easily. For example, he was usually not deterred when he made mistakes and simply carried on without correcting them. During the intervention sessions he was generally enthusiastic, cooperative and willing to learn. At baseline assessment he was seven years and seven months old, which is younger than the average eight-year-old child in grade three (see Addendum 4.1.i). In the beginning his level of literacy performance and pace of progression was low, but after the mid-test assessment his learning accelerated at a much faster rate, as can be seen in 4.6.3.2.2.

#### *4.6.3.2 Reading*

##### *4.6.3.2.1 Baseline assessment*

During the baseline assessment William scored 91% on a level 3 Reading Recovery® book (see Addendum 4.1.i). This was an indication that one out of ten words was an error, and according to Reading Recovery® procedures, this is the lowest acceptable percentage needed to proceed to the next level (Clay, 2002). Even though his score was high, reading to understand was not his main focus. He focused rather on reading words in isolation, which most probably was a reflection of the phonics approach followed in the classroom (Vadasy *et al.*, 2008:51). When he encountered difficult words he mostly used visual or syntactic cues to solve them. His baseline running record showed that he did not know how to monitor his reading by rereading a sentence or self-correcting a word when it did not make sense (see Addendum 4.1.i). Although he drew on his limited knowledge of sentence structure, vocabulary and visual cues to attain some meaning from the text, he had not yet learnt to orchestrate these cueing systems into a smoothly functioning process. As a result his comprehension was inconsistent.

##### *a) Implications for research and teaching*

Teachers are called to respond to learners' needs and build upon their strengths (Hornsby, 2000:8). Thus, from the baseline assessment it was clear that William had to be taught what the purpose behind reading was, which is to read every book with understanding. He also had to learn how to use visual, syntactic and semantic cues more accurately to obtain meaning from a new text. Therefore I had to teach him to stop when he did not understand and to reread the

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<sup>1</sup> Note that names have been changed for confidentiality purposes.

phrase or to look for the necessary cues in the book to gain understanding. The running record furthermore revealed that William had to read a lot of easy books (along with more challenging texts) to practise fluency and build his confidence. Further strategies that he needed to acquire to read with more accuracy were rereading and breaking up words with more accuracy when an unknown word was encountered. It was clear that the research tools, like the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement Tasks* and observation done during the intervention sessions helped immensely with the accurate analysis and interpretation of the data findings in order to direct my teaching to be able to respond most effectively to the problems of the participants.

#### 4.6.3.2.2 Mid-test assessment

During the mid-test assessment William scored 94% on a Level 6 book. He continually referred back to the illustrations to try to figure out what the unknown words might be. He also learnt to make good substitutions, for example “pens” for “paints” in a level 6 book (mid-test), which did not interfere with the meaning in the specific sentence structure and context of the story (see Addendum 4.1.iii). William started to read with a degree of emotion, which showed that he was learning to read with understanding (see Addendum 5.1.iii). At this point his Running Records showed that he was applying the following strategies with increasing accuracy: prediction, word solving, monitoring, using multiple cues, self-correction, rereading, substituting and summarising with ease (see Addendum 5.1.i). Some substitutions did make sense within the context and fit into the existing sentence structure of the books he read, but other words he simply guessed and read on, which then affected the meaning of the sentence. He also used the word wall to find words he had read or written before. In summary, from baseline to mid-test assessment William read 14 books (see Figure 4.8). At the mid-test assessment he was at level 6 and my aim was to get him to at least level 14 in the remaining seven weeks.

#### a) Implications for research and teaching

It was evident from the data that William had yet to acquire strategies such as questioning, gaining the general message behind the story and seeing deeper than the surface level of the book. Therefore I aimed to teach him how to read for meaning by reflecting on the story, rereading and questioning what happened in the text (see Addendum 5.1.iv, vi, vii). Towards the middle of the intervention period it became apparent that William tended to ignore punctuation marks when reading and therefore I had to focus on teaching him to read while taking punctuation into consideration (Addendum 5.1.vi). Punctuation is a crucial element that

contributes to the meaning of a text. William applied this advice immediately and it helped him to gain a deeper understanding of what he was reading.

#### 4.6.3.2.3 Post-test assessment

Towards the end of the intervention period William read so well that I moved him to a next level (level 13) quicker than the other participants because he was capable of reading more complex texts (see Addendum 5.1.v). He ended with a level 15 book, which he read with ease and understanding (see Addendum 4.1.v). Therefore, within a period of 12 weeks William had progressed from a level 3 to a level 15 book, which was an excellent accomplishment, given the short period of time (see 4.10.2.5.a). Furthermore, William's pace in reading showed great improvement. He attained the main goal of applying useful strategies to read for meaning, and he could do this up to a level 15 book. He was applying these known strategies when reading without consciously thinking about them. For example, William would reflect upon his reading and ask me questions about the text afterwards. He monitored his own reading, and knew when to stop and reread when he failed to understand (see Addendum 5.1.vi). He also continued to make substitutions that made sense at text and sentence level.

#### 4.6.3.3 Writing

##### 4.6.3.3.1 Baseline assessment

During the baseline assessment, when asked to write a sentence dictated from the Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words tasks (one of the five *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement Tasks*), William struggled to write high frequency words correctly, probably because of his limited vocabulary and unfamiliarity with English spelling patterns (Ekwall & Shanker, 1993:113). He was able to recognise the dominant sounds in words easily and could write them down accurately in the Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words task (see Addendum 4.1.i).

##### a) Implications for research and teaching

The baseline assessment findings indicated that William had a limited vocabulary and therefore it was important to enlarge his vocabulary by providing him with lots of opportunities for authentic writing and reading experiences (see Addendum 5.1.vi). Furthermore, the results of the Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words task guided me to see that William needed to attend to the vowels in words in order for him to spell correctly.

##### 4.6.3.3.2 Mid-test assessment

When William was asked to write a word halfway through the intervention he would first make an attempt on another page and say the word softly to himself to identify the main sounds, after which he usually would record the dominant sounds with accuracy. Therefore, it was clear that he could still not identify and hear the internal sounds in English words accurately. However, hearing individual words in sentences and differentiating between words and sounds in a speech stream became easier for him every day. For example, by the mid-test he was able to articulate words slowly to himself and segment them into sounds when writing the dictated sentence in the hearing and recording sounds task (see Addendum 4.1.ii). When encountering an unfamiliar word, William segmented the word quietly to himself sound by sound before writing it.

#### a) Implications for research and teaching

The mid-test assessment mainly revealed that William had to attend to the internal vowel sounds in words, both when reading and writing, to be able to spell more accurately. For that reason I also gave him opportunities to practise writing the new words he learnt in different ways, like building them with magnetic letters, writing them on a whiteboard, rewriting new words with different colours, and so forth. These activities expanded his writing vocabulary as well.

#### 4.6.3.3.3 Post-test assessment

William made good improvement from mid-test to post-test assessment in terms of his spelling and writing vocabulary. Words he usually struggled with became second nature to him when he was writing. He no longer had to look up to the word wall every time to check for spelling. He also learnt the difference between the Afrikaans 'k' and the English 'c' sounds, as well as the difference between the Afrikaans 'ie' and the English 'y', which was a breakthrough (see Addendum 5.1.viii). William started grasping some basic English spelling rules and, together with that, his vocabulary expanded daily. He attained the ability to use or recognise:

- Rhyming patterns (*day, play, away*)
- Familiar parts of words (*day* in *Monday* to *Sunday*)
- Analogies (*ould* in *should, could, would*)
- Consonant clusters (*thr, lk, st*) and consonant digraphs (*th, wh, sh*)
- Vowel phonemes ordered by spelling patterns (*ea-ee*)
- Past tense (*tried, played*) (Department for Education and Employment)

Despite the short intervention period, William attained the level of an early writer who has acquired the following skills with print: writing good sentences, using more descriptive nouns and verbs, and developing a sense of beginning and closure (Dorn & Soffos, 2001:2). Early writers begin to think about the length of their stories and use repetitive phrases that signify the books they are reading at this stage. From the three assessment opportunities it was evident that William made satisfactory progress in reading and writing within twelve weeks of receiving individualised intervention, and this serves as evidence of the effectiveness of this specific intervention programme.

#### **4.6.4 Cameron<sup>2</sup>**

##### *4.6.4.1 Short description of participant*

Cameron was a determined learner. For example, during the intervention sessions he would try to figure out difficult words by himself rather than ask for help. Cameron was also easily distracted and struggled to focus on the task at hand, but reading seemed to interest him and provided him with a challenge. Therefore, using a book that triggered his interest was one of the ways to get him to focus. It was evident that Cameron had a better general understanding of English than the other participants, because he could respond more fluently in English and his word pronunciation when reading sounded like that of a first-language English speaker. Initially, according to his classroom teacher, his reading was weaker than his writing ability and he tended to ignore punctuation marks when reading. He also struggled to concentrate when reading or writing (see Addendum 4.2.i). Therefore, he needed intervention that would accelerate and improve his language learning.

##### *4.6.4.2 Reading*

###### *4.6.4.2.1 Baseline assessment*

At baseline assessment Cameron read a level 3 Reading Recovery® text with 91% accuracy (see Addendum 4.2.i). Even though he attained 91%, he was still at the instructional level, rather than the independent level. This means that he was not able to read more difficult texts without the instructional help of a teacher. Overall, at baseline assessment it was evident that Cameron had acquired some reading strategies, but the application of these strategies was inconsistent and had to be strengthened. When Cameron encountered unfamiliar words, he could identify the dominant letters in the words and he used his most prominent problem-solving

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<sup>2</sup> Note that names have been changed for the purpose of confidentiality.

strategy, which was to sound out the word (see Addendum 4.2.i). This enabled him to “read” the word, but it was clear that he was not reading efficiently, with understanding, seeing that he pronounced some of the unknown words incorrectly, which made the text lose its meaning. He also made limited use of visual, syntactic and semantic information from the text by attending to the illustrations, familiar words and repetitive sentence structures, but he applied these strategies inconsistently.

Another strategy he used inconsistently during the baseline assessment was substitution, which helped him attain meaning in a sentence. One substitution that did make sense in the sentence was substituting ‘*birthday*’ for ‘*party*’ (see Addendum 4.2.i). He also applied the strategy of self-correction twice in the baseline assessment and changed “*berd*” to “*bird*” and “*syd*” to “*said*” (see Addendum 4.2.i). Therefore, all the basic strategies he used to gain understanding from the text had to be strengthened in order for him to apply these strategies to more advanced texts at a later stage.

#### a) Implications for research and teaching

The books Cameron read up until the mid-test assessment were books that mostly suited his level of competency and therefore supported his vocabulary, strategies and text knowledge, according to Reading Recovery® principles (Dorn, 1998:42-45; Fountas & Pinnell, 2001). The books therefore allowed him to use what he knew to solve the unknown words in the texts. Reading the right levelled books made him feel confident, since he was able to “conquer” the challenge successfully. I focused on finding teaching points from the texts he read to teach him more comprehension strategies, like predicting, reflecting, self-correcting and monitoring his reading. I also helped him to focus on gaining meaning from the text every time he read a book. Fountas and Pinnell (1996:2) emphasise the importance of carefully choosing teaching points to present to the child after he has read a book.

#### 4.6.4.2.2 Mid-test assessment

The mid-test running record was on a Level 6 book on which Cameron scored 96% for a first-time reading, and he made good attempts to solve new words (see Addendum 4.2.ii). He continually referred back to the illustrations to try to figure out unknown words. He would also make substitutions, like “paintings” for “paints”, which made perfect sense within the sentence structure and did not interfere with the meaning (see Addendum 4.2.ii). Strategies that he was using competently at this stage of the intervention were prediction, monitoring meaning, using visual, semantic and syntactic cues to solve words, self-correction, rereading, summarising and

retrieving the general message of the text. This was evidence that the teaching points referred to in Section 4.6.4.2.1.a had a positive influence on his acquisition of strategies. After readings Cameron even used his imagination and predicted what might have happened if the story continued. This was an indication that the intervention was working successfully, since he was learning to use all the appropriate strategies effectively on texts.

However, from observation in the intervention sessions it was clear that Cameron gave up quickly when he was unable to read difficult words, perhaps because he experienced a sense of failure. This observation helped me to realise the importance of introducing the text to him before allowing him to read a new book, because the introduction would help Cameron to understand the context better and predict the possible words that might occur in the text (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:2). Halfway through the literacy intervention, Cameron started to complain that the level 11 books he had to read next were becoming too long and difficult (see Addendum 5.2.i). Most of the words in these texts contained five letters or more and were multisyllabic. I therefore had to adjust his programme to accommodate this problem. This adjustment is explained next.

#### a) Implications for research and teaching

When I observed that Cameron struggled to read level 11 books, I provided him with easier books to read that would boost his reading confidence again. He therefore stayed on level 11 longer than planned initially (four days) so that he could get used to the level of difficulty of the texts. Thereafter, his reading ability improved, he got used to the new level and started to read level 12 books more effectively.

#### 4.6.4.2.3 Post-test assessment

In the post-test assessment, Cameron scored 95% on a level 14 book. Thus, from the baseline assessment he had improved from level 3 to level 14, which was a good improvement. Overall, by the end of the intervention Cameron could orchestrate a number of new strategies. For example, he used problem-solving strategies, like breaking up unfamiliar words, paging through books beforehand to become familiar with the context, rereading, summarising, reading for meaning, incorporating all the cues to gain meaning, adding in extra words that make the text read more sensibly, self-correcting, substituting, spelling and prediction, interchangeably. Therefore, it was evident that he was becoming an independent reader. An example of his successful reading can be observed in his first reading of *My Brother's Motorcycle* (Level 11) (see Addendum 5.2.i). Overall, Cameron's record shows that he attained success in reading



because he acquired the necessary strategies to become an independent reader who learned more about reading every time he read (Clay, 2002:24).

#### 4.6.4.3 Writing

##### 4.6.4.3.1 Baseline assessment

In the baseline assessment, Cameron scored 22% on the Writing Vocabulary task, which was far below the average for a grade three learner (see Addendum 4.2.i). At the beginning of the intervention he struggled with spelling, as he was not familiar with English spelling patterns and rules. He was not taught to reread what he wrote or to monitor his writing. He would just write a piece without checking for mistakes.

##### a) Implications for research and teaching

The implications of these findings were that I focused on broadening his writing vocabulary by doing various writing activities with him on a daily basis as part of the research intervention. As I continued doing writing activities with Cameron, the data showed that his vocabulary of familiar words was expanding each week (see Addendum 5.2.ii). Cameron also had to learn to apply strategies, such as monitoring his written work and reflecting on his writing after he completed his writing task, because usually he would simply write a piece and then want to move on to the next activity. According to research, teaching a child to think like a writer and an editor helps him to become a skilful writer (Martin & Hyden, 2006). Therefore, programmes that focus on accurate writing rather than on the drafting and editing process are likely to inhibit this important learning process.

##### 4.6.4.3.2 Mid-test assessment

From the mid-test assessment it was clear that Cameron's spelling had improved a great deal, and consequently his core vocabulary of high-frequency words that supported his story writing expanded quickly (see Addendum 5.2.ii). From observation during the intervention sessions it was clear, at this stage, that Cameron's strategies for figuring out new words had increased from mainly one strategy, i.e. sounding them out, to saying words to himself, rereading, looking at picture cues or repeating a word until it sounded right, and lastly he would ask me for help. These were all good strategies that he mostly applied correctly in different contexts. The Letter Identification test in the mid-test assessment revealed that Cameron did not yet know the following letter names in English: *W, U, Y, J, G, I, A, V, H*. More specifically, it was clear from daily observations that he still confused *W/V, U/I/A, S/C, K/C, J/G* and the following digraphs: *th,*

*sh, ch* (see Addendum 5.2.iii). The reasons he struggled with these letters and digraphs were because these letters and letter combinations are pronounced differently in English than in Afrikaans, and also because the digraphs are not familiar letter combinations in Afrikaans.

#### a) Implications for research and teaching

Therefore, I aimed to help Cameron clarify the abovementioned letter confusions by playing letter identification games with him and building words with the specific letters. It was evident that these exercises helped him to clarify the confusions. The word wall also helped build his store of high-frequency words beginning with the letters he found difficult.

#### 4.6.4.3.3 Post-test assessment

The post-test revealed that Cameron's writing vocabulary and spelling had improved vastly since the baseline assessment. In the post-test's hearing and recording sounds task he wrote most of the words correctly and inserted the appropriate punctuation marks, such as full stops and capital letters, at the right places. He also wrote 31 words in the Writing Vocabulary test, of which 26 were spelled correctly (see Addendum 4.2.i). This was an improvement from the initial 11 correctly spelled words in the baseline assessment. Therefore, Cameron had improved considerably in his writing skills in the 12-week intervention period.

### **4.6.5 Eric<sup>3</sup>**

#### 4.6.5.1 *Short description of participant*

Eric's teacher and friends described him as a friendly and gentle child (see Addendum 3.1.ii). After years of experiencing failure in the area of literacy, he was somewhat unsure of himself and his capabilities. Eric was also quite a perfectionist, which caused him to fear making mistakes. Due to his fear of failure he would look at me first to appeal for help when he struggled with a word, seeing that he had little confidence in his own ability to read the word accurately (see Addendum 5.3.vii).

#### 4.6.5.2 *Reading*

##### 4.6.5.2.1 Baseline assessment

At the baseline assessment, Eric read a level 3 Reading Recovery® book with 75% accuracy. The reason for this low percentage was that the book contained many repetitive words/phrases

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<sup>3</sup> Notice that names have been changed to guard the safety of the research participants.

that he was unable to read, like 'said,' 'come,' 'time,' 'I' (see Addendum 4.3.i). From the running record it was apparent that Eric possessed basic reading strategies, such as identifying dominant letters in words and sounding out words that enabled him to "read". Even though he was able to pronounce individual words correctly in a text, his running record showed that he was not yet able to read with understanding (see Addendum 4.3.i). In addition to reading words in isolation, he also read so slowly that he was unable to follow the thread of the story. Instead, he figured out the meaning of the text by looking at the illustrations. From the running record it was also evident that Eric was able to locate some visual, syntactic and semantic cues in the text, but this strategy was not highly developed. He really struggled to pronounce words that were not short vowel-consonant-vowel words.

#### a) Implications for research and teaching

It was clear from the data that he would have to be taught to search for multiple clues to solve the unknown words, and also to look at the whole word and previous words for meaning, rather than guessing what the word might be (see Addendum 5.3.vi). I had to read more English books to him and provide him with many books to read on his level of competency, so that his English vocabulary and knowledge could broaden. Strategies he acquired were using the word wall, paging through books to look for words, breaking up words into syllables, self-correcting and rereading (see Addendum 5.3.ii). He still had to learn to monitor himself in more than one way when reading continuous texts (Clay, 2002:49). Furthermore, I taught him how to break up words into syllables and helped him to focus on gaining meaning from the texts he was reading by prompting questions at carefully selected points during his reading (see Addendum 5.3.iii). This helped him to see exactly where to apply a certain strategy to attain better meaning from the text (see Addendum 5.3.i).

#### 4.6.5.2.2 Mid-test assessment

At the time of the mid-test assessment, Eric read a level 6 Reading Recovery® book with only 85% accuracy (see Addendum 4.3.i). It was evident from the running record that Eric found level 6 books hard to read without any contextual introduction from the teacher. For example, Eric would only read the first letter of unfamiliar words, then guess the word and look to me for the answer. This observation had to be remediated. However, Eric was starting to recognise repetitive sentences in books, which in turn helped him with fluency in reading. He was beginning to read and understand words with "s" "ed" and "ing" and was able to break these words into parts. Strategies that Eric started applying with greater efficiency were the use of

sources, like the word wall or writing pieces for help, breaking up of words, self-correcting, predicting, and rereading. Overall, Eric read five books with understanding at the same level before proceeding to the next level, but even though his reading was slow, he still showed improvement. That was the reason for many different books at each level, so that he could conquer all the necessary challenges of a specific level before moving on.

#### a) Implications for research and teaching

It was important for me to do a contextual introduction to a new text with Eric, because when he read a book without me providing a rich introduction beforehand, he struggled to read the book with understanding and fluency.

##### 4.6.5.2.3 Post-test assessment

Towards the end of the intervention Eric improved from a level 3 to a level 13 book, which was a big achievement in a short space of time. From level 12 upwards, I sometimes had to read the alternate pages of the books for him, because the books became too long for him to read alone. This was an interesting observation and could be something that needs attention in interventions. Balajthy and Lipa-Wade (2003:141) have pointed out that, at higher levels, the sentence patterns and vocabulary become more difficult in texts. This could be another reason why Eric initially found level 12 books difficult. They contained less repetitive sentences and fewer familiar words. He therefore stayed on level 12 for a longer period of time before he achieved success with the books on the level. Eric ended on level 13 (see 4.10.2.5.c). At times Eric guessed unknown words after reading the first letter of the word. Guessing words and overusing context cues can cause learners to gloss over details in print (Adams, 1990). Nevertheless, the overall gain in meaningful reading was an important step forward. He also made use of the contextual information of the book to predict what the unknown words might be. Even though he read slowly, he self-corrected most of his errors or reread sentences to gain understanding. He also made meaningful substitutions, like “*come*” for “*came*” and “*laughed*” for “*laughing*” (see Addendum 5.3.viii). These were all signs that he was reading for meaning, even though verb tenses still needed attention.

##### 4.6.5.3 Writing

###### 4.6.5.3.1 Baseline assessment

At the baseline assessment it was clear that Eric’s English writing abilities were not up to standard, as can be expected, because he was selected for being below average. He scored

44% for his writing vocabulary test, in which he wrote mostly short vowel-consonant-vowel words, which probably came from his phonics lists (see Addendum 4.3.i). In the intervention sessions he also used the word wall quite frequently and referred to previous pages of his writing for help with spelling, or he reread the word or a sentence.

#### a) Implications for research and teaching

I helped Eric to break away from the phonics lists by allowing him to read continuous texts and to write authentic messages that made sense to him. Through these experiences he learnt new words that were not necessarily vowel-consonant-vowel words.

#### 4.6.5.3.2 Mid-test assessment

Eric's writing vocabulary expanded quickly. Many words on the word wall and in the texts he read in the intervention became part of his vocabulary, and he knew how to spell the words. In terms of letters and sounds, he struggled with the following (possible reasons for his difficulties are provided in brackets):

- Digraphs: "sh", "th", "ch" (These sounds do not occur in Afrikaans)
- Single letters: "w", "v", "h", "g", "l" (The English and Afrikaans pronunciations of these letters differ)
- Letter confusions: "a/i," "g/h," "b/d," "k/c," "v/w" (Visual confusions or pronunciation problems)

Interestingly, Eric wrote "I", "and", "we" and "the" almost every day. Although these words were on the word wall, he got them wrong almost every time. A probable explanation might be the strong influence of his home language on his spelling ability. In addition, his attention tended to fluctuate from day to day. At the end of the intervention, his confusion between "k/c" and "v/w" cleared up (see Addendum 5.3.iv). Also, when writing he often started a word with a capital letter in the middle of a sentence without trying to rectify it. This is typical of an early developmental phase in writing (Clay, 2002:18). One would not expect a grade 3 learner of English to still be at an early developmental phase, but this could be because English was his additional language.

#### a) Implications for research and teaching

From the mid-test assessment, it was evident that Eric was still too dependent on me, because he would frequently look to me for answers instead of looking for the answers himself. One way of rectifying Eric's dependency problem was to allow him to first search for meaning in his own

work before I answered his questions. He searched for meaning by rereading sentences and looking for clues in the text and illustrations. As mentioned earlier, research indicates that editing skills, such as rereading, self-correcting and reflecting, are neglected in many classrooms (see 2.5.3). I also had to teach him to reread his work after he finished writing so that he could learn to monitor his writing effectively. His vocabulary still had to broaden and he still had to learn to monitor his understanding by cross-checking different cues in the text when reading continuous texts. Therefore, I focused on teaching him how to develop and apply monitoring strategies.

#### 4.6.5.3.3 Post-test assessment

Towards the end of the intervention he still became confused between the following words: *when, where, were, we, with*, probably because the “w” and “wh” letter combination were not familiar sounds or spelling conventions in Afrikaans. However, after the mid-test assessment he started grasping the following:

- The difference between the digraphs “ch”, “th” and “sh”, which meant that he built words like “*chip, ship, this, they, the, that, with*”.
- Spelling convention: he realised that many words in English end with ‘y,’ and not ‘ie,’ (which is an Afrikaans spelling convention).

Generally, Eric progressed more slowly than the other two intervention participants. He most likely would have benefitted from continuing with the intervention programme for a few more weeks. Even though this was not possible, he still made progress in that his post-test results showed a significant improvement from the baseline assessment results.

## **4.7 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND THEMES FROM LEARNER PERFORMANCE: QUALITATIVE DATA FROM INTERVENTION SESSIONS AND OS ASSESSMENT TASKS (INTERVENTION GROUP)**

This section forms the main discussion in this chapter, as it reveals the major themes obtained from the qualitative data results. These repetitive themes will be discussed in order to avoid repeating similar observations in the interpretation of the individual learners in Section 4.6. The qualitative data was obtained through 12 weeks of intensive observation, interviewing and assessment, which were continually typed, filed and processed. The main themes were gained through a process of coding, which refers to “the application of labels or tags to allocate units of meaning to collected data” (Walliman, 2006:204). Coding is sometimes referred to as

categorisation – which things belong together and how (Reddy, 2001:62). Categorising makes it easier for the researcher to gain a general understanding of the research and to find important themes in the data that might help with the improvement of current or future research (Walliman, 2006:72, Bickman & Rog, 1998:89). In the research study, eight major themes reoccurred throughout the data and therefore will be discussed to see how these themes might contribute to the fields of research and education.

#### **4.7.1 Influence of home language**

All three intervention learners were Afrikaans speaking, so the support of the participants' first language served as a meaningful springboard from which to learn. Their first language helped them with the acquisition of their second language. English and Afrikaans are both classified as Germanic languages that use the Roman alphabet, and consequently share similar linguistic features on the phonological, syntactic, semantic and structural level. However, their spelling conventions differ. As a result of the learners' Afrikaans support base, they acquired the various linguistic skills of reading, writing and communication much easier. For example, towards the middle of the intervention the three learners grasped some of the basic spelling rules, spelling patterns, and grammar rules and comprehension strategies (prediction, monitoring, self-correction), because many of the linguistic rules, patterns and strategies apply to English and Afrikaans. Thus, these grade 3 learners, who had already learned to read and write in Afrikaans, generally found it easier to learn to read and write in English.

Even though their first language mainly served as a springboard from which to learn, the learners also experienced some difficulties with pronunciation and spelling as a result of their strong Afrikaans influence (Ekwall & Shanker, 1993:19). In the beginning of the intervention, the intervention learners struggled specifically with the English pronunciation of words (see Addendum 4.2.i,ii). In the baseline assessment, all three learners pronounced the words in the Word Test with a strong Afrikaans accent, for example William pronounced “*come*” like “*kom*” and “*you*” like “*jou*” (see Addendum 4.1.i). Cameron pronounced the “*th*” sound in “*mother*”, with an Afrikaans “*t*” sound, and read “*moter*” (see Addendum 4.2.ii). In the baseline Running Record assessment, Eric also read “*come*” like “*kom*” (see Addendum 4.3.i).

The learners' Afrikaans background had a positive impact on their letter identification (Afrikaans and English share the same alphabet), basic syntax (subject-verb-object), and comprehension strategies (transferring from one language to the other). However, the data showed that, as a result of phonemic similarities between English and Afrikaans, Afrikaans-speaking learners had

problems with English spelling. The learners therefore tried to spell the words using Afrikaans spelling patterns, because the Afrikaans spelling rules and structures were the only spelling system they were familiar with (see Addendum 4.3.i). For example, when Cameron had to write the dictated sentence he thought in Afrikaans and therefore spelled the words using Afrikaans spelling patterns to represent the same phonemes in both English and Afrikaans, for example *home – houm, going – gouje, take – teik, have – hef* (see Addendum 4.1.ii).

In these cases the learners' Afrikaans background might also be seen as a disadvantage when it comes to spelling, because, although English and Afrikaans share phonological patterns, their spelling differs vastly. This is why the three learners confused the English "c" with the Afrikaans "k", and also *w/v, b/d, o/a, ou/o, ie/i, oe/o/ou*. They would write, for example "vet" for "fat", "pieg" for "pig", "san" for "sun" and "grouap" instead of "grow up". They spelled the words phonetically, according to what they heard, but substituted Afrikaans spelling patterns for the English sounds. Consequently, their spelling was based on sound rather than on visual familiarity with legal letter strings in English (see Addendum 4.1.ii). Towards the end of the intervention, this problem started to diminish as a result of substantial exposure to continuous texts and focused attention to legal letter strings.

#### *4.7.1.1 Development from phonetic spelling to correct English spelling*

In the beginning, all three learners could identify dominant sounds in words, but they struggled immensely with recognising the medial vowels in words. This was probably due to their lack of hearing of and reading English books, as well as their limited vocabulary (Ekwall & Shanker, 1993:113). Another factor was that they became confused between English and Afrikaans spelling patterns and rules, which made them spell English words using Afrikaans spelling patterns. In the beginning of the intervention they were all dependent on phonological spelling, which meant that they spelled the words exactly as they heard them. Nonetheless, all three participants' spelling improved from the mid-test onwards when they progressed from using a predominantly phonemic spelling strategy to producing correct spelling. This transition happened through exposure to English texts, writing authentic messages and instruction, so that their vocabularies could enlarge and their understanding of grammar and spelling rules expanded.

#### **4.7.2 Importance of context**

It was interesting to note that all the intervention participants struggled more to read the list of words in the Word test that had no meaningful context, than to read the same words in a book



that had a meaningful context (see Addendum 4.2.i). During the Word tests the learners would read the words without trying to correct them when they made a mistake because they had no other clues to help them solve the unknown words, such as visual, structural or semantic cues. This coincides with Weaver's (1994:140) findings, showing that learners find words in context easier to read than isolated words in lists. For example, when the context of a story was familiar to Cameron, he found it much easier to read, even though it contained unfamiliar words. Similarly, when Eric read "Goldilocks" for the first time, he found the words quite difficult, but, on reading the story, he was able to solve them because he knew the story (see Addendum 5.3.xi). Also, when the learners read the traditional tale of "The Three Little Pigs" (level 7) they found it easy, even though the book contained difficult words (see Addendum 5.2.iv). Because they knew the story beforehand they found it easier to identify and read the words in the text (see Addendum 5.3.v). These observations support my argument that meaningful contexts have an impact on reading.

A method that helped the learners to understand texts better was doing a proper introduction to a new book, when we would talk about the context before reading the book so that the reader could know what words and possible ideas to expect in the text. Fountas and Pinnell (1996:2) confirm the importance of this method by recommending that the teacher should introduce the book to the reader and make sure that the new text offers minimum new challenges, so that the child can apply strategies he has already learned with success. The introduction, therefore, makes it much easier for the learners to read the book than to read it unprepared without knowing what words to expect. I repeatedly found that, without a meaningful context, the learners struggled to read with understanding.

Furthermore, learners also need a supportive context in which to learn to read. Guided reading, according to Fountas and Pinnell (1996:2), is "a context in which a teacher supports each reader's development of effective strategies for processing novel texts at increasingly challenging levels of difficulty. The teacher introduces a text to the child and may select one or two teaching points to present after the child read the book". The text offers minimum new challenges, so the child can apply strategies he has already learned with success. Therefore, the guided reading approach, used in the intervention sessions, allowed the children to enjoy the stories because they understood the contexts and related to them (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:2).

### **4.7.3 Limited vocabulary**

All three intervention participants had very little exposure to English at school or at home (see Section 4.6). They were only formally introduced to English at school in their third grade. The majority of teachers and learners at the specific primary school were Afrikaans speaking, and the learners therefore had little opportunity to practise their English skills in class or whilst socialising with peers. For these reasons the participants found it hard to communicate fluently in English and were not always familiar with the basic sentence structure and grammar rules of the language (Ekwall & Shanker, 1993:95). As a result, their English vocabularies were also very limited. Even though they had little exposure to English on the whole, they still managed to acquire English with greater ease, since their first language, Afrikaans, served as a support system.

The baseline assessment revealed that, in general, all three participants' English vocabulary was limited, and their inadequate vocabulary most probably had an influence on their comprehension of texts (Balajthy *et al.*, 2003:141). In addition, they pronounced certain English words incorrectly (see Addendum 5.1.x, 5.2.iv, 5.3.vii, ix). Because of their limited vocabulary, the English words were unfamiliar to them and they did not recognise when they made mistakes, but carried on reading, which then resulted in them losing the meaning of the text.

### **4.7.4 Struggle with past tense**

Initially, the intervention participants also struggled immensely to understand the grammar principle and graphic conventions for the past tense. William, for example, would write "*like*" instead of "*liked*" or "*he swim there*" instead of "*he swam there*" (see Addendum 5.3.ix). This problem was not limited to their written work. They also struggled to recognise words in their past tense when reading. Therefore, I aimed to provide them with examples of sentences and actions in the past tense and to correct some of their written sentences. I also tried to explain the concept of past tense to them, because although they were familiar with past tense in their first language, they were not exposed to enough English books to recognise the past tense form when hearing, reading or writing it themselves. After the three-month intervention period of intensive reading of new English books, they started picking up the basic principles of past tense and could mostly apply it correctly in their writing (see Addendum 5.3.x). This suggests that children can learn the graphic conventions for the past tense in a fairly short space of time.

#### **4.7.5 Main goal of reading achieved**

Through observation, reflecting on texts and questioning, it was evident that the three participants attained the main goal of understanding the purpose behind reading, namely that reading has a meaning and that is important to understand the main message behind a story. For example, William's definition changed from "read(ing) to become clever" (see Addendum 3.2.i) to knowing that every book has a meaning and that we read mainly to understand (see Addendum 5.1.iv; vii). In the interview Eric said that reading means "to break up words into syllables. If you know words, you can read it" (see Addendum 3.2.iii). Towards the middle of the intervention, Eric's understanding of reading changed and he could explain that the main purpose of a specific book was to give directions to friends who were invited to a girl's party (see Addendum 5.3.ii). Likewise, when asked what reading was, Cameron revealed in the interview: "You can read stories - good and bad stories" (see Addendum 3.2.ii). Later he repeatedly reflected upon the texts after reading and commented on the characters' behaviours, which was an indication that he was reading for comprehension.

#### **4.7.6 Influence of classroom approach**

It was evident that the phonics approach used by the classroom teachers had influenced the learners' views on reading and writing, their comprehension abilities, their acquisition of reading strategies and their assessment results. In the "writing vocabulary test" William only wrote short sight words, which contained the same vowel or consonant, like "cat", "sat", "fat", "up" and "sit", which are typical examples from phonics word lists. In addition, all three participants learned according to the phonics-first approach, i.e. they considered letter-sound correspondences and word recognition to be their primary tasks as readers (Balajthy & Lipa-Wade, 2003:141). While phonics is an essential part of a reading programme, the teachers' explicit focus on phonics could inhibit the children's acquisition of other reading strategies. The results suggest that the teachers' use of an inflexible, sequenced phonics approach was not developing literate behaviours in the children (Dahl & Freppon, 1998). Cameron, for example, read "said he for" instead of "said the frog", without correcting himself and rereading. This indicated that he read a sentence even if it did not make sense. The cause might be the phonics approach, which does not teach learners to read mainly for meaning. It is rather believed that if you are able to pronounce words correctly in the right word order, then you can "read" (Weaver, 1994:3, 15; Vadasy *et al.*, 2008). In all probability, the class phonics programme had a significant influence on all three learners, as they were clearly taught to apply the following word-attack strategy: sounding out word phonemes until they could read the word with accuracy.

Furthermore, the interviews I had with the three intervention learners at the beginning of the intervention revealed that their definitions of and perceptions regarding reading were influenced by their classroom programme (see Addendum 3.2.i, ii, iii). Initially, when asked what reading meant to them, Cameron responded that reading means to “read stories” (see Addendum 3.2.ii). William said that “reading makes you clever” (see Addendum 3.2.i), whereas Eric explained that “You break up words into syllables. If you know words, you can read it” (see Addendum 3.2.iii).

The reason for these responses might have been the influence of the phonics approach on their reading. The focus is rather on the memorisation of word lists, the correct pronunciation of words, and reading words in isolation with accuracy and fluency (Adams, 1990:50; Weaver, 1994). Learners following this approach often struggle to think outside of their phonics vocabulary box, because they are taught to memorise words instead of thinking for themselves, and to read words in isolation rather than understanding the message behind a story. For example, in the first two assessments, when the intervention learners were asked to write the words they knew in English (in the Writing Vocabulary task), the words they wrote were those that they had memorised from phonics lists. In a step-wise phonics-first approach, comprehension only becomes important at a later stage, after all the isolated aspects of the language have been mastered (Weaver, 1994:3,15). Hence, comprehension is seen as a by-product of reading and not as the main goal. As seen in the research project, this approach does work for average to high achieving children, because they can cope with most reading programmes. However, the low achievers are often left behind, because their limited literacy experiences have not enabled them to overcome the gaps in the teacher’s classroom programmes (Clay, 1991b:17) (see 2.5.1.1.1).

In the intervention sessions, the learners were able to generate their own sentences and learn to write their own words based on their personal interests or favourite books. Towards the end of the intervention, these new words, learnt through authentic, meaningful reading and writing situations, became part of their known vocabularies (see Addendum 4.1.vi & 4.2.viii).

The reason why slow-progress learners need a context of understanding to work from is for reading and writing to be made purposeful and comprehensible (Weaver, 1994:341). When learners work with isolated word items they struggle to make connections between the individual items, whereas the fast-progress learners find this to be a natural process. This is why most slow-progress learners need intensive, individual attention from a professional who is able to teach them to apply comprehension strategies in order to attain meaning from a text.

It was remarkable to observe the transformation that the intervention learners underwent from the beginning to the end of the intervention period. Their perceptions and understanding of reading and writing changed dramatically once they learned that the reason why we read is to understand and gain more knowledge from a text, and that each book carries a meaning (see Addendum 5.1.iv & 5.3.i). In terms of writing, they grasped that you write for a purpose, for example writing a letter to a friend or giving an explanation to someone (see Addendum 5.2.v). This was one of the most important changes – a paradigm shift – that had to take place in the learners’ minds, which then laid the foundation for further purposeful learning.

#### **4.7.7 Comprehension strategies used**

At the benchmark assessment the data indicated that all three learners were “handicapped” by their phonics programme in that they mainly used two strategies for dealing with unknown words, namely the word-attack/word-solving strategy, and making use of visual cues to gain meaning. Any other reading strategy they applied inconsistently. My main criticism against the phonics approach is that it does not teach children to become independent readers from the beginning by using reading strategies to improve their reading comprehension.

By the end of the intervention, it was encouraging to observe that the three intervention learners had acquired most of the essential, research-based reading (and writing) strategies needed to become successful independent readers and writers (Block & Duffy, 2008:22; Pinnell, 2001:5). They started acquiring these strategies within the first week of the intervention. In teaching for strategies, I used prompts (e.g. Now you read!/Does that make sense?/Does that look right/sound right?) and selected teaching points that arose naturally out of the texts the children were reading (see Addendum 5.3.x). Through careful observation I could identify the areas in which the specific learner struggled and use this to guide my planning process. In this way I made sure that I addressed the child’s problem by teaching him to become more independent through applying a new comprehension strategy (see Addendum 5.3.ii).

#### **4.7.8 Word work: Hearing dominant sounds, phonetic spelling, mismatches**

In the baseline assessment the data revealed that all three participants were able to identify some letters in unfamiliar words, like “b” in “bird” and “m” and “k” in “monkey” (see Addendum 4.1.i). For example, in the Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words task, William listened to the dominant sounds and wrote them down correctly, and mostly added Afrikaans interpretations of the vowels in between (see Addendum 4.1.i). At first all three learners were focused on letter-sound correlations, which meant that they only wrote down the sounds that they heard. Weaver

(1994) refers to this as the “random letter” developmental phase. Their spelling improved towards the middle of the intervention when they started grasping English spelling patterns and rules. Towards the end of the intervention it was clear that the participants’ spelling abilities and vocabularies had expanded and they were able to write quite a number of words with ease and accuracy. These words were acquired through numerous reading and writing opportunities and by practising how to write new words correctly in various ways, for example writing out the words in different colours, finding the words on the word wall, building new words with magnetic letters and making sentences with new words.

#### **4.7.9 Emotional influence**

Whilst conducting the research I became aware of the degree to which a child’s personal background situation and emotional stability/instability play a role in learning. Under the weight of failure he had accumulated over his school years, one of the learners was emotional at times during the sessions and hence struggled to cooperate. This emotional factor interfered with his ability to focus, as well as with my teaching. My responsibility was to create a consistent, stable and safe space within which this learner could optimise his learning (Section 4.5.1). It is important that teachers know that emotions drive what children remember or do not remember (Lyons, 2003). Emotion drives attention and attention drives learning and problem-solving (Lyons, 2003:58-65). For this reason it is important to remember that each individual’s emotional response to a situation differs. Therefore one must be sensitive to these varying emotional states and accommodate each learner as best one can. Observing the body language of a child reveals clues to the child’s inner feelings and state of mind. Emotional support and encouragement should therefore be provided for a child who has had bad experiences with reading. Encouragement and positive feedback stimulate feelings of success within the child and, in turn, connect positive feelings to the reading process.

Through this experience I learnt the importance of finding the balance between discipline and sympathy. A child feels safe when he knows his boundaries, and when they are applied without rigor or force. According to Duncan (Correspondence, 26 May 2010), a child needs to know where he stands with you and that he is not allowed to challenge your authority or decisions. He is allowed to make certain decisions, but the overall authority lies with the teacher/facilitator (Duncan, correspondence, 26 May 2010).

#### **4.7.10 Challenges of working with older learners**

I experienced various challenges when I worked with these older learners. First of all, they quickly became used to the general layout and design of the first set of levelled books that I used for reading. I therefore had to search for other graded texts from overseas that would trigger their interest and provide a good challenge. Secondly, these learners' academic workload also increased in grade three and they consequently were tired after school. As a result, they at times were tired during the intervention sessions, even though the sessions were only thirty minutes long. I had to counteract their tiredness by devising ways of keeping their interest, as discussed in the next paragraph.

They also soon became bored with the standard interactive writing tasks, so I had to devise other plans. I decided to incorporate electronic texts into the interactive writing section of the lesson, as well as short movie clips and simple scientific experiments, for example making static electricity with a balloon or colouring roses with food colouring, to engage them and make them excited about writing (see Addendum 5.1.ii). This resulted in me having to put in a lot of effort for every lesson, but as a result the learners thoroughly enjoyed the writing activities. After applying these tactics I experienced an immediate breakthrough in the learners' attitudes, as they became more eager to write and cooperate. This was a very positive change.

In this sense I had to break away from the set Reading Recovery® lesson format, as my circumstances differed from the preferred Reading Recovery® learning situation (see 1.4, 2.10). Even though I had to improvise, the results show that the intervention was successful, which suggests that the innovations I made, based on my specific context, had an important role to play in the intervention (see Section 5.3.7).

#### **4.8 COMPARISON OF INTERVENTION AND CONTROL GROUP ON THE OBSERVATION SURVEY OF EARLY LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT TASKS**

It is important to compare the intervention group with the control group in order to see whether the intervention group reached the average performance levels of the control group. If they did attain the same performance rates or higher, then the intervention was successful. The two groups will be compared according to their general performance on the five *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement Tasks*, namely the Letter Identification task, the Word test, the Writing Vocabulary test, the Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words task and, finally, the

Running Records. The intervention and control groups will be discussed separately and thereafter their results will be compared.

A quantitative comparative study was done on the numeric results of the control and intervention groups in the quantitative data analysis and interpretation section (see 4.11), which will strengthen the argument in Section 4.7.

According to Clay (1991:226) and Calkins *et al.* (2005:93), if beginner readers are taught to use reading strategies, such as directional control, drawing on background knowledge, using visual cues, using some conventions of print, rereading and self-correcting, cross-checking two types of cues, using first letters and word endings, correcting medial sounds and getting to new words by analogy with known words, they might use their existing language knowledge and different context cues and get most of the essential meaning of stories even if they do not know many of the words (Weaver, 1994:41).

It seemed as if all three intervention learners learnt most of these critical skills/strategies that a competent reader needs to acquire within the first year of reading (see Table 4.1.). It is important to mention that the intervention learners only started learning English formally in grade three and therefore they started with level 3 books – which are suitable for grade one learners. As a result of the intervention, as well as their strong linguistic foundation in Afrikaans, all three intervention learners quickly advanced to grade level texts within a period of ten weeks, by when they could read level 12 books, which are suitable for grade three learners. According to Reading Recovery®, learners become transitional readers when they start reading level 12 books, which is the stage before they become independent or self-extending readers. The self-extending stage is reached when learners start reading level 18 books and up (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:65). The essential skills needed for reading successfully within the first year of reading acquisition, mentioned below in Table 4.1, therefore is of importance for the intervention learners, even though they only started acquiring these skills in grade three.



**Table 4.1: Important reading skills to acquire in the first year of reading acquisition**

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**Critical skills to become a competent reader (Clay, 1991b:226)**

- Directional control;
  - How to use your background knowledge;
  - Using visual cues to help with reading;
  - Using conventions of print, taking risks;
  - Word by word reading;
  - Rereading and self-correcting;
  - Searching for meaning;
  - Cross-checking two types of cues;
  - Using letter-sound relationships;
  - Using first letters and word endings;
  - Building a vocabulary of high-frequency words.
- 

The three intervention learners attained all the above-mentioned skills and were able to apply them to texts on grade level (i.e. level 12 Reading Recovery® level), after a period of twelve weeks. At the end of the intervention, all three intervention learners moved up even more reading levels. One ended on level 12, whereas the other two participants ended on level 14, and all these levels are part of the transitional stage (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:65).

**4.8.1 Letter Identification****4.8.1.1 Intervention group**

At the start of the intervention, the participants knew their letters quite well, since they already been acquiring letter knowledge in Afrikaans since grade one. The alphabet letters are the same in Afrikaans and English, but many of the letter-names differ. Therefore common confusions between Afrikaans and English letter names that they experienced were the following (see Table 4.2):

**Table 4.2: Common confusions with letter names**

c/k	or	c/s;
g/q	or	p/q;
g/j;	z/x;	v/f
a/i	or	i/u;

All three learners found the letters in Table 4.3 difficult:

**Table 4.3: Difficult letters (intervention & control groups)**

<b>Consonants:</b>	v	y	w	q	f	c	j	h	r	s	u
<b>Vowels:</b>	i	u									

It is interesting to note that these learners found most of the same letter-sound sets difficult as those documented in a large-scale study with Reading Recovery® children in New Zealand (see Table 4.4). The study distinguished between a large “easy-to-learn” group and a small “hard-to-learn” letter-sound group (Clay, 2002:89). It is evident that most learners, therefore, find some letters more difficult than others. This means that current teaching practices should be reflected upon to see whether there are more efficient ways of teaching letters. The data from my research suggest that there are easier ways to teach letters than the A-to-Z approach (Clay, 2001:90). Figure 4.4 lists the letter-sound set that many learners find difficult:

**Table 4.4: Most difficult to learn letter-sound sets (Clay, 2002:89)**

<b>Most difficult to learn letter-sound sets:</b>											
<b>Consonants:</b>	V	J	Y	W	G	O					
<b>Vowels:</b>	U										

Since the learners in my intervention programme were in grade three, they had already learned the alphabet in Afrikaans. As mentioned, one of their problems was that they became confused between the English/Afrikaans letter names, because the letter names sounded different in each

language. In the intervention sessions I therefore focused on the letters the learners struggled with and taught them to identify these letters through authentic writing activities. Towards the end of the study, the three intervention learners knew the majority of the letter names and could identify them in English rather than in Afrikaans.

#### *4.8.1.2 Control group*

At the time of the baseline assessment the control group also struggled with the letter-sound confusions that are shown in Table 4.2. The four control group participants also became confused between English and Afrikaans letter names, even in the post-test assessment. Specific letter names they struggled to remember in English are listed in Table 4.3.

#### *4.8.1.3 Comparing the groups*

Even though both groups could identify almost all of the letters of the alphabet, the main difference became apparent in the post-test assessment, when the intervention learners knew most of the letter names in English, whereas the control group participants were not as familiar with the English letter names and made Afrikaans substitutions when they failed to recall the English names.

### **4.8.2 Word test**

#### *4.8.2.1 Intervention group*

The participants all received turns to read three alternative word lists (i.e. list A, B or C) on the three separate assessment occasions. In the first assessment, all three intervention subjects were able to identify and read most of the short (vowel-consonant-vowel) high-frequency words, for example *for, at, get, we, are, am car, not, and, he, up, in* and *will*. This was a probable reflection of the phonics approach followed in the classroom, in terms of which learners are expected to memorise phonics word lists, initially consisting of short, high-frequency words that rhyme with each other. As the learners progress, these word lists gradually become more complex and contain multisyllabic words.

After analysing all three assessments of each participant in the intervention group, it became evident that the general words they could not read were "*mother,*" "*father,*" "*where*" and "*please,*" seeing that they were multisyllabic words that were longer than the general consonant-vowel-consonant words they were confronted with in their phonics lists (see Addendum 4.2.ii). Another observation made during the baseline assessment was that the intervention learners

pronounced the words with a strong Afrikaans accent. In the post-test assessment they could all read the words with proper English pronunciations.

#### 4.8.2.2 *Control group*

In the baseline assessment, all four participants in the control group pronounced the words in the Word test with an Afrikaans pronunciation (Ekwall & Shanker, 1993:19). The control group also struggled to read words that were longer than vowel-consonant-vowel words. Once again, this shows a possible influence from the phonics approach. Nevertheless, in the post-test they all improved and could read almost all the words accurately with the correct English pronunciation.

#### 4.8.2.3 *Comparing the groups*

From the data it was clear that both groups progressed in their ability to identify and read unknown words void of a context. In the beginning, both groups struggled with the proper English pronunciation of words, but in the post-test assessment all seven learners had learnt to pronounce words with an English accent. These findings indicate that both the intervention programme, as well as the classroom programme, helped to improve the learners' English pronunciation. According to the two groups' numeric results, however, the intervention group had to progress at a faster rate to attain the same performance level of the control group (see Section 4.10.3.2 & Fig. 4.5).

### 4.8.3 *Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words*

#### 4.8.3.1 *Intervention group*

At first, the intervention group spelled English words predominantly using Afrikaans spelling patterns, but halfway through the intervention they started segmenting words themselves, and used the basic English spelling rules to the point where many of their high-frequency words were spelled correctly.

In all three Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words assessments they could all write *the, it, get, on, let, stop, is* correctly, and in the rest of the sentences they spelled most of the words phonetically correct, which was a big improvement.

#### 4.8.3.2 *Control group*

In the baseline assessment, all four control group participants wrote "tyk" instead of "take", "skool" instead of "school", and other frequent mistakes were "hiem/him, gouieng/going, de/the, hew/have, toe/to, toedy/today". In the control group the "oe" was a common substitute for "o", for

example they wrote “toe” for “to”, or “ou” for the “o” in “home” and “ie” for “i” in “him”. The reason might have been that these Afrikaans letters/letter combinations represented the sounds they heard when pronouncing the English words. The exception was one girl who read a lot at home. It was evident throughout all her assessments that she had an advantage over the rest in terms of English spelling, grammar, comprehension, reading fluency and pronunciation. The incorrect spelling patterns were evidence of the strong influence of their home language. They were only familiar with Afrikaans spelling patterns at the baseline assessment.

#### *4.8.3.3 Comparing the groups*

From the baseline assessment results it was evident that Afrikaans had a strong influence on both groups’ spelling. This meant that both groups transferred their knowledge of Afrikaans spelling patterns to record phonemes that sounded the same in Afrikaans and English.

The intervention group specifically made great improvement in terms of their English spelling. Throughout the intervention it was clear how they picked up English spelling patterns. This transition in spelling happened because I made use of explicit teaching points after book readings and authentic writing activities, and I directed them to find help from the word wall and to practise writing new words in different ways. Some of the ways in which they learnt new words were to build new words with magnetic letters, write out words in different colours, make sentences with new words, break new words into their syllables, look for the new words in their written work and write them out. Towards the end of the intervention, both groups’ English spelling abilities had improved to the point where new English spelling patterns started governing their writing.

### **4.8.4 Writing Vocabulary**

#### *4.8.4.1 Intervention group*

In the Writing Vocabulary task, the learners were expected to write down all the English words they knew and all three learners mostly wrote short, high-frequency words that rhymed with each other (see Addendum 4.2.ii, 4.3.ii). Many of these words were most probably part of their phonics word lists. Their thinking patterns were most likely driven by the phonics approach. Even after several weeks of intensive intervention that consisted partly of authentic writing and reading activities, they still struggled to think of words other than their phonics word lists. To them, reading was to read words in isolation and writing was to write isolated words with a pen (see Addendum 3.2.i,ii,iii). Initially it did not matter to them if a text made sense, they only

focused on memorising the necessary phonics word lists and doing well in the test, rather than learning new words through reading and creating their own, new texts.

In addition, the three intervention participants could not think of more than 15 words by themselves. The phonics approach used in the classroom seemed to constrain their creative and logic thinking skills and deprived them of opportunities to read books that could help them generate words. Another factor that might have influenced their limited word vocabulary was their lack of exposure to English as a whole. The school environment was predominantly Afrikaans, which suggests that their teachers as well as their friends/peers were generally Afrikaans speaking. As a result they rarely had contact with English-speaking people. This means that it is important that English additional language learners should have many opportunities to read English books.

In the writing vocabulary test the learners once again spelled most of their English words using their knowledge of Afrikaans spelling patterns, as illustrated in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Afrikaans influence on spelling**

'pieg'	instead of	'pig'
'san'	instead of	'sun'
'vet'	instead of	'fat'
'grouap'	instead of	'grow-up'

This was another indication that they had little exposure to English reading and writing experiences prior to entering grade three, as they were not familiar with typical English spelling patterns. Towards the end of the intervention, the participants' writing vocabularies expanded to a large degree. Their vocabularies included adventurous words that they acquired from the readers and from their writing pieces. These words were longer than the typical short phonics words. The intervention participants were able to write sentences that they dictated themselves and their knowledge of grammar and sentence structure increased as well.

#### 4.8.4.2 *Control group*

The control group experienced similar difficulties. They also struggled to generate their own words in the Writing Vocabulary task. This might have been evidence of the limited way in which

they were trained to think when learning to read and write in the classroom. The phonics influence was also evident in this group's responses, as they also produced short sight words, such as those in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Phonics-inspired words**

'hug, dug, sun, pup'
or
'rat, fat, cat, bat'

#### *4.8.4.3 Comparing the groups*

One of the differences between the two groups was that the intervention group attained the ability to produce authentic words that they had acquired through meaningful reading and writing experiences, whereas the control group continued to write words such as “cool, book, look, foot” and “hen, pen, pet, box, fox” in the post-test.

### **4.8.5 Running Records**

#### *4.8.5.1 Intervention group*

In the Running Records assessment, each participant struggled with unknown words. Initially all three intervention participants possessed very few strategies for solving words. In the baseline assessment, all of them applied the “word-attack” strategy, which meant that when they got to an unknown word, they would break the word into syllables, sounding it out to themselves in order to read it. Another strategy they applied was over-use of visual cues to attain meaning. Therefore, I challenged the learners by providing them with new texts on a continual basis, when they were ready for them, so that their initial strategies could be expanded upon and improved (Short, 1991:105). I also gave them prompts while they were reading, which helped them to focus on various language cueing systems they would otherwise have missed (Woolsey, 1991:196).

A strategy such as self-correction was almost non-existent during the baseline assessment, as were monitoring, rereading, correcting mismatches or questioning. This changed dramatically towards the mid-test assessment. On the whole, it was also clear that the learners' first language could be used as a resource for helping them read and write in their second language.

#### 4.8.5.2 *Control group*

Throughout the intervention the control group mainly used visual cues (word-attack skills) for solving words. They also did very little self-correcting or rereading during the Running Records, which might indicate that they did not primarily focus on reading for meaning. Three of the control group participants read fairly well and understood what they read, even though they did not reread sentences or self-correct their mistakes, but the fourth learner basically “barked at print” and was not sure what she read when I asked her questions afterwards. On this note, DeFord (1991:85) mentions that a child who continues to focus only on print will not develop a self-improving system or be able to learn to read through reading. This is why I aimed to teach the intervention learners to read with understanding from the beginning and to stop and find textual cues when they did not understand what they were reading.

#### 4.8.5.3 *Comparing the groups*

The difference between the two groups was that the control group could basically only apply one or two strategies throughout all three assessments, whereas the reading behaviour of the intervention group developed throughout the intervention as they continuously acquired and applied new comprehension strategies. They used these problem-solving strategies to search for meaning in and construct meaning from a text (Clay, 1985; Pinnell, 2001:6). Clay (1991:264) explains that a child needs strategies to help him improve his reading by detecting errors and correcting it. Therefore, the more strategies the intervention participants acquired, the more their reading improved.

### **4.9 SUMMARY**

From this case study I have made valuable discoveries and gained useful insights. In summary, the main goals of the intervention were for slow-progress learners to reach the average reading level of their peers by attaining effective strategies for working on texts (Clay, 1993:15); and secondly, to confirm the effectiveness of an intervention based on Reading Recovery® principles in the South African context. As the qualitative analysis and interpretive discussions revealed, these goals were achieved, despite the evident influence of the classroom approach. The main differences between the two groups started surfacing in the mid-test assessment and continued thereafter.

It was also clear from the observations that the intervention participants had gained inherent comprehension strategies that they could apply to any text on their level of competence. Moreover, their definitions of reading and writing changed over time as they realised the



importance of reading for meaning, instead of reading words in isolation (see Addendum 5.1.iv, vi, vii). The use of levelled texts helped these learners to accelerate their reading abilities by experiencing a sense of success each day after reading a book with accuracy and understanding. The levelled texts supported the learners in the reading process, as they provided specially levelled texts for each stage of reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:8). Therefore, the use of finely levelled books within a specially designed programme would be highly recommended for South African educators, provided they are trained to use them correctly.

It is important to reflect upon the possibility of the classroom phonics approach having some positive influences on the intervention participants' progress, apart from the intervention itself. For example, their definite knowledge of letter names, their ability to sound out words and their knowledge of basic concepts of print are proof of a positive influence. Therefore, the phonics approach did not only have an unconstructive influence on the intervention participants and the possibility remains that the intervention might have been building on some of the phonics principles taught by the teacher. Phonics therefore is an essential part of learning to read and write, but this study has also found that phonics taught in an inflexible sequence does not always benefit those learners who struggle with reading and writing (see 4.7.1, 4.8.2.1 and 4.8.4.1). For these reasons I am not set against the teaching of phonics, but rather against the sequenced way in which phonics is taught in many classrooms (Nathanson, 2008).

Lastly, the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* assessment tasks contributed greatly to the success of the intervention, as I was enabled to monitor the work and improvement of each participant and document the changes in their reading and writing behaviours over time. This was possible because the assessment results not only provided quantitative numeric data, but also informative qualitative data that revealed why the child achieved a specific result. From the informative data I could plan specifically for each new session and, in this way, provide effective teaching opportunities for each child that focused on each one's specific needs.

## **SECTION B: QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **4.10 OBSERVATION SURVEY: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The qualitative data has been interpreted in Section A, and the quantitative data results will be discussed here in order to support the qualitative data findings. The use of statistical box plot

graphs and other graphic representations of the quantitative data will strengthen my data interpretation, as visual data representations are logically presented and easier to access than written interpretations.

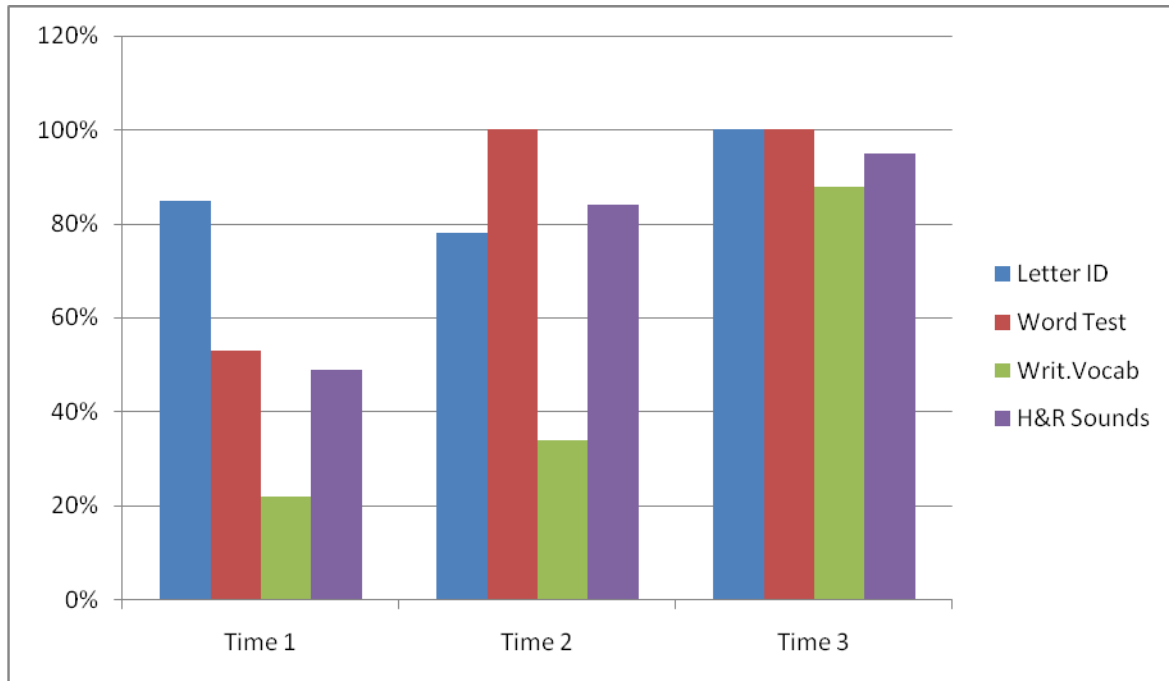
As mentioned previously, the main research tool I used to gain the quantitative data results was the Observation Survey assessments tasks (Clay, 2002:141), which provide one with numeric results as well as qualitative information about the child's performance (see 3.3.4.1). Three formal assessments were conducted during the intervention period – a baseline assessment, a mid-test assessment and a post-test assessment. On these three occasions both the intervention group, consisting of three low-progress learners, and the control group, consisting of four average-performing learners, were assessed. The aim was to determine whether the intervention group improved to the average performance levels of the control group. On this matter, Katz and Carlisle (2009:331) confirm that, by comparing the post-test and pre-test results for the reading and language subtests, one can compute the effect of the intervention on the learners.

Lastly, many researchers have been influenced by their personal knowledge of participants and, accordingly, anticipate that their assessment results will match the learners' profiles or past performance. But Gersten *et al.* (1997:467) state that teachers and learners are not machines that will produce the exact results in the manner we anticipate. Many a time the results turn out differently than expected. I therefore aspired to remain as objective as possible towards the participants' performance outcomes and results.

#### **4.10.1 Observation Survey Task results**

First, I will discuss the individual data results of each of the three intervention learners to obtain knowledge of their improvement, solely according to their quantitative numeric results on four of the five *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* tasks. The Running Records task could not be measured in the same manner as the rest of the assessments, since each learner read different levelled texts at each assessment and no fixed variable consequently could be used as a measurement. The Running Records task will therefore be discussed in Section 4.10.3.5.

#### 4.10.1.1 William



**Figure 4.1: William – Improvement in OS Tasks**

Figure 4.1. reveals William's improvement in the Letter Identification task (blue), the Word test (red), the Writing Vocabulary task (green) and the Hearing and Recording Sounds task (purple) over the three assessment times, time1 (baseline), time 2 (mid-test) and time 3 (post-test) (see 4.6).

#### Letter Identification

At first testing, William scored 46/54, then 42/54 in the mid-test assessment and lastly 54/54 in the post-test. William scored lower in his second assessment because he became confused between the English and Afrikaans letter names. He knew all the letters in Afrikaans, but could not remember all the correct letter names in English. In the mid-assessment he still struggled with some confusions, like "h/y"; "c/k"; "i/a"; 'v/w'; j/g". These were all rectified towards the end, when he scored 100% with ease in the post-test.

#### Word Reading

William improved from 8/15 in the baseline assessment to 15/15 in both the mid- and post-tests. From these scores it is evident that his reading skills improved, as well as his reading vocabulary of high-frequency words.

### Writing Vocabulary

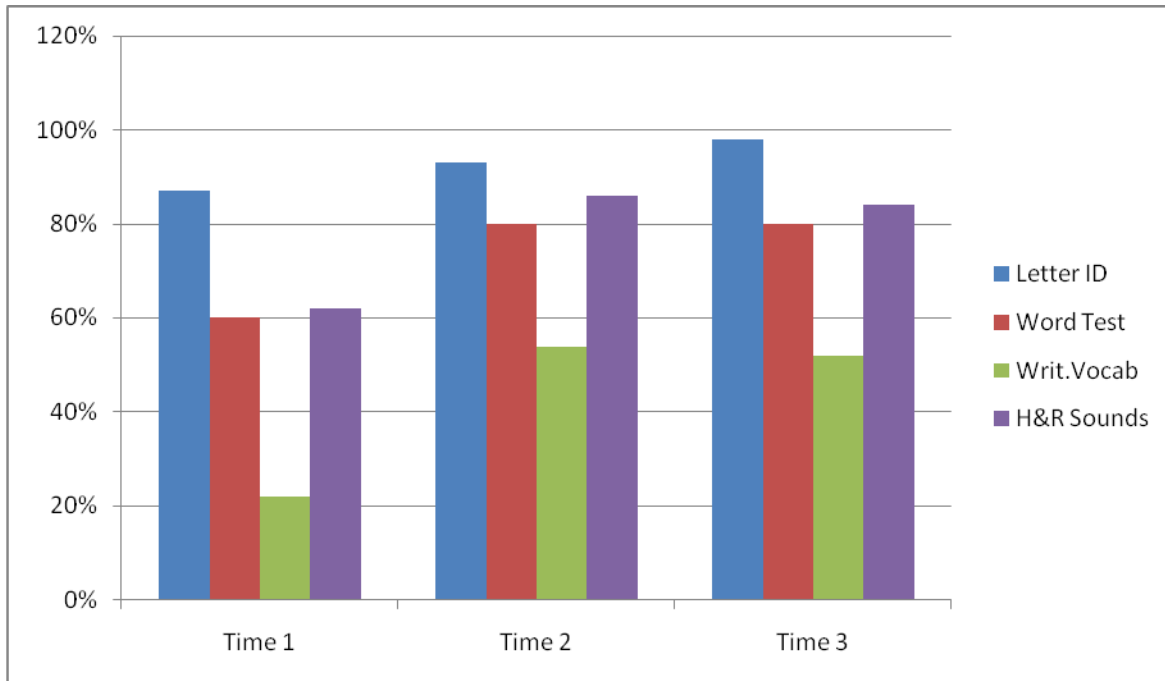
An impressive change occurred within a month's time. In the first assessment, he wrote 11 words and in the second assessment he wrote 17 words by himself. This indicates that William's vocabulary was expanding and thus his understanding of English was increasing. At this stage, the data indicated that he mostly wrote three-letter phonics words that he learnt in his classroom programme, instead of writing the words he acquired naturally in the intervention sessions.

A major improvement occurred towards the end of the intervention, when William scored 44/50 words (88%). This was evidence of the positive effect the intervention had on William. William's score therefore increased by 54%, from 34% to 88%. He also transitioned from writing predominantly phonics words to writing the words he acquired in the intervention sessions (see Addendum 4.1.vi). These words were more adventurous and usually longer than the typical vowel-consonant-vowel sight words learnt in the phonics programme.

### Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words

In the first assessment, he scored 18/37, of which all the words were spelled using Afrikaans spelling conventions (see Addendum 4.1.ii). In the second assessment he scored 31/37 (see Addendum 4.1.iv). The words that were unknown to him in the dictated sentence he spelled using a phonemic strategy. He identified all the dominant consonants. It was only the vowels that he struggled with. In the final assessment his score improved to 35/37, which was a most pleasing result. William's writing vocabulary expanded to such a degree that he knew a large number of high-frequency words and became more familiar with English spelling rules, which helped him to spell unknown words more accurately. For example, he grasped that the Afrikaans "k" is mostly replaced by "c", as in "cat" or "cake" (see Addendum 5.1.viii).

#### 4.10.1.2 Cameron



**Figure 4.2: Cameron - Improvement in OS tasks**

#### Letter Identification

Cameron's score improved from 47/54 in the baseline assessment to 50/54 in the mid-test assessment. In the post-test he achieved a score of 52/54. Like William, Cameron got confused between the English and Afrikaans letter names. He knew all the letters in Afrikaans, but could not provide all the correct names in English. In the mid-test it was clear that he still confused some letter-sound correspondences, for example "h/y"; "c/k"; "v/w"; "j/g". Most of these confusions were cleared away by the end of the intervention and he was able to identify most of the letters of the alphabet in English.

#### Word Reading

In the baseline assessment he scored 9/15, and for both the mid- and post-test assessments he scored 12/15, which was satisfactory (see Addendum 4.2.i). In the Word Reading assessments the words were devoid of any context, which made it more difficult for him to read. Nevertheless, his word reading assessment score improved by 20%. This meant that his core vocabulary of words expanded, and his word reading skills improved.

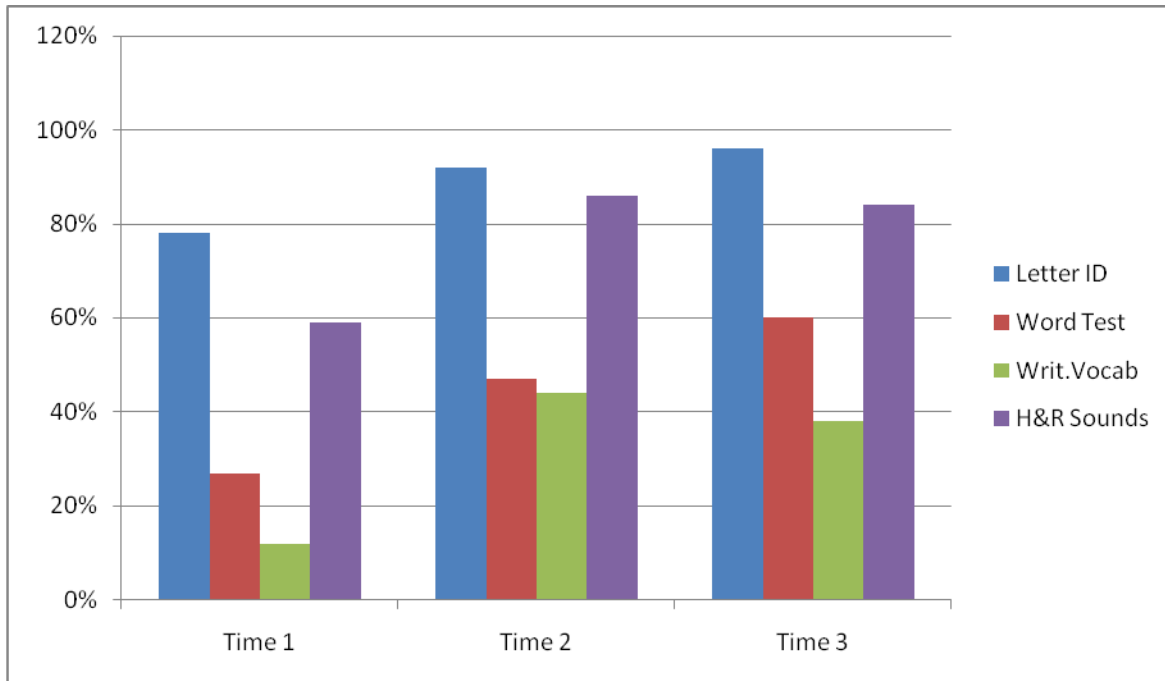
### Writing Vocabulary

This assessment was scored out of 50. After three months in grade 3, Cameron could write only 11 English words (see Addendum 4.2.i), while in the second and third assessments he wrote 27 and 26 words respectively. In the first two assessments Cameron only wrote down short phonics words. He struggled to think of words other than those he memorised from phonics lists. By the mid-test assessment, Cameron was able to start thinking of other, more adventurous words that he had acquired during the intervention sessions. They differed from phonics words in that they were usually longer. The learners also generally took greater risks to write these words instead of than phonics words. In the post-test, therefore, Cameron could write down many of the words he had learned during the authentic reading and writing opportunities in the intervention sessions, with very little dependence on regularly spelled phonics words.

### Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words

At first Cameron scored 23/37, of which all the words were spelled using Afrikaans spelling conventions. In the second and third assessments he scored 32/37 and 31/37, which were satisfactory scores and most of the words were spelled correctly (see Addendum 4.2.v). The words he was unable to spell in the dictated sentence were spelled phonetically correct. Towards the end of the intervention Cameron still struggled with identifying the “*sh*” sound and the “*w*” in “*will*”, because the “*sh*” sound does not exist in Afrikaans and the “*w*” represents a different sound in English than in Afrikaans. In the mid- and post-tests he was able to identify dominant sounds in words with ease and his core of vocabulary words expanded.

#### 4.10.1.3 Eric



**Figure 4.3: Eric - Improvement in OS tasks**

#### Letter Identification

Eric scored 42/54 in the baseline assessment, 50/54 in the mid-test assessment and 52/54 in the post-test assessment, which was highly satisfactory. Initially he became confused with the new English letter names. He still experienced some confusions, like “s/c”; “i/a”; “j/g” towards the end of the intervention, because the letters sounded similar in many English words. The only letters he did not know in the post-test assessment were “X” and “Z,” as he did not use these letters regularly.

#### Word Reading

Eric improved from 4/15 to 7/15 to 9/15 in his last assessment. From the post-test score it was evident that his reading skills had improved. Towards the end of the intervention he still struggled with reading words that were longer than four letters. However, his core vocabulary of English words expanded quickly within the short intervention period.

#### Writing Vocabulary

In the baseline assessment, Eric scored 6/50 in the Writing Vocabulary test (see Addendum 4.3.ii). Towards the mid-test his vocabulary expanded and he wrote 22 words, of which I prompted 15, as he was unable to think of other English words by himself. This indicated that Eric’s understanding of English and his core vocabulary increased significantly. In the last

assessment he scored 19/50, which was not satisfactory, but nevertheless Eric improved from the initial baseline assessment score.

#### Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words

Eric scored 22/37 in the baseline assessment, and all the words were spelled using Afrikaans spelling conventions. In the mid-test and post-test assessments he scored 32/37 and 31/37 respectively (see Addendum 4.3.iv). He spelled most of the words in the dictated sentence correctly, and used phonemic spelling strategies for the words that were unknown to him. He identified all the dominant consonants and mostly struggled to identify the in-between vowel-sounds. Overall, the scores indicated that most of the improvement occurred between the baseline and mid-test assessments, which revealed that Eric's knowledge of English spelling increased more from baseline to mid-test assessment and stabilised towards the post-test assessment.

#### **4.10.2 General comments on learner performance**

It was evident that there was great variability between the participants' performance in the assessments. Each learner had strengths in different areas of literacy. This is why individualised attention in the intervention helped to improve their individual performance in the various literacy aspects.

Another interesting observation at the time of the baseline assessment was that the highest scores out of the five Observation Survey assessments were for the Letter Identification task (blue). It therefore was evident that the participants knew their letters. However, the lowest scores at baseline were for the Writing Vocabulary task (green), which indicated that the learners' sufficient letter knowledge did not help them to write words or build their core vocabulary of high-frequency words. Therefore, it seems as if they were still unable to apply their letter knowledge to building words and sentences.

Furthermore, it is clear from the graphs that Cameron performed better in all five assessments at baseline, and therefore I expected him to outperform the other participants in the post-test assessment. The graphs indicate that this was not the case. His performance stayed fairly constant from the mid-test to the post-test. This could be ascribed to his emotions that affected his learning negatively. Therefore, the role of emotions in learning should be taken into account when working with children.

#### **4.10.3 Group comparison of statistical results for the five Observation Survey tasks**

The numerical data results, obtained from the Observation Survey assessments, were given to the Centre for Statistical Consultation at the University of Stellenbosch for computation. The



data was inserted into a statistical program that was able to produce ANOVA and LSD tables, as well as box plot graphs, which indicated the trends and effects of the data results in the form of visual representations. More specifically, a statistical comparison was done between the control and intervention groups at three different time slots, time 1, time 2 and time 3, in order to see whether the main research goal was achieved (see 4.6). Mixed model repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted, with child (nested within the two groups) taken as random effect and time, group as fixed effects. Thus, three fixed effects were tested with the following hypotheses, namely:

- time null hypothesis: average for all the time points is equal regardless of group
- group null hypothesis: average of the two groups is equal regardless of time
- time\*group interaction null hypothesis: the differences between groups (if any) are equal for all time points

A 5% significance level ( $p < 0.05$ ) was used as the guideline for significant effects (rejecting the null hypothesis). In the case of significant (or near significant) effects, Fisher least significant difference (LSD) *post hoc* tests were conducted. In the case of not significant effects on some of the Observation Survey tasks, LSD Time Effect tests were conducted to test whether both groups combined increased in their performance level over the three time slots. Specifically, the Fisher test compared the performance levels of the two groups in four of the five Observation Survey assessment tasks.

This section will be divided into five parts according to the five Observation Survey tasks. The Running Records task will be assessed last (see 4.10.2.5) with a different set of graphs, seeing that the levelled books read by the participants differed from learner to learner. Therefore no fixed variable could be used to produce similar box plot graphs for the Running Record tasks.

#### 4.10.3.1 Letter Identification task

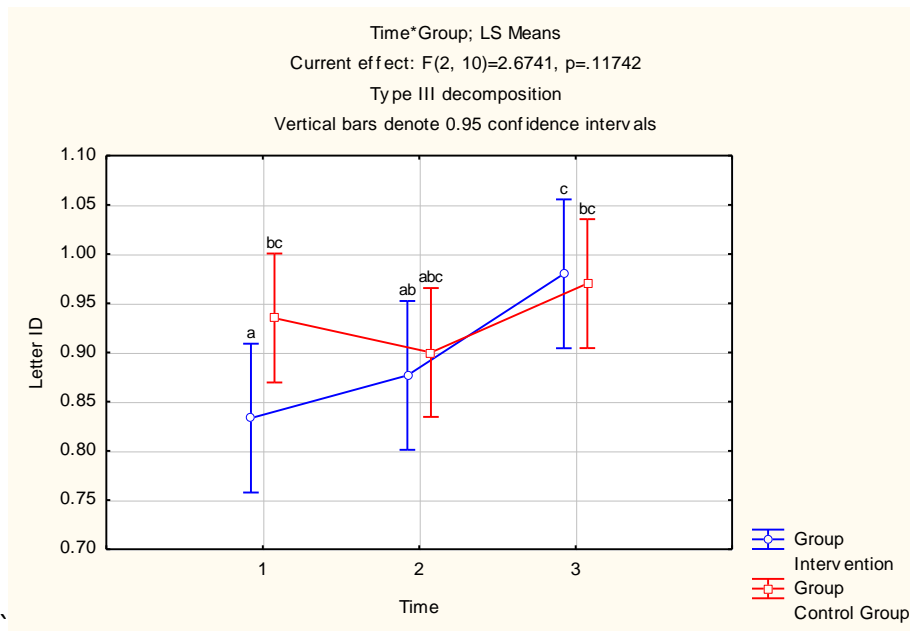
**Table 4.7: ANOVA table for Letter Identification task**

<b>Effect</b>	<b>F-statistic</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Time	F(2,10)=8.56	<0.01
Group	F(1,5)=1.23	0.31
Group*Time	F(2,10)=2.67	0.12

The time\*group interaction p-value of 0.12 in Table 4.7 indicates that the interaction's post hoc analysis should be investigated further.

**Table 4.8: Fisher LSD for Letter Identification (Time\*Group)**

Time	Group	Letter ID Mean	Letter ID Standard Error	Letter ID -95.00%	Letter ID +95.00%
1	Intervention	0.83	0.03	0.76	0.91
1	Control Group	0.94	0.03	0.87	1.00
2	Intervention	0.87	0.34	0.80	0.95
2	Control Group	0.90	0.03	0.83	0.97
3	Intervention	0.98	0.34	0.90	1.06
3	Control Group	0.97	0.03	0.90	1.04

**Figure 4.4: Time\*Group; LS Means (Letter Identification)**

The 95% confidence intervals indicated in the graph show the boundaries within which the averages lie, taking into account the alpha value of 0.05.

In Figure 4.4, the intervention and control groups were compared at time 1 (baseline), time 2 (mid-test) and time 3 (post-test). It is clear that there was a difference between the averages of the two groups at time 1, although not statistically significant. The intervention group (blue) at time 1 measured lower than the control group (red), which points out that the intervention learners' performance in the baseline assessment initially was lower than that of the control group. The reason for the difference was that the intervention group's literacy performance in

the classroom was initially lower than the average performance levels of the control group participants.

At times 2 and 3, the 95% confidence intervals of the intervention and control groups overlapped, which indicates that the intervention group's performance level increased to the same level as that of the control group at times 2 and 3. Therefore, overall, the intervention group had to improve more than the control group to reach the same level of performance.

Another important observation is that the intervention group's performance increased by 15% from time 1 to time 3, whereas the control group stayed constant, seeing that all three control group averages did not differ significantly. Therefore, one can deduct that the increase in the intervention group could be attributed mainly to the intervention.

In conclusion, at time 1 the intervention group and control group differed significantly, but at time 3 the control and intervention groups achieved the same level. Therefore, the intervention group attained their goal of reaching the average level of the control group, which was the desired outcome.

#### 4.10.3.2 Word test assessment

**Table 4.9: ANOVA table for Word test assessment**

<b>Effect</b>	<b>F-statistic</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Time	3.55	0.07
Group	1.84	0.23
Time*Group	1.18	0.35

Table 4.9 indicates that the p-value for the time\*group interaction was not significant (i.e. >0.05). There also was not a statistically significant difference between the two groups' performance levels, seeing that the p-value for the two groups was 0.23 (> 0.05). Therefore, the LSD Time Effect was investigated in order to see whether the two groups combined increased in their overall performance from baseline to post-test assessment. Table 4.9 indicates that, over time, an increase in performance occurred from baseline to post-test assessment, although this was not strictly significant ( $p = 0.07$ ).

**Table 4.10: Fisher LSD for Word test (Time)**

Time	Word test Mean	Word test standard error	Word test -95.00%	Word test +95.00%
1	0.62	0.74	0.45	0.78
2	0.80	0.74	0.64	0.97
3	0.83	0.74	0.66	0.99

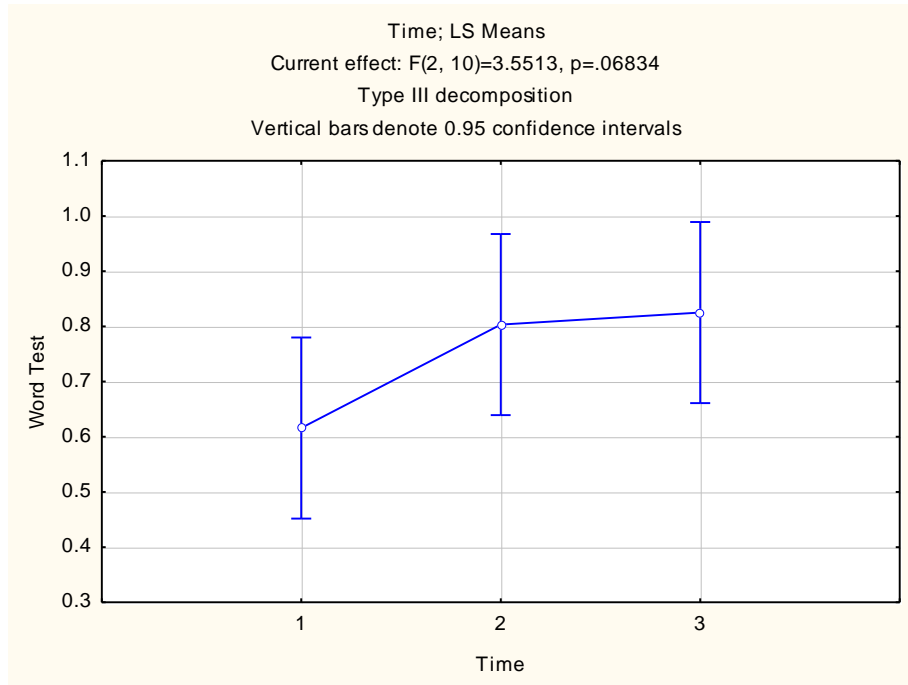
**Figure 4.5: Time; LS Means (Word test)**

Figure 4.5 reveals that there was a trend for an increase in the two groups' combined Word test results from time 1 to time 2, but that it remained constant from time 2 to time 3. Therefore, the graph in Figure 4.5 indicates that the intervention most probably had a positive influence on the intervention group, since the intervention participants had to increase in their levels of performance to be able to measure on the same performance level as the control group.

#### 4.10.3.3 Writing Vocabulary task

**Table 4.11: ANOVA table for Writing Vocabulary task**

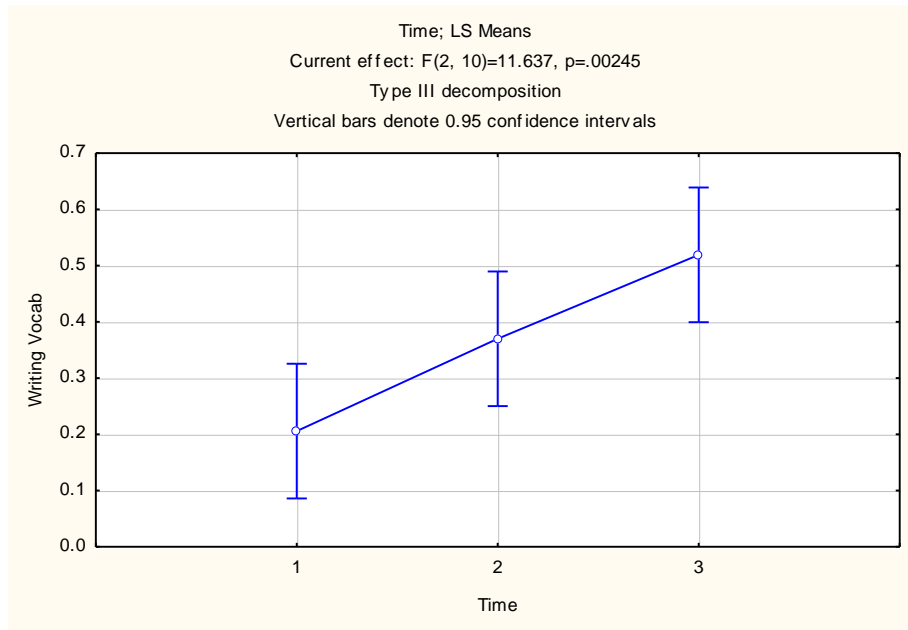
<b>Effect</b>	<b>F-statistic</b>	<b>p-value</b>
- Time	- 11.63	- <0.01
- Group	- 1.17	- 0.33
- Time*Group	- 1.32	- 0.31

The p-value for the time\*group interaction in Table 4.11 was not statistically significant (i.e. > 0.05). Therefore, the Time LS Means graph was investigated in order to see whether the two groups combined increased overall in their performance in the Writing Vocabulary task from baseline to post-test assessment.

However, it should be borne in mind when one looks at the qualitative data that, towards the end of the intervention programme, the intervention participants were able to spell a large number of words correctly, as well as use these words in their own dictated sentences (see 4.8.4).

**Table 4.12: Fisher LSD for Writing Vocabulary test (Time)**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Writing Vocab Test Mean</b>	<b>Writing Vocab Test Standard Error</b>	<b>Writing Vocab Test -95.00%</b>	<b>Writing Vocab Test +95.00%</b>
1	0.62	0.74	0.45	0.78
2	0.80	0.74	0.64	0.97
3	0.83	0.74	0.66	0.99



**Figure 4.6: Time; LS Means (Writing Vocabulary Test)**

There was an increasing trend for the two groups' combined averages from time slots 1 to 2 and from 2 to 3, as shown in Figure 4.6. According to Table 4.12, the two groups increased from 0.20 at time 1 to 0.37 at time 2 to 0.52 at time 3. Thus, a 17% increase from time 1 to 2 and a 15% increase from time 2 to 3 took place. The final average percentage of 51% for the two combined groups was not as good as expected, and shows that the participants' word vocabulary was still below average toward the end of the research period. In the Writing Vocabulary assessment test, the learners were expected to write down all the words they could think of in a short period of time. None of the participants (control and intervention groups) could achieve more than 55%, except one intervention participant who achieved 88% in the post-test assessment. One of the reasons for the low scores was that only the correctly spelled words were scored, and not the phonetically spelled words. Secondly, it was expected that English additional language learners would not spell as well in English as in Afrikaans. This assessment could have been more successful if more time was available to continue with the intervention.

#### 4.10.3.4 Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words

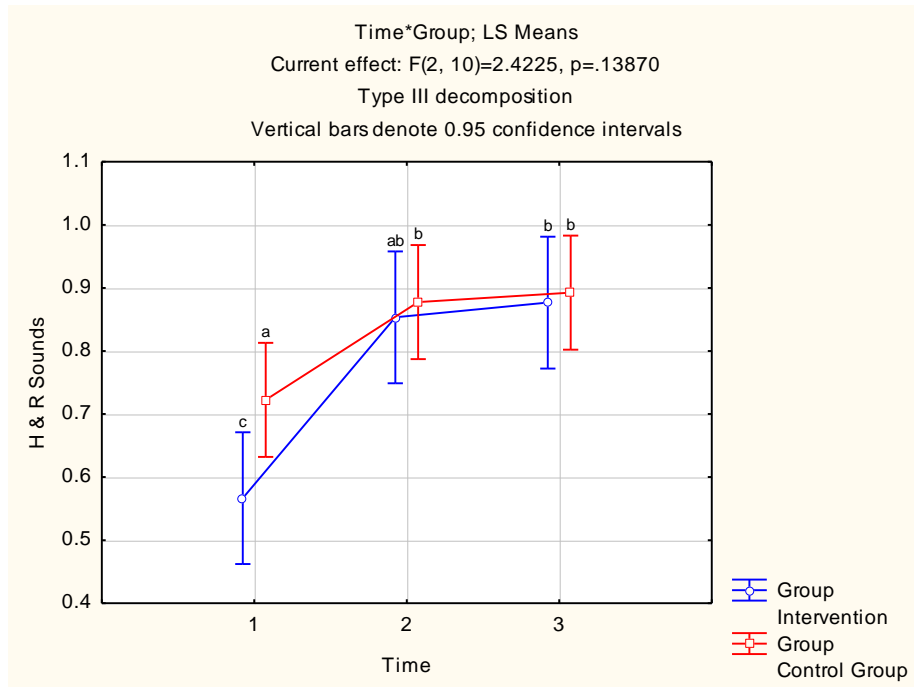
**Table 4.13: ANOVA table for Hearing and Recording Sounds**

<b>Effect</b>	<b>F-statistic</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Time	27.95	<0.01
Group	1.97	0.21
Time*Group	2.42	0.14

The time\*group effect on the Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words task indicated a positive trend, and therefore the time\*group LS Means graph with the Fisher LSD table was investigated to see how the two groups improved separately in their performance in this task.

**Table 4.14: Fisher LSD for Hearing and Recording Sounds (Time\*Group)**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>H&amp;R Sounds Test Mean</b>	<b>H&amp;R Sounds Test Standard Error</b>	<b>H&amp;R Sounds Test -95.00%</b>	<b>H&amp;R Sounds Test +95.00%</b>
1	Intervention	0.57	0.0	0.46	0.67
1	Control Group	0.72	0.04	0.63	0.81
2	Intervention	0.85	0.05	0.75	0.96
2	Control Group	0.88	0.04	0.79	0.97
3	Intervention	0.88	0.05	0.77	0.98
3	Control Group	0.89	0.04	0.80	0.98



**Figure 4.7: Time\*Group; LS Means (hearing & recording sounds)**

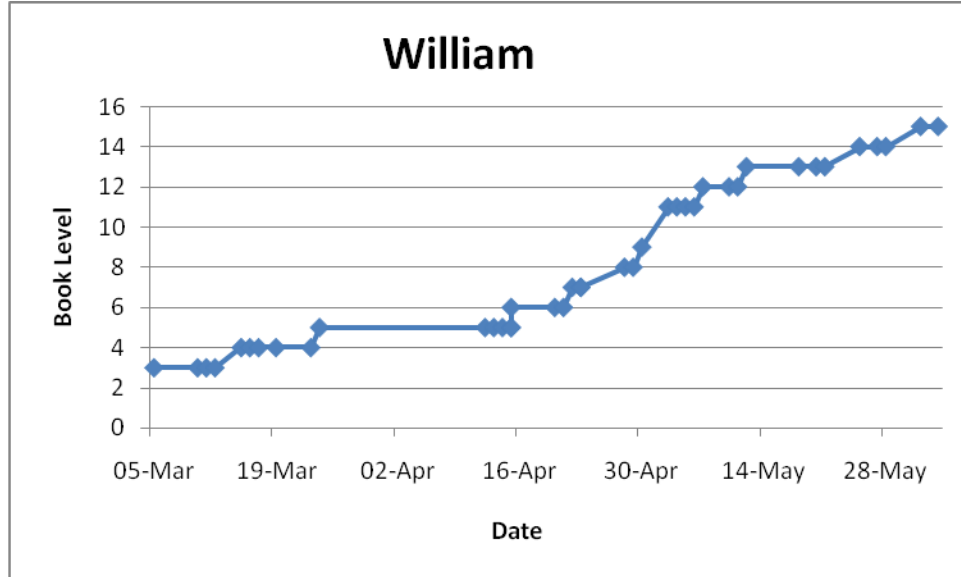
In this box plot graph (Fig. 4.7), the control group's performance in the baseline assessment was higher than that of the intervention group, which indicates that the control group was initially better equipped to hear and write down simple messages with greater accuracy. However, there was a trend that indicated that the intervention group increased more in performance than the control group from time 1 (baseline) to time 2 (mid-assessment), even though this was not statistically significant.

Furthermore, both groups stayed fairly constant between the mid- (time 2) and post-assessments (time 3). This means that both groups improved at a faster rate between baseline and mid-test assessment, and stayed constant from mid-test to post-test assessment. The intervention goal was still reached, seeing that both groups achieved the same results towards the end of the study, at time 3, and were able to hear and record sounds in words more accurately than in the initial baseline assessment.



#### 4.10.3.5 Running Records

##### 4.10.3.5.1 William



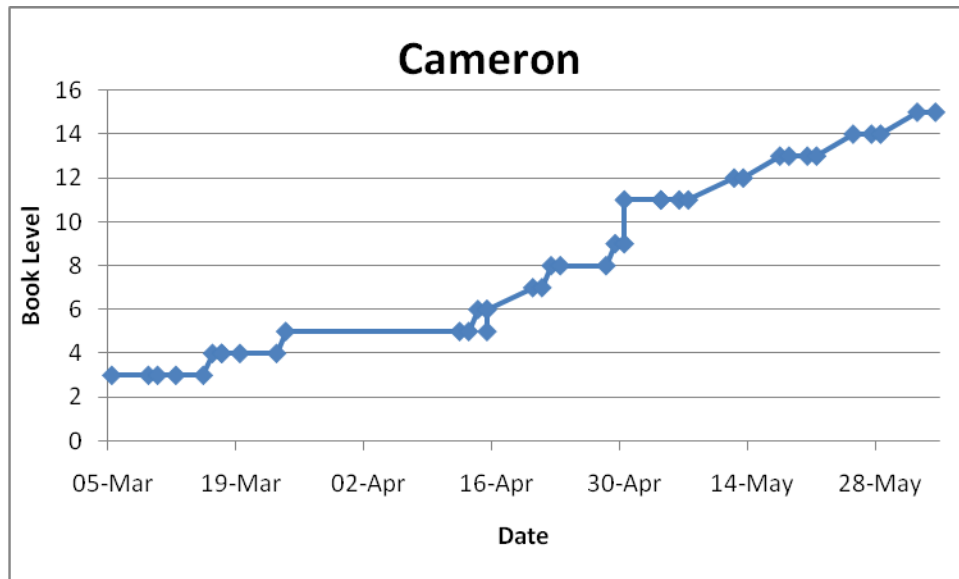
**Figure 4.8: Book Level Improvement (William)**

Within the three month intervention period, William improved from level 3 to level 15 in instructional level (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996:113) (see Addendum 4.1.i, iii, v). This means that he moved up one or two levels per week, which was an excellent progress rate. Instructional level refers to a book that was previously introduced and in relation to which the illustrations, language and specific words in the book might have been discussed beforehand. In the post-test Running Record assessment, William could read an unseen level 14 text successfully with no support (see Addendum 4.1.v), which was also an excellent improvement. It is important to note that the reason for the long flat line between the end of March 2010 and 16 April 2010 in all three graphs was a two-week vacation, during which no intervention sessions were conducted.

According to Fountas and Pinnell (2006:6), a child who reads level 15 books falls under the category of transitional reader. A transitional reader is not yet totally independent, but has control over early reading behaviours. Transitional readers do not rely too heavily on illustrations any longer and start to read fluently, with some expression in their tone of voice (see Addendum 5.1.iii). Transitional readers are also able to solve more complex words and use multiple sources of information to gain meaning (see 2.7.3).

From Figure 4.8 it is also evident that William read more than one book per level. At some levels, for example level 5 and level 11, where he struggled, he read up to five different books. This was done in order for him to become used to the degree of difficulty of the specific level and also to become acquainted with the language use and structure of the texts. In addition, rereading different books at the same level of difficulty prevented him from memorising the text. This ensured that he did “reading work” rather than simply memorise a given text. When he read with 90% accuracy or higher and I could see that he understood what he read, I moved him up to a new level (see 2.10.4.3). In this way William felt supported and could experience maximum success while reading.

#### 4.10.3.5.2 Cameron



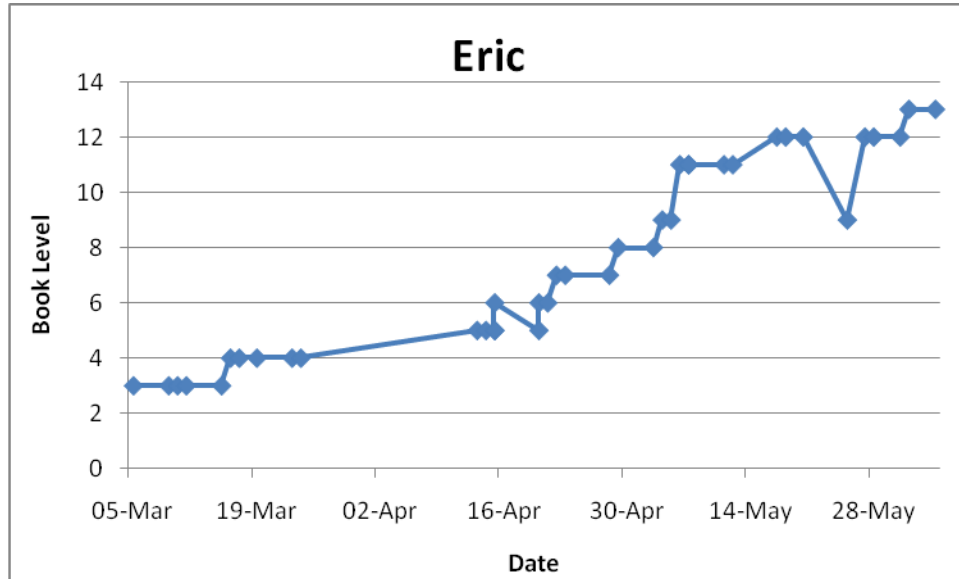
**Figure 4.9: Book level improvement (Cameron)**

Figure 4.9 indicates that Cameron also started off at level 3 at the time of the baseline assessment (see Addendum 4.2.i). Over a twelve-week period he progressed to level 15, which made Cameron a transitional reader. Therefore, both William and Cameron improved at approximately the same rate. Even though they acquired different strategies and skills at different times, they were both on the same reading competency levels.

Figure 4.9 shows that Cameron struggled at levels 3, 4, 5, 11 and 13, since he read four to five books at these levels. According to Cameron’s ability and performance scores on his daily Running Records, I made informed decisions in terms of moving him up to a new book level or keeping him on the same level to practise fluency, and to get used to the word vocabulary,

sentence structures and length of the stories. As a result, Cameron was able to read most of the higher level books with success. Given the relatively short intervention period, Cameron made adequate progress and acquired the necessary reading strategies to enable him to read with understanding.

#### 4.10.3.5.3 Eric



**Figure 4.10: Book level improvement (Eric)**

Eric started off at level 3 at the time of the baseline assessment (see Addendum 4.3.i) and progressed to level 10 on an independent level at post-test assessment (see Addendum 4.3.v). Towards the end of the intervention Eric reached level 13 on instructional level (see discussion on difference between independent and instructional level in Section 4.10.3.5.1). From an early stage in the intervention I taught the learners to read for meaning and to stop when they failed to understand. Eric started applying this knowledge immediately (see Addendum 5.3.i).

From Figure 4.10 it is clear that, during the intervention, Eric had to drop from level 6 to level 5, as well as from level 12 to 9, since he found the new levels hard to read at those stages. At level 12 the books became longer in length, which Eric found discouraging. I therefore provided him with texts that he was able to read with success in order to boost his self-confidence and sense of success and enjoyment (see Addendum 5.3.xii). Eric still made good progress, since he improved from level 3 at the baseline assessment to a level 13 book (instructional level). However, it would have been advantageous for Eric if the intervention period was extended for a further few months to give him the opportunity to reach the transitional or self-extending level of reading (see 2.7.3).

#### 4.10.4 Comparison of intervention and control group participants on Running Records

Table 4.15: Group comparison of Running Records

GROUP	Time 1	Time 2	Time 3
Intervention	3	6	14
Intervention	3	6	14
Intervention	4	6	10
Control	3	6	11
Control	4	7	15
Control	4	7	13
Control	10	13	18

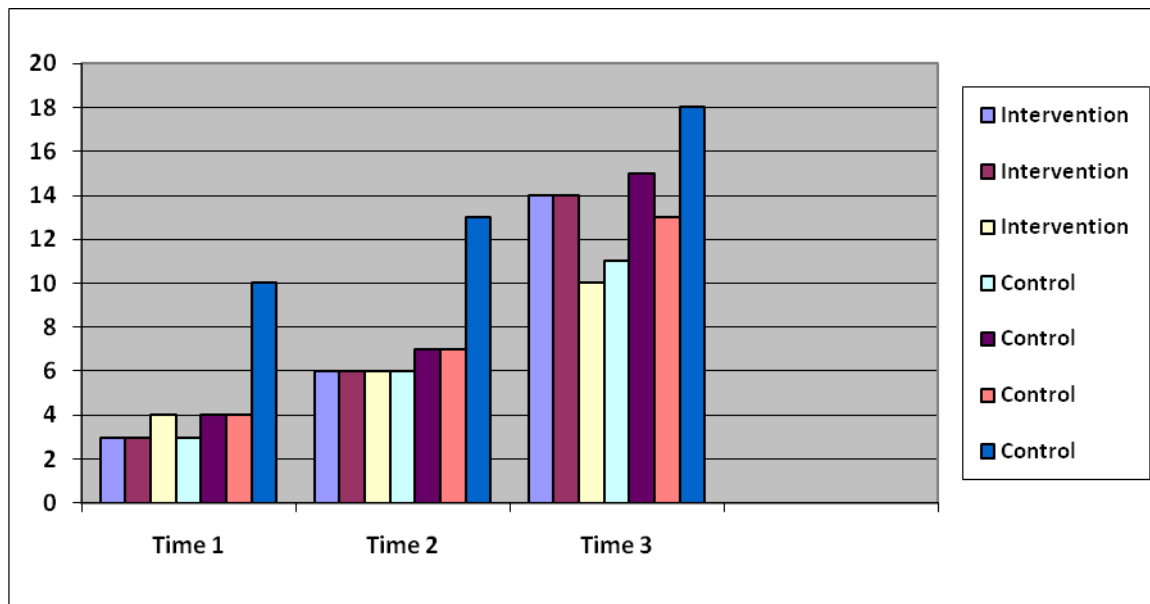


Figure 4.11: Group comparison of Running Records

At the baseline assessment, both the control and intervention groups read books on a similar level, except for one control group participant who clearly was ahead of the group. Initially, at baseline, there was a difference of seven levels between the three intervention participants and the one control group learner (royal blue), who could read a level 10 book. In the post-test assessment the gap decreased to a four-level difference because the intervention participants improved in their reading ability. Furthermore, by the post-test assessment the control group and intervention group had attained similar book levels, except for the one control group learner who read a level 18 book. Therefore, the goal of the intervention was achieved, since the

members of the intervention group improved in their reading abilities and was able to read books on a similar level to those read by the control group participants.

#### ***4.10.5 Summary***

In summary, given the small sample size, the trend in the statistical representations of the results indicates that the intervention attained its goal, which was for the intervention learners to reach the same or higher performance levels than the control group learners, who represented the average performance levels of their grade three peers. It is important to mention that the limitations of the study prevented me from using a larger sample size for the intervention (see Section 5.3.1). Had the sample size been larger, the results would most probably have been statistically significant and it would have been possible to generalise the statistics to the population, which would make the study even more relevant (Kidd, 2010). Therefore, I would suggest that larger sample sizes should be chosen for future study in this specific field of research.

## CHAPTER 5

### REFLECTIVE OVERVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The pilot study discussed in this thesis was conducted at a primary school in the Western Cape. Based on my understanding of the literature and research base outlined in Chapter 2, I conducted an intervention in which three of the lowest-achieving learners in grade three participated. I chose to work on a one-on-one basis with the individuals, because each child had unique challenges that needed to be addressed. The results of the intervention were positive and the learners managed to improve to the average level of their peers, which means the research goal was reached.

In this chapter I will reflect on the research project as a whole and draw a final conclusion. More specifically, I will first reflect on the sub-research questions and their implications for research (see 5.2). Thereafter, the limitations of the study will be discussed together with recommendations for further research (see 5.3). The strengths of the study will be discussed in Section 5.4, after which the ethical aspects will be elucidated in Section 5.5 and the study will end with a final conclusion that will aim to summarise the whole chapter (see 5.6).

#### 5.2 REFLECTION ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question was: *“How does an intervention programme using levelled books help improve struggling learners’ comprehension skills and strategies in reading and writing?”* To answer this question I investigated the different aspects stated in the sub-questions below.

##### ***5.2.1 How did learners define reading and writing before and after the intervention?***

Before the intervention, my data was compatible with Weaver’s (1994:1) research findings, which showed that teachers’ definitions of reading influenced how they taught reading, which in turn influenced children’s perceptions of reading. Many children in predominantly phonics programmes seem to think that reading is simply a matter of pronouncing individual words, one after the other (see Addendum 3.2.iii). The baseline data revealed that the children in my research study often practised ineffective reading behaviours, such as sounding out words,

which often made no sense (e.g. *e-a-t/eat; f-a-c-e/face*), and that they stopped searching for meaning (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:3). This was a probable effect of the phonics approach.

As mentioned, in the beginning the intervention learners' answers boiled down to the understanding that reading is simply to read words on a page. They initially did not understand that they should comprehend or enjoy what they read. This makes one question their reading programmes (Calkins, 2001:175). The phonics programme deprives children of developing the rich network of 'in-the-head' strategic actions that operate simultaneously as they process continuous texts (Fountas & Pinnell, 2005:12). Towards the end of the intervention, the intervention learners' perceptions and definitions of reading had changed, since they were able to argue that one reads to understand and also that every book has a meaning (see Addendum 5.1.vi). This transition showed that the intervention participants' reading perceptions underwent progressive development.

### ***5.2.2 Do levelled books help learners to improve their reading and comprehension skills and develop sustainable comprehension strategies?***

The use of high-quality levelled books for reading instruction was the crux of my intervention programme. A coherent system of levelled books on a gradient of difficulty was crucial for providing effective support for each learner. The matching of books to readers is critical for children who are struggling with the reading process, and it is also important to use a gradient of text to be sure that more advanced readers have the support and challenge they need to expand their reading strategies as they engage with more complex texts over time (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:2). Furthermore, levelled books are important because they offer a ladder of support for intensive small-group instruction, accessibility and readability. Each kind of text has important implications for the behaviour of the reader and the potential to learn about the text (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:2).

Finely graded texts are the tool that is missing in traditional remedial programmes, where the main focus is not on reading continuous texts, but rather on doing individual reading activities, reading with fluency and memorising sight words to enlarge children's vocabularies. In contrast to the traditional remedial programmes, my programme focused on helping learners to build a cognitive network of strategic activities that becomes self-expanding through reading and writing (Clay, 1991b:325, 327). As a result of this focus, the intervention learners developed successful processing strategies as they learned to read for meaning and began to understand the language of books.

While easy texts help readers to practise fluency, develop automaticity and build confidence, the learners also need to learn how to read increasingly challenging texts. Hence, one of the purposes of my intervention was to provide assistance for the learners to expand their processing systems by reading texts that were at the edge of their current reading development (Vygotsky, 1979; Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:4). The goal was to help them learn how to read increasingly complex texts that required the application of more sophisticated reading strategies. Furthermore, my data was compatible with international research (Clay, 2002:24; Fountas & Pinnell, 2006a:1; Clay, 1993:8) that reveals that levelled texts used in the intervention accelerate the participants' reading, because they experience support and success at each new level. Without graded texts, this intervention programme would have been impossible.

**5.2.3 *How do the five assessment tasks in the OS contribute to the effective assessment, identification and monitoring and of each individual child? Why/why not?***

The Observation Survey (OS) assessment tasks served as the main data collection tool to monitor the improvement of the intervention and control groups. This tool also enabled me to compare the two research groups with one another to see whether the research goal was being achieved. Towards the end of the intervention, the intervention group achieved the average level of the control group. The baseline assessment results showed the initial gap between the two groups and how, at the end of the intervention, the gap had closed.

Furthermore, the assessments also showed where each of the participants' weaknesses and strengths lay, which then enabled me to make informed decisions on effectively addressing each learner's needs. The assessments also provided feedback on my teaching methods so that I could continually improve the instructional programme.

**5.2.4 *Does this intervention interfere with or advance the schedule, curriculum and methodology the educator utilises in the classroom?***

The intervention supported the learners' learning process in the classrooms, as they were equipped with comprehension strategies that enabled them to read independently. It did not affect the teachers' teaching methods that were used in the class. The teachers were able to continue with their programmes as normal, without interference from the intervention. However, the classroom programme did not fully support the approach and methods used in the intervention. It was difficult to help the learners make a transition from writing mainly phonics words to producing more adventurous words during interactive writing. Only from the mid-test



assessment onwards were the intervention learners becoming more venturesome with words and generating their own messages during interaction.

### **5.3 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.3.1 Sample size**

This intervention served as a pilot study and one of the aims was to see whether this type of one-on-one intervention would work successfully with learners in the South African educational context. However, because of the small sample size, the study's statistical power was low. Power refers to the chance of rejecting the null hypothesis, given that the hypothesis should be rejected. Ideally, the power should be as close as possible to one (Kidd, 2010). As a result of the low power of the study, the chance of rejecting the null hypotheses was low, which means that the statistical results obtained from the assessments were not statistically significant and therefore can not be generalised to the larger population. However, there was a positive trend of increase in the four assessment tasks from pre-test to post-test, providing an indication that the intervention did have an effect on the intervention participants, despite the small sample size.

Furthermore, because of a time constraint set by the school, I was only able to work with three intervention participants and four control group participants. Consequently, if one of the intervention participants would have chosen to opt out, the comparison between the control group and the intervention group would have been uneven.

##### *5.3.1.1 Recommendation: Larger sample size*

If further study in this specific field of early intervention is considered, I would recommend that a larger sample size is chosen to make the statistical research results significant and more generalisable for South African schools, as well as for future research purposes. In this way, such a study could be of great use for teachers and learning support educators, as well as for researchers who aim to expand research focusing on early intervention.

With regard to the likelihood of participants dropping out, I would suggest that more intervention learners are chosen in future studies to prevent the possibility of an uneven comparison between the control and intervention groups.

#### **5.3.2 Choice of control group**

The choice of the control group posed some challenges, since the intervention and control groups were not equivalent. After consultation with professor Kidd, a statistician, we decided

that the option of using an average-levelled control group to which the progress of the intervention group would be measured, would best address my research goal. Even though both the intervention and control groups received classroom instruction and were subject to various factors that influenced their learning, we agreed that this design would best fit the aims of this pilot study.

### **5.3.3 Trained professionals**

This research project was aimed at changing teaching practices to enable teachers and learning support educators to identify and monitor learners' weaknesses and strengths in the area of literacy more effectively. In addition, more than thirty years of research in this field has proven that this type of preventative intervention has achieved remarkable success in countries all over the world (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006b:364).

#### *5.3.3.1 Recommendation: More trained professionals*

South African education is in need of more trained professionals, specifically in the area of literacy, who are able to identify struggling learners at a young age and provide effective learning support for the growing number of illiterate learners in our country.

### **5.3.4 Limiting classroom programmes**

In most South African classrooms, teachers follow traditional approaches to language teaching. More specifically, in the primary school where I conducted my research, the teachers applied phonics in a set, part-to-whole approach that interfered partially with the learning process of the intervention participants. As a result, the participants initially struggled to construct new words apart from the phonics lists they had to memorise (see 4.4.2). Moreover, the initial interviews revealed that they were not sure about the purpose of reading, which indicated that the phonics programme did not place much emphasis on reading for comprehension (see Addendum 3.2.i,ii,iii).

#### *5.3.4.1 Recommendation: Supportive classroom programmes*

I would recommend that South African educators re-evaluate the effectiveness of their literacy programmes on all types of learners – high-progress learners, average and slow-progress learners – to see whether the programmes serve as an effective tool to reach the desired literacy outcomes. It is usually the slow-progress learners who benefit least from traditional reading and writing approaches, since these bottom-up approaches do not make logical sense to them (see 2.5.1.1.1). Approaches such as the cognitive processing approach, which focuses on both learning to read in a meaningful context and acquiring self-extending reading strategies

to help learners to read, would be more viable for slow-progress learners (2.5.2.1.2). Therefore, if educators would adopt such approaches in their classrooms, their practices would better support newly researched intervention programmes, such as the one utilised in this study.

### **5.3.5 *Lack of resources in South Africa***

This programme makes use of various resources, for example finely levelled texts from a range of authors, magnetic letters, big books, whiteboards and writing books, as well as a word wall. It therefore is quite costly and, without sponsorship, many South African schools would struggle to afford the necessary resources. Secondly, a range of levelled books has not yet been developed for the South African context. Currently, the only option is to order these books from overseas, which again is costly. Since no South African levelled books were available when I conducted my research, I made use of levelled texts from overseas, which the children thoroughly enjoyed.

#### **5.3.5.1 *Recommendation: Development of South African levelled books***

There is a growing need for adequately trained researchers in South Africa to design (a) unique series of levelled books that will typify unique South African dialogue and feature South African tales from the country's diverse cultures. There also is a need to develop levelled books in different languages, for example English, Afrikaans and Xhosa, since a large percentage of the South African population is not English speaking. In the meantime, negotiations are under way with Ohio State University to attain printing rights for some levelled books so that these books would be readily available at cheaper rates for South African schools.

### **5.3.6 *Limitations of the intervention***

In this research intervention, I focused more intensely on reading and writing development than on oral language development. The Observation Survey tasks do not test oral language development and, for that reason, the participants' oral language improvement could not be monitored.

Furthermore, Reading Recovery® has been criticised for being a very costly intervention programme because of the professional training and resources needed (Pressley, 2006). For this reason, this intervention, which was based on Reading Recovery principles, was also expensive. However, in assessing the costs of an intervention for individuals, one should keep in mind the social, emotional and economic costs of school failure (Fleisch, 2008).

### *5.3.6.1 Recommendation: Oral language activities*

It would be advantageous for any intervention programme to incorporate oral language development activities, as well as assessment tests that can accurately measure learners' oral language abilities. For this reason I would suggest that oral language development should be integrated into intervention programmes. The main reason for this is that communication skills are crucially important and that one often uses oral language more than reading or writing abilities in everyday life.

### *5.3.6.2 Recommendation: Development of South African resources*

There is a need for locally developed levelled texts that are on a par with international standards, yet suit the South African context. This would bring down the costs of the levelled texts and provide South African schools and researchers with levelled texts that meet international criteria.

## **5.3.7 Working with older children**

In the intervention I worked with older learners, whereas Reading Recovery® is focused more on grade 1 learners. As a result, my intervention at times had to break away from the typical Reading Recovery® lesson format. For example, I incorporated electronic texts, simple science experiments and big books into the interactive writing section of the lessons. This triggered the participants' interest and stimulated them to start writing.

### *5.3.7.1 Recommendation: Extra stimulation*

I would suggest that older learners, needing one-on-one intervention, could be provided with stimulating activities, such as mentioned above, that would encourage and inspire them to write creatively.

## **5.4 VALUE OF THE RESEARCH**

This study proved to be successful in improving the literacy and comprehension abilities of three of the lowest achieving grade three learners in a primary school in Stellenbosch. As mentioned, the three intervention learners initially were only able to read level 3 texts and improved to level 13 texts. The success of this programme could be attributed mainly to three aspects of the programme, namely the use of levelled texts and the Observation Survey tasks (Clay, 2002) and the acquisition of comprehension strategies.

Firstly, levelled texts contributed greatly to the success of the programme, since the finely graded books provided great support to the learners and accelerated their learning. Secondly,

the Observation Survey assessment tasks served as research instrument by which to monitor each learner's improvement. Furthermore, these tasks informed my teaching so that I was able to identify valuable teaching points through which to teach the learners new strategies. In this way I improved the effectiveness of the intervention programme. Thirdly, through continuous assessment and observation, individual needs were identified and these needs were addressed by teaching each learner the necessary strategies needed to solve particular problems in the text. The learners also received ample opportunities to apply these strategies to texts, and became more successful in their efforts every time they applied the strategies.

Furthermore, the intervention broke away from the conventional view that sees reading and writing as separate processes. In this programme, reading and writing were rather seen as complementary processes that can be attained simultaneously. Therefore, the learners were encouraged from day one to read and write in every session. The learners found this approach to be natural and did not complain that it confused them in any way. They would rather make comments such as, "Teacher, I just read that word in the book, so I can remember how to write it." Such comments confirm that the reading process complements the writing process.

Future goals would include helping more struggling learners through this intervention. Another goal would be to equip other learning support professionals to facilitate this type of programme in their schools. As mentioned, illiteracy rates in South African schools are very high. There is thus an increasing need for South African schools to find and implement successful intervention programmes that will help to remedy this problem. The ultimate goal would be for the South African education system to accept this kind of intervention programme nationwide and to allow learning support educators to implement it in schools across the country.

## **5.5 CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS**

### ***5.5.1 Early Identification***

After more than thirty years of research, Clay (2002:142) has shown that "early identification of children at risk in literacy learning has proved to be possible" and the efficiency of this early identification and intervention process cannot be measured in value. For these reasons, teachers should be trained to identify struggling learners in their classrooms and "those children who are not assuming a normal trajectory of progress need to be offered more expert teaching interactions in the classroom" (Clay, 1991a:23) and, if needed, one-on-one professional help.

It is not always easy to identify the specific problems learners struggle with, since all children vary in their awareness of the detail in print, in what they find confusing about print, and in their ways of working with print (Clay, 2002:142). Therefore, research should inform training programmes for learning support specialists who assess struggling learners and offer much needed intervention.

### **5.5.2 Effective learning support programmes**

The difference between the programme used in this research study and other traditional remedial programmes is that one-on-one instruction is designed to begin where the child is at, and not where the curriculum is. Systematic observation allows the teacher to go to where the child is and begin teaching from there. Most remedial programmes are still focused on getting children school-ready, instead of adjusting the programme to suit the needs of the child. Usually the teacher would say that the children have to get to where the formal programme starts, and then they will be ready for instruction (Clay, 2002:64). It makes more sense for the teacher to become a sensitive observer of children in order to help them make the transitions that have been planned for them. The effectiveness of this programme therefore lies in the identification of each child's specific needs, and then planning the instruction accordingly to meet those needs.

Furthermore, this intervention programme supports daily instruction that increases the power of the intervention, instead of one or two sessions per week. The reason for daily instruction is to engrave the newly acquired knowledge in the learners' minds through application. The above-mentioned aspect of the programme causes accelerated learning to take place, since the teacher never wastes valuable teaching time on something the child does not need to learn or already knows (Clay, 2002:64).

### **5.5.3 Goal of the intervention**

Ultimately the goal of this programme is to develop independent readers and writers who do not lean on the support of the facilitator when reading or writing, but can apply their own acquired comprehension strategies, like self-correcting, rereading, monitoring their reading and breaking up words, and this way work independently on print. Through systematic observation and the Observation Survey assessments, the study recorded the change in performance over time as the learners moved up a gradient of difficulty with increasing independence. The Observation Survey task results showed that the intervention learners were actively seeking sources of information in texts and working with that information. Therefore, this intervention did attain the goal of equipping the participants with valuable comprehension strategies that they could apply

efficiently to increasingly difficult texts. In this way, they became more and more independent in reading and writing.

#### **5.5.4 *Learning through success***

One of the most encouraging aspects of this intervention was to see how the learners experienced success in reading and writing. Their experiences of success in the intervention sessions boosted their confidence in their own abilities and encouraged them to read and write new texts. These observations assured me that this intervention was based on an effective body of research that emphasises valuable approaches to learning, such as independent reading and writing through the application of comprehension strategies, learning through experiencing success, and building on what learners know (Lyons, 1991; DeFord, 1991; Fountas & Pinnell, 2007; Hornsby, 2000; Clay, 2002; Mceneaney *et al.*, 2006). Furthermore, the qualitative and quantitative data results produced by this study, as well as the principles in which the intervention was grounded, merit further research that is based on this type of intervention.

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**ADDENDA**

**ADDENDUM 1:  
CONSENT FORMS**

## Addendum 1.1. Letter from WCED

Navrae  
Enquiries  
IMibuzo  
Telefoon  
Telephone  
IFoni  
Faks  
Fax  
IFeksi

Dr A.T. Wyngaard

021 467 9272

Verwysing  
Reference  
ISalathiso

20100223-0015



Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni

Mev Nita Kidd  
Universiteit Stellenbosch  
Fakulteit Opvoedkunde  
Privaatsak X1  
Matieland  
7602

**Beste Mev Kidd**

### **NAVORSINGSVOORSTEL: A LEVELED LITERACY INTERVENTION FOR FOUNDATION PHASE LEARNERS**

U aansoek om bogenoemde navorsing in skole in die Wes-Kaap te onderneem, is toegestaan onderhewig aan die volgende voorwaardes:

1. Prinsipale, opvoeders en leerders is onder geen verpligting om u in u ondersoek by te staan nie.
2. Prinsipale, opvoeders, leerders en skole mag nie op enige manier herkenbaar wees uit die uitslag van die ondersoek nie.
3. U moet al die reëlings met betrekking tot u ondersoek self tref.
4. Opvoeders se programme mag nie onderbreek word nie.
5. Die ondersoek moet onderneem word vanaf **01 Maart 2010 tot 11 Junie 2010**.
6. Geen navorsing mag gedurende die vierde kwartaal onderneem word nie omdat skole leerders op die eksamen (Oktober tot Desember) voorberei.
7. Indien u die tydperk van u ondersoek wil verleng, moet u asb met Dr R Cornelissen in verbinding tree by die nommer soos hierbo aangedui, en die verwysingsnommer aanhaal.
8. 'n Fotostaat van hierdie brief sal oorhandig word aan die prinsipaal van die inrigting waar die beoogde navorsing sal plaasvind.
9. U navorsing sal beperk wees tot die lys van skole soos wat by die Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement ingedien is.
10. 'n Kort opsomming van die inhoud, bevindinge en aanbevelings van u navorsing moet voorsien word aan die Direkteur: Onderwysnavorsing.
11. 'n Afskrif van die voltooide navorsingsdokument moet ingedien word by:

**Die Direkteur: Navorsingsdienste  
Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement  
Privaatsak X9114  
KAAPSTAD  
8000**

Ons wens u sukses toe met u navorsing.

Die uwe

Geteken: Audrey T Wyngaard  
vir: **HOOF: ONDERWYS**

MELD ASSEBLIEF VERWYSINGSNOMMERS IN ALLE KORRESPONDENSIE / PLEASE QUOTE REFERENCE NUMBERS IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE /  
NCEDA UBHALE INOMBOLO ZESALATHISO KUYO YONKE IMBALELWANO

GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LAER-PARLEMENTSTRAAT, PRIVAATSAK X9114, KAAPSTAD 8000  
GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LOWER PARLIAMENT STREET, PRIVATE BAG X9114, CAPE TOWN 8000

WEB: <http://wced.wcape.gov.za>

**INBELSENTRUM/CALL CENTRE**

INDIENSNEMING- EN SALARISNAVRAE/EMPLOYMENT AND SALARY QUERIES ☎0861 92 33 22  
VEILIGE SKOLE/SAFE SCHOOLS ☎0800 45 46 47

*Addendum 1.2.i) Letter of Permission from Deputy Principle of School*



**UITVOERING VAN NAVORSING BY LAERSKOOE EIKESTAD**

Hiermee erken ek, die adjunkhoof, D Coetzee, dat N.Kidd WKOD toestemming verkry het om haar navorsing by Laerskool Eikestad te voltooi. Dus verskaf ek, institutionele toestemming aan Nita Kidd, Meesters student aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch, om haar navorsing hier te voltooi tussen die tydperk Maart 2010 tot einde Junie 2010.

Die uwe, mnr. D. Coetzee

Adjunkhoof – Laerskool Eikestad

Datum: 24 Maart 2010

Geteken:

## Addendum 1.2.ii) Letter of Institutional Permission from School

### **LAERSKOOL EIKESTAD**

Doornboschstraat, Stellenbosch 7600

Telefoon: (021) 887 4610 : Faks: (021) 886 6995

E-pos: [eikestad@eike.co.za](mailto:eikestad@eike.co.za)

#### UITVOERING VAN NAVORSING BY LAERSKOOL EIKESTAD

Hiermee verskaf ek, die adjunkhoof, D. Coetzee, institusionele toestemming aan Nita Kidd, Meesters student aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch, om haar navorsing te voltooi by Laerskool Eikestad tussen die tydperk Maart 2010 tot einde Junie 2010.

Nita Kidd het die navorsingsonderwerp en alle nodige informasie rakende die deelnemers en navorsingsproses met my gedeel en met die nodige toestemming van die WKOD (vorms reeds ingestuur) gee ek, namens die skool, voorlopige toestemming dat die navorsing op die betrokke leerders (met toestemming van hul ouers) uitgevoer kan word. As die Wes-Kaapse Onderwysdepartement nie hul toestemming vir die navorsing verleen nie, sal die skool ongelukkig hul voorlopige toestemming moet terugtrek, sonder enige nagevolge.

Die uwe



D. Coetzee

Adjunkhoof: Laerskool Eikestad

Datum: 4 Februarie 2010

**ADDENDUM 1.3.**  
**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORMS**



## ADDENDUM 1.3.i) Information Form - WILLIAM

### DEELNEMER INFORMASIEVORM

(Aan deelnemer voorgelees – verbale toestemming)

Naam:

Van: \_\_\_\_\_

Geboortedatum: 2002-07-08

Ouderdom: 7 j. 7 maande.

Graad: 3

- Ek, , wil aan die navorsingsprojek deelneem en die navorser het aan my verduidelik waarom die studie gaan, naamlik dat 'n geletterdheidsprogram vir my ontwikkel word om my lees- en skryfvaardighede te help verbeter.
- Ek, , verstaan dat geen my naam nie op publieke spase gepubliseer sal word nie. Die resultate van my werk sal in die projek gebruik word, maar my naam of skool sal nooit genoem word nie.
- Die fasiliteerder/navorser het aan my verduidelik dat ek onder geen omstandighede geforseer sal word om vrae te beantwoord nie en as ek sou besluit om nie meer aan die betrokke navorsingsprojek deel te neem nie, sal ek toegelaat word om uit die projek te tree.

## ADDENDUM 1.3.ii) Information Form - CAMERON

### DEELNEMER INFORMASIEVORM

(Aan deelnemer voorgelees – verbale toestemming)

Naam:

Van:

Geboortedatum: 2001.08.20

Ouderdom: 8j. 6 maande

Graad: 3

- Ek, , wil aan die navorsingsprojek deelneem en die navorser het aan my verduidelik waarom die studie gaan, naamlik dat 'n geletterdheidsprogram vir my ontwikkel word om my lees- en skryfvaardighede te help verbeter.
- Ek, , verstaan dat geen my naam nie op publieke spase gepubliseer sal word nie. Die resultate van my werk sal in die projek gebruik word, maar my naam of skool sal nooit genoem word nie.
- Die fasiliteerder/navorser het aan my verduidelik dat ek onder geen omstandighede geforseer sal word om vrae te beantwoord nie en as ek sou besluit om nie meer aan die betrokke navorsingsprojek deel te neem nie, sal ek toegelaat word om uit die projek te tree.

## ADDENDUM 1.3.iii) Information Form - ERIC

### DEELNEMER INFORMASIEVORM

(Aan deelnemer voorgelees – verbale toestemming)

Naam: Name excluded for participant protection

Van:

Geboortedatum: 2001.03.15

Ouderdom: 8 j. 11 maande

Graad: 3

- Ek, [Redacted], wil aan die navorsingsprojek deelneem en die navorser het aan my verduidelik waarom die studie gaan, naamlik dat 'n geletterdheidsprogram vir my ontwikkel word om my lees- en skryfvaardighede te help verbeter.
- Ek, [Redacted], verstaan dat geen my naam nie op publieke spasie gepubliseer sal word nie. Die resultate van my werk sal in die projek gebruik word, maar my naam of skool sal nooit genoem word nie.
- Die fasiliteerder/navorser het aan my verduidelik dat ek onder geen omstandighede geforseer sal word om vrae te beantwoord nie en as ek sou besluit om nie meer aan die betrokke navorsingsprojek deel te neem nie, sal ek toegelaat word om uit die projek te tree.

## ADDENDUM 1.3.iv) Information Form – Control Group Participant A

### DEELNEMER INFORMASIEVORM

(Aan deelnemer voorgelees – verbale toestemming)

Naam:

Name excluded for participant protection

Van:

Geboortedatum: 2001-05-09

Ouderdom: 8 j. 9 maande

Graad: 3

- Ek, [redacted], wil aan die navorsingsprojek deelneem en die navorser het aan my verduidelik waarom die studie gaan, naamlik dat 'n geletterdheidsprogram vir my ontwikkel word om my lees- en skryfvaardighede te help verbeter.
- Ek, [redacted], verstaan dat geen my naam nie op publieke spase gepubliseer sal word nie. Die resultate van my werk sal in die projek gebruik word, maar my naam of skool sal nooit genoem word nie.
- Die fasiliteerder/navorser het aan my verduidelik dat ek onder geen omstandighede geforseer sal word om vrae te beantwoord nie en as ek sou besluit om nie meer aan die betrokke navorsingsprojek deel te neem nie, sal ek toegelaat word om uit die projek te tree.

## ADDENDUM 1.3.v) Information Form – Control Group Participant B

### DEELNEMER INFORMASIEVORM

(Aan deelnemer voorgelees – verbale toestemming)

Naam:

Van:

Geboortedatum: 2001-04-03

Ouderdom: 8 j. 11 monde

Graad: 3

- Ek, , wil aan die navorsingsprojek deelneem en dië navorsers het aan my verduidelik waaroor die studie gaan, naamlik dat 'n geletterdheidsprogram vir my ontwikkel word om my lees- en skryfvaardighede te help verbeter.
- Ek, , verstaan dat geen my naam nie op publieke spasie gepubliseer sal word nie. Die resultate van my werk sal in die projek gebruik word, maar my naam of skool sal nooit genoem word nie.
- Die fasiliteerder/navorsers het aan my verduidelik dat ek onder geen omstandighede geforseer sal word om vrae te beantwoord nie en as ek sou besluit om nie meer aan die betrokke navorsingsprojek deel te neem nie, sal ek toegelaat word om uit die projek te tree.

**ADDENDUM 1.3.vi) Information Form – Control Group Participant C****DEELNEMER INFORMASIEVORM**

(Aan deelnemer voorgelees – verbale toestemming)

Naam: 

Van: \_\_\_\_\_

Geboortedatum: 2001-10-02Ouderdom: 8 j. 4 mndeGraad: 3

- Ek, , wil aan die navorsingsprojek deelneem en die navorser het aan my verduidelik waarom die studie gaan, naamlik dat 'n geletterdheidsprogram vir my ontwikkel word om my lees- en skryfvaardighede te help verbeter.
- Ek, , verstaan dat geen my naam nie op publieke spasio gepubliseer sal word nie. Die resultate van my werk sal in die projek gebruik word, maar my naam of skool sal nooit genoem word nie.
- Die fasiliteerder/navorser het aan my verduidelik dat ek onder geen omstandighede geforseer sal word om vrae te beantwoord nie en as ek sou besluit om nie meer aan die betrokke navorsingsprojek deel te neem nie, sal ek toegelaat word om uit die projek te tree.

## ADDENDUM 1.3.vii) Information Form – Control Group Participant D

### DEELNEMER INFORMASIEVORM

(Aan deelnemer voorgelees – verbale toestemming)

Naam:

Van:

Geboortedatum: 2002-01-18

Ouderdom: 8j. 1moed

Graad: 3

- Ek, , wil aan die navorsingsprojek deelneem en die navorser het aan my verduidelik waarom die studie gaan, naamlik dat 'n geletterheidsprogram vir my ontwikkel word om my lees- en skryfvaardighede te help verbeter.
- Ek, , verstaan dat geen my naam nie op publieke spasie gepubliseer sal word nie. Die resultate van my werk sal in die projek gebruik word, maar my naam of skool sal nooit genoem word nie.
- Die fasiliteerder/navorser het aan my verduidelik dat ek onder geen omstandighede geforseer sal word om vrae te beantwoord nie en as ek sou besluit om nie meer aan die betrokke navorsingsprojek deel te neem nie, sal ek toegelaat word om uit die projek te tree.

**ADDENDUM 1.4.  
UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH CONSENT FORMS FOR  
EDUCATORS**



## Addendum 1.4.i) Consent Form – Teacher A (Grade 2)

### VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSOON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [*naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer*], gegee en verduidelik deur [*naam van die betrokke persoon*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] en [*ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is*] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [*my/hom/haar*] vertaal. [*Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon*] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[*Ek wil lig hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die proefpersoon/deelnemer aan die studie mag deelneem.*] 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)**

M. Swart \_\_\_\_\_ 20/05/2010

**Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger** **Datum**

### VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervat verduidelik het aan [*naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer*] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [*naam van die regsverteenvoordiger*]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [*Afrikaans/\*Engels/\*Xhosa/\*Ander*] gevoer en [*geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in*] \_\_\_\_\_ *vertaal deur* \_\_\_\_\_].

\_\_\_\_\_

**Handtekening van ondersoeker**

\_\_\_\_\_

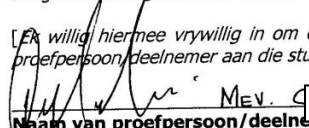
**Datum**

## Addendum 1.4.ii) Consent Form – Teacher B (Grade 2)

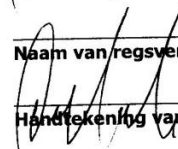
**VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSOON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER**

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [*naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer*], gegee en verduidelik deur [*naam van die betrokke persoon*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] en [*ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is*] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [*my/hom/haar*] vertaal. [*Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon*] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[*Ek wil hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die proefpersoon/deelnemer aan die studie mag deelneem.*] 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

 MEV.   
**Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)**

 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger**

19.05.10  
**Datum**

**VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER**

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervaar verduidelik het aan [*naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer*] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [*naam van die regsverteenvoordiger*]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [*Afrikaans/\*Engels/\*Xhosa/\*Ander*] gevoer en [*geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in*] \_\_\_\_\_ vertaal deur \_\_\_\_\_].

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Handtekening van ondersoeker**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Datum**

### Addendum 1.4.iii) Consent Form – Teacher C (Grade 3)

#### VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSOON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [*naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer*], gegee en verduidelik deur [*naam van die betrokke persoon*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] en [*ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is*] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [*my/hom/haar*] vertaal. [*Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon*] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[*Ek wil hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die proefpersoon/deelnemer aan die studie mag deelneem.*] 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)**

Gnts  
**Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger**

17 Maart 2010  
**Datum**

#### VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervat verduidelik het aan [*naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer*] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [*naam van die regsverteenvoordiger*]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [*Afrikaans/\*Engels/\*Xhosa/\*Ander*] gevoer en [*geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in* \_\_\_\_\_ *vertaal deur* \_\_\_\_\_].

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Handtekening van ondersoeker**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Datum**

## Addendum 1.4.iv) Consent Form – Teacher D (Grade 3)

### VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSOON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [*naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer*], gegee en verduidelik deur [*naam van die betrokke persoon*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] en [*ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is*] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [*my/hom/haar*] vertaal. [*Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon*] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[*Ek wil hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die proefpersoon/deelnemer aan die studie mag deelneem.*] 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

Mariel

Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer

Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)

17.03.2010

Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger

Datum

### VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervaar verduidelik het aan [*naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer*] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [*naam van die regsverteenvoordiger*]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [*Afrikaans/\*Engels/\*Xhosa/\*Ander*] gevoer en [*geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in* \_\_\_\_\_ vertaal deur \_\_\_\_\_].

Handtekening van ondersoeker

Datum

Goedgekeur Subkomitee A 25 Oktober 2004

**ADDENDUM 1.5.  
UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH CONSENT FORMS FOR  
LEARNERS**

## Addendum 1.5.i) Consent Form - WILLIAM

**VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSOON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER**

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [*naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer*], gegee en verduidelik deur [*naam van die betrokke persoon*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] en [*ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is*] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [*my/hom/haar*] vertaal. [*Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon*] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[*Ek wil lig hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die proefpersoon/deelnemer aan die studie mag deelneem*]. 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

Name excluded for participant protection

**Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer**

**Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)**

*Cherys*

**Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger**

*4/03/2010*

**Datum**

**VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER**

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervaar verduidelik het aan [*naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer*] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [*naam van die regsverteenvoordiger*]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [*Afrikaans/\*Engels/\*Xhosa/\*Ander*] gevoer en [*geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in*] vertaal deur \_\_\_\_\_].

**Handtekening van ondersoeker**

**Datum**

## Addendum 1.5.ii) Consent Form - CAMERON

**VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER**

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [*naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer*], gegee en verduidelik deur [*naam van die betrokke persoon*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] en [*ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is*] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [*my/hom/haar*] vertaal. [*Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon*] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[*Ek willig hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die proefpersoon/deelnemer aan die studie mag deelneem.*] 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

Name excluded for participant protection

**Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer**

T. Volschenik

**Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)**

*[Handwritten signature]*

**Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger**

**Datum**

5/3/2010

**VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER**

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervat verduidelik het aan [*naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer*] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [*naam van die regsverteenvoordiger*]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [*Afrikaans/\*Engels/\*Xhosa/\*Ander*] gevoer en [*geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in*] vertaal deur \_\_\_\_\_].

**Handtekening van ondersoeker**

**Datum**

Goedgekeur Subkomitee A 25 Oktober 2004

## Addendum 1.5.iii) Consent Form - ERIC

**VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSOON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER**

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [*naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer*], gegee en verduidelik deur [*naam van die betrokke persoon*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] en [*ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is*] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [*my/hom/haar*] vertaal. [*Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon*] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[*Ek wil lig hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die proefpersoon/deelnemer aan die studie mag deelneem.*] 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

Name excluded for participant protection

**Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer**

**Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)**

**Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger**

**Datum**

4 Maart. 2010.

**VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER**

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervat verduidelik het aan [*naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer*] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [*naam van die regsverteenvoordiger*]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [*Afrikaans/\*Engels/\*Xhosa/\*Ander*] gevoer en [*geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in*] \_\_\_\_\_ vertaal deur \_\_\_\_\_].

**Handtekening van ondersoeker**

**Datum**

Goedgekeur Subkomitee A 25 Oktober 2004



Addendum 1.5.iv) Consent Form – Control Group Learner A

**VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER**

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [*naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer*], gegee en verduidelik deur [*naam van die betrokke persoon*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] en [*ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is*] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [*my/hom/haar*] vertaal. [*Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon*] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[*Ek wil hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die proefpersoon/deelnemer aan die studie mag deelneem.*] 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

Name excluded for participant protection

Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer

Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)

Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger

Datum

04/03/2010

**VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER**

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervat verduidelik het aan [*naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer*] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [*naam van die regsverteenvoordiger*]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [*Afrikaans/Engels/Xhosa/Ander*] gevoer en [*geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in*] vertaal deur \_\_\_\_\_.

Handtekening van ondersoeker

Datum

*J. M. ...*

04/03/2010

## Addendum 1.5.v) Consent Form - Control Group Learner B

**VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSOON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER**

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [*naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer*], gegee en verduidelik deur [*naam van die betrokke persoon*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] en [*ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is*] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [*my/hom/haar*] vertaal. [*Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon*] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[*Ek wil hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die [naam van die betrokke persoon] die studie mag deelneem.*] Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

Name excluded for participant protection

**Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)**

**Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger**

04/03/2010  
**Datum**

**VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER**

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervaar verduidelik het aan [*naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer*] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [*naam van die regsverteenvoordiger*]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [*Afrikaans/\*Engels/\*Xhosa/\*Ander*] gevoer en [*geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in \_\_\_\_\_ vertaal deur \_\_\_\_\_*].

**Handtekening van ondersoeker**

**Datum**

Addendum 1.5.vi) Consent Form - Control Group Learner C

**VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSOON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER**

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer], gegee en verduidelik deur [naam van die betrokke persoon] in [Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other] en [ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [my/hom/haar] vertaal. [Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[Ek wil graag hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die proefpersoon/deelnemer aan die studie mag deelneem.] 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

Name excluded for participant protection  
 naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer

*Kanselaar*  
*Stem toe tot deelname*

Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)

*[Handwritten Signature]*

Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger

*200-03-03*  
 Datum

**VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER**

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervaar verduidelik het aan [naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [naam van die regsverteenvoordiger]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [Afrikaans/\*Engels/\*Xhosa/\*Ander] gevoer en [geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in \_\_\_\_\_ vertaal deur \_\_\_\_\_].

Handtekening van ondersoeker

Datum

## Addendum 1.5.vii) Consent Form - Control Group Learner D

### VERKLARING DEUR PROEFPERSOON OF SY/HAAR REGSVERTENWOORDIGER

Die bostaande inligting is aan my, [*naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer*], gegee en verduidelik deur [*naam van die betrokke persoon*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] en [*ek is/die proefpersoon is/die deelnemer is*] dié taal magtig of dit is bevredigend vir [*my/hom/haar*] vertaal. [*Ek/die deelnemer/die proefpersoon*] is die geleentheid gebied om vrae te stel en my/sy/haar vrae is tot my/sy/haar bevrediging beantwoord.

[*Ek wil hiermee vrywillig in om deel te neem aan die studie/Ek gee hiermee my toestemming dat die proefpersoon/deelnemer aan die studie mag deelneem.*] 'n Afskrif van hierdie vorm is aan my gegee.

Name excluded for participant protection

**Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer**

**Naam van regsverteenvoordiger (indien van toepassing)**

*M.aste*

**Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer of regsverteenvoordiger**

*04/03/2010*

**Datum**

### VERKLARING DEUR ONDERSOEKER

Ek verklaar dat ek die inligting in hierdie dokument vervat verduidelik het aan [*naam van die proefpersoon/deelnemer*] en/of sy/haar regsverteenvoordiger [*naam van die regsverteenvoordiger*]. Hy/sy is aangemoedig en oorgenoeg tyd gegee om vrae aan my te stel. Dié gesprek is in [*Afrikaans/\*Engels/\*Xhosa/\*Ander*] gevoer en [*geen vertaler is gebruik nie/die gesprek is in*] \_\_\_\_\_ vertaal deur \_\_\_\_\_].

**Handtekening van ondersoeker**

**Datum**

Goedgekeur Subkomitee A 25 Oktober 2004

ADDENDUM 2  
OBSERVATION SURVEY TASK EXAMPLES

# ADDENDUM 2.1. Letter Identification task

LETTER IDENTIFICATION SCORE SHEET

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ TEST SCORE: 54

STANINE GROUP:

	A	S	Word	I.R.		A	S	Word	I.R.	
A				a						
F				f						
K				k						
P				p						
W				w						
Z				z						
B				b						
H				h						
O				o						
J				j						
U				u						
				a						
C				c						
Y				y						
L				l						
Q				q						
M				m						
D				d						
N				n						
S				s						
X				x						
I				i						
E				e						
G				g						
R				r						
V				v						
T				t						
				g						
				TOTALS					TOTAL SCORE	

Confusions: \_\_\_\_\_

Letters Unknown: \_\_\_\_\_

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

**Recording:**  
 A Alphabet response: tick (check)  
 S Letter sound response: tick (check)  
 Word Record the word the child gives  
 IR Incorrect response: Record what the child says

# ADDENDUM 2.2. Word test

**WORD TEST SCORE SHEET**

Use any one list of words.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ TEST SCORE:

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ STANINE GROUP:

Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_

Record incorrect responses beside word

LIST A	LIST B	LIST C
I	and	Father
Mother	to	come
are	will	for
here	look	a
me	he	you
shouted	up	at
am	like	school
with	in	went
car	where	get
children	Mr	we
help	going	they
not	big	ready
too	go	this
meet	let	boys
away	on	please

COMMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

# ADDENDUM 2.3. Writing Vocabulary Task

WRITING VOCABULARY OBSERVATION SHEET

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ TEST SCORE:

(Fold heading under before child uses sheet) STANINE GROUP:



# ADDENDUM 2.4. Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words

**HEARING AND RECORDING SOUNDS IN WORDS (DICTATION TASK)  
OBSERVATION SHEET**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

(Fold heading under before child uses sheet)

TEST SCORE:   
STANINE GROUP:

---

COMMENT

# ADDENDUM 2.5. Running Record

RUNNING RECORD SHEET

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ D. of B.: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ yrs \_\_\_\_\_ mths  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_ Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_

Text Titles	<u>Running words</u> Error	Error rate	Accuracy	Self-correction rate
1. Easy _____	_____	1: _____	_____ %	1: _____
2. Instructional _____	_____	1: _____	_____ %	1: _____
3. Hard _____	_____	1: _____	_____ %	1: _____

Directional movement \_\_\_\_\_

**Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections**  
 Information used or neglected [Meaning (M) Structure or Syntax (S) Visual (V)]

Easy \_\_\_\_\_

Instructional \_\_\_\_\_

Hard \_\_\_\_\_

Cross-checking on information (Note that this behaviour changes over time)

\_\_\_\_\_

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections  
(see *Observation Survey* pages 30-32)

Page		E	SC	Information used	
				E MSV	SC MSV

# ADDENDUM 2.6 Running Record Score Sheet

## SOME CONVENTIONS USED FOR RECORDING

- 1 Mark every word read correctly with a tick (or check). A record of the first five pages of the 'Ready to Read' (1963) book *Early in the Morning* that was 100 percent correct would look like this. (The lines indicate page breaks.)

Bill is asleep.	✓	✓	✓
'Wake up, Bill,' said Peter.	✓	✓	✓
Sally is asleep.	✓	✓	✓
'Wake up, Sally,' said Mother.	✓	✓	✓
Father is shaving.	✓	✓	✓

- 2 Record a wrong response with the text under it.

Child: home  
Text: house [One error]

- 3 If a child tries several times to read a word, record all his trials.

Child: here | h— | home  
Text: house | | [One error]

Child: h— | ho— | home  
Text: home | | [No error]

- 4 If a child succeeds in correcting a previous error this is recorded as 'self-correction' (written SC). Note that example 3 did not result in a self-correction.

Child: where | when | SC  
Text: were | | [No error]

- 5 If no response is given to a word it is recorded with a dash. Insertion of a word is recorded over a dash.

No response      Insertion  
Child: —      Child: here  
Text: house      Text: — [In each case  
one error]

- 6 If the child baulks, unable to proceed because he is aware he has made an error and cannot correct it,

## TAKING RUNNING RECORDS OF READING TEXTS 27

or because he cannot attempt the next word, he is told the word (written T).

Child: home | —  
Text: house | T [One error]

- 7 An appeal for help (A) from the child is turned back to the child for further effort before using T as in 6 above. Say 'You try it'.

Child: — | A | here  
Text: house | — | T [One error]

- 8 Sometimes the child gets into a state of confusion and it is necessary to extricate him. The most detached method of doing this is to say 'Try that again', marking TTA on the record. This would not involve any teaching, but the teacher may indicate where the child should begin again.

It is a good idea to put square brackets around the first set of muddled behaviour, enter the TTA, remember to count that as one error only (see page 29), and then begin a fresh record of the problem text. An example of this recording would be:

✓	look	said	✓	✓
Susan	went	with	the	headmaster
Timothy				TTA
to				

✓    said | R | SC    ✓    ✓    ✓  
went |    |    |    |    |  
✓    |    |    |    |    | [One error]

- 9 Repetition (R) is not counted as error behaviour. Sometimes it is used to confirm a previous attempt. Often it results in self-correction. It is useful to record it as it often indicates how much sorting out the child is doing. 'R', standing for repetition, is used to indicate repetition of a word, with R<sub>2</sub> or R<sub>3</sub> indicating the number of repetitions. If the child goes back over a group of words, or returns to the beginning of the line or sentence in his repetition, the point to which he returns is shown by an arrow.

Child: Here is the home | R | SC  
Text: Here is the house | | [No error]

ADDENDUM 3  
TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEWS

**ADDENDUM 3.1**  
**TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS**

### *ADDENDUM 3.1.i) Interviews with Grade Two Teachers – Cameron and Eric*

1. *Hoe het elk van die leerdere/deelnemere gevaar op akademiese vlak in 2009, veral in Geletterdheid?*

**William** – (William’s teacher moved to another school the previous year, so I could not conduct an interview with her.)

**Teacher X (Cameron)** – Hy is sterk in Wiskunde. Vir Afrikaans het hy hier en daar 2’s op sy rapport gekry, maar oor die algemeen 3’s. Hy is aandagafleibaar en op medikasie. Dus maak hy onnodige foute en dit maak dat hy nie sy 3’s soms kry nie.

**Teacher Z (Eric)** – Hy het nie goed gevaar nie. Hy was in ‘n ander skool in George in graad 1. Hy het geweldig gesukkel met geletterdheid, wiskunde en spesifiek lees. Hy het gewoonlik lae 2’s vir die leerareas gekry en het ook meer tyd as die res van die leerdere ontvang om toetsies of take te voltooi. Hy het net-net aan die vereistes voldoen om graad 3 toe te gaan.

2. *Hoe het u hul ervaar in die klaskamer? Was daar enige noemenswaardige opmerkings wat u geobserveer het rakende hul optrede tydens akademiese skoolure?*

**Teacher X (Cameron)** - Hy is redelik emosioneel ingestel en sy emosies het sy werk beïnvloed. Hy het gereeld gesprekke onderbreek en het gesukkel om deel te vorm van die klas. Hy fokus nie op opdragte nie en het onderpresteer as gevolg van sy onvermoë om te fokus. Hy het ook nie sy werk oorgegaan nie. Hy het vir spel terapie gegaan om hom te help om sy emosies te hanteer, om te sê hoe hy voel en om te sosialiseer.

**Teacher Z (Eric)** – Hy is aandagafleibaar in die klas en werk teen ‘n stadige tempo. Hy moes alleen sit by sy eie bank, omdat hy te veel gesels het. Sy lettervorming was onderontwikkeld, bv. hy het gesukkel om die letters “a, g, b” se rondings toe te maak. Hy het ook gesukkel met spasiering tussen letters en woorde.

3. *Hoe vaar elkeen van die leerdere tydens leesaktiwiteite?*

**Teacher X (Cameron)** – Hy was nie lief vir lees nie. Hy kon slegs 3 minute fokus.

**Teacher Z (Eric)** – Hy het leerondersteuning by die leerondersteunings-onderwyseres ontvang vir ekstra hulp. Hy het nie uit sy eie uit gelees nie en het ook nie veel selfvertroue gehad om te lees nie. Hy het maar hakerig, teen ‘n stadige tempo gelees en gesukkel om te verstaan wat hy lees.

4. *Waaruit bestaan ‘n tipiese Engelse leesles en hoe word dit min of meer aangebied?*

**Teacher X (Cameron)** – Ons het slegs “Big Books” gebruik en gefokus op visuele illustrasies en ouditiewe aktiwiteite – om Engelse woorde te hoor. Hul het ook gepraat en hy was nie skaam om antwoorde te waag nie. Hy is ook aan baie Engelse woorde op die televisie blootgestel.

**Teacher Z (Eric)** – Ons het basies geen Engels gedoen nie, behalwe om ‘n bietjie oor ‘n onderwerp in Engels te gesels op die mat en so die leerders se woordeskat uit te brei.

5. *Het u leesgroepe in u klas en, indien wel, hoe word die leerders in groepe ingedeel?*

**Teacher X (Cameron)** – Nee, nie vir Engels nie.

**Teacher Z (Eric)** – Nie in Engels nie.

6. *Hoe bied u Engelse skryfaktiwiteite aan?*

**Teacher X (Cameron)** – Geen.

**Teacher Z (Eric)** – Ons het nie Engelse skryfaktiwiteite gedoen nie.

### *ADDENDUM 3.1.ii) Interviews with Grade Three Teachers – William, Eric, Cameron*

1. *Hoe ervaar u die spesifieke leerders in die klaskamer? Is daar enige noemenswaardige opmerkings wat u geobserveer het rakende hul optrede tydens lees- en skryfaktiwiteite?*

**Teacher A (William)** – Hy praat baie. William is oorhaastig en rammel sy werk gewoonlik af.

**Teacher A (Eric)** – Eric is ‘n vriendelike kind, maar is woelig en praterig in die klas. Dit gaan baie beter met sy werk die jaar. Hy sukkel steeds om te fokus.

**Teacher B (Cameron)** – Cameron floreer op individuele aandag. Hy is emosioneel redelik onstabiel en sukkel om sy emosies te verbaliseer. Dit maak dit vir hom moeilik om soms te konsentreer in die klas.

2. *Hoe vaar elkeen van die leerders tydens leesaktiwiteite?*

**Teacher A (William)** – Sy uitspraak van Engelse woorde is nie so goed nie. Hy meng Engelse en Afrikaanse woorde terwyl hy praat en skryf.

**Teacher A (Eric)** – Hy sien nie take of konsepte as ‘n geheel nie. Hy skryf ook al sy woorde presies onder mekaar, so hy is baie daarop gefokus om alles reg te doen. Hy is bang om foute te maak en vra dus baie vrae en is baie afhanklik van my. Hy sukkel met woordherkenning.

**Teacher B (Cameron)** – Sy skryfvermoë is beter as sy leesvermoë. Verder is hy goed in wiskunde. Hy lees nie met gevoel nie en ignoreer oor die algemeen leestekens, veral in onbekende werkstukke. Die hele klas is nog by die basiese konsepte van Engels, maar sommiges vorder baie vinniger as ander. Sy spelling is gemiddeld. Hy is nie lief daarvoor om lang stukke te skryf nie. Hy rammel gewoonlik sy werk af.

3. *Waaruit bestaan ‘n tipiese Engelse leesles en hoe word dit aangebied?*

**Teacher A (William & Eric)** – Ek sal voorlees, terwyl die hele klas op die mat sit. Daarna lees die leerders almal saam, en dan deel hul in hulle leesgroepe (lae, middel en



vinnige groepe) en lees die Engelse boek by my op die mat. Daarna moet hulle dit by die huis gaan oefen.

**Teacher B (Cameron)** – Almal lees dieselfde boekie. Ek stel die flitswoorde aan die leerders bekend, dan lees ons almal die Engelse boekie saam (klassikaal). Daarna verdeel hul in groepe en elkeen kry ‘n beurt om ‘n paar bladsye uit die boekie te lees in groepsverband op die mat.

4. *Het u leesgroepe in u klas en, indien wel, hoe word die leerders in groepe ingedeel?*

**Teacher A (William & Eric)** – Ja, ek het drie leesgroepe – ‘n lae, gemiddelde en hoë groep. Aan die begin van die jaar deel ek vir hul leesstukkies uit en ek luister na elkeen se leesvermoëns en verdeel hul so in groepe. Ek deel ook ‘n begripstoets uit wat hul self moet deurlees en die vrae beantwoord en daardeur kom ek ook agter wie in watter groep moet wees.

**Teacher B (Cameron)** – Die eerste twee weke het ons klassikaal gewerk en toe het ek rofweg die drie groepe geïdentifiseer, maar die groepe verander deur die jaar, soos die kinders teen verskillende tempo’s vorder. Hul lees in groepe, maar die lees- en wiskundegroepe verskil. Ek gee nie name aan my groepe nie, want die kinders konnoteer maklik ‘n naam met die vlak van die groep. Daarom roep ek net die kinders se name in elke groep uit.

5. *Hoe word Engelse skryfaktiwiteite aangebied?*

**Teacher A (William & Eric)** – Ons het nie veel Engels in die eerste kwartaal gedoen nie. Ons het wel klanke gedoen waar hul woorde in Engels moes leer skryf, dit by die huis moet leer en dan skryf ons Vrydae ‘n “phonics” toets. Ons het ook sinne geskommel wat hul in korrekte volgorde moes rangskik en oorskryf. Ons het aan die einde van eerste kwartaal begin lees).

**Teacher B (Cameron)** – Dit word baie informeel in die eerste kwartaal gedoen. Hul word ook nie in die eerste kwartaal formeel geassesseer in Engels nie. Hul kry woordeboekies waarin hul nuwe woorde wat hul leer moet skryf. Hul moet hul eie sinne maak met die “phonics” woorde. Engels word op Donderdae en Vrydae aangebied. Daar word gewoonlik oor ‘n sekere onderwerp gepraat en geskryf.

**ADDENDUM 3.2.**  
**TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEWS WITH LEARNERS**

### *ADDENDUM 3.2.i) Interview with William*

1. *Wat is lees en wat is skryf, volgens jou? / What does it mean to read and to write?*

Reading is “giving a sentence. You read to become clever.”

“You can write a sentence. Jy moet netjies skryf.”

2. *Hou jy van lees en skryf? / Do you enjoy reading and writing?*

“Yes, I like both. Reading is the best.”

3. *Waarom hou jy daarvan of nie? / Why do you enjoy it, or not?*

“Dit maak jou slim.”

4. *Kan jy Engels verstaan en praat en hou jy daarvan? / Do you understand English and do you speak it?*

“Little bit, yes”

5. *Het jy al in Engels leer lees en skryf? / Have you learnt to read and write in English?*

“Only this year.”

6. *Sal jy daarvan hou om goed te lees en skryf in Afrikaans en Engels? / Would you like to read and write well?*

“Yes.”

### *ADDENDUM 3.2.ii) Interview with Cameron*

1. *Wat is lees en wat is skryf, volgens jou? / What does it mean to read and to write?*

“Lees is lekker. Dit is hulpvaardigheid en ontwikkeling. You can read stories - good and bad stories.” (When I showed him a word and asked him what it was, he pronounced the individual letters without reading it and did not answer the question.)

“Writing is drawing a picture.”

2. *Hou jy van lees en skryf? / Do you enjoy reading and writing?*

“Yes, because it’s fun and (an) adventure. No, I don’t like writing. It’s not so fun.”

3. *Waarom hou jy daarvan of nie? / Why do you enjoy it, or not?*

“Yes, I’m good at writing.”

4. *Kan jy Engels verstaan en praat en hou jy daarvan? / Do you understand English and do you speak it?*

“No, you need to spend lots of time on it.”

5. *Het jy al in Engels leer lees en skryf? / Have you learnt to read and write in English?*

“No, just Afrikaans.”

6. *Sal jy daarvan hou om goed te lees en skryf in Afrikaans en Engels? / Would you like to read and write well?*

“Ja.”

### ADDENDUM 3.2.iii) Interview with Eric

1. *Wat is lees en wat is skryf, volgens jou? / What does it mean to read and to write?*

“Reading makes you clever. (It helps you to) do better in class.”

“You break up words into syllables. If you know words, you can read it.”

“Writing is writing words with a pencil on a paper.”

2. *Hou jy van lees en skryf? / Do you enjoy reading and writing?*

“Yes, lots. Both.”

3. *Waarom hou jy daarvan of nie? / Why do you enjoy it or not?*

“You get funny books, and books that you can learn from that are interesting, like about animals you didn’t know about.”

4. *Kan jy Engels verstaan en praat en hou jy daarvan? / Do you understand English and do you speak it?*

“Yes.”

5. *Het jy al in Engels leer lees en skryf? / Have you learnt to read and write in English?*

“Only this year. Every Friday we write English tests.”

6. *Sal jy daarvan hou om goed te lees en skryf in Afrikaans en Engels? / Would you like to read and write well?*

“Yes, very much.”

ADDENDUM 4  
EXAMPLES OF LEARNERS' ASSESSEMENT  
RECORDS

**ADDENDUM 4.1.**  
**WILLIAM**

4.1.i) Running Record - Baseline

RUNNING RECORD SHEET

Name:  Date: 05-03-10 D. of B.: 08-07-02 Age: 7 yrs 7 mths  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_ Recorder: N. Kidd

Text Titles	Running words Error	Error rate	Accuracy	Self-correction rate
1. Easy _____		1: _____	_____ %	1: _____
2. Instructional <u>Party Time (3)</u>	<u>54/5</u>	1: <u>10,8</u>	<u>91</u> %	1: <u>0</u>
3. Hard _____		1: _____	_____ %	1: _____

Directional movement \_\_\_\_\_

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections  
 Information used or neglected (Meaning (M) Structure or Syntax (S) Visual (V))

Easy \_\_\_\_\_  
 Instructional \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hard \_\_\_\_\_

Cross-checking on information (Note that this behaviour changes over time)

\_\_\_\_\_

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections  
 (see Observation Survey pages 30-32)

Page	Party Time	E	SC	Information used	
				E MSV	SC MSV
	✓ ✓				
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				
	✓ ✓ brand bird	1		MSV	
	<u>Why</u> I ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	1		MSV	
	✓ ✓ moky monkey	1		MSV	
	<u>A</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	1		MSV	
	✓ ✓ — (sounds out)	1		MSV ?	
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				
	✓ ✓ alligator (looks at picture)	1		MSV	
	✓ ✓ alligator				
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				

50



## 4.1.ii) Hearing &amp; Recording Sounds Task - Baseline

**HEARING AND RECORDING SOUNDS IN WORDS (DICTATION TASK)  
OBSERVATION SHEET**

Name:  Date: 03-03-10

Recorder: N. Kidd Age: 7y. 7m. TEST SCORE: 18/37

Date of Birth: 08-07-2002 STANINE GROUP: 49%

(Fold heading under before child uses sheet)

---

A h e f a t h o u m - g o u j e t o t y k  
h i m t o s c h o o l

COMMENT

- Still focused on letter-sound correlations - write what you hear. (Phonological awareness)
- Spelling based on sound, rather than visual familiarity of legal letter strings. Do LOTS of writing!



## 4.1.iv) Hearing &amp; Recording Sounds – Mid-Test

**HEARING AND RECORDING SOUNDS IN WORDS (DICTATION TASK)  
OBSERVATION SHEET**

Name:  Age: 7 y. 9 m. Date: 15 April 2010

Recorder: N. Kidd Date of Birth: 08-07-2002 TEST SCORE: 31 / 37

(Fold heading under before child uses sheet) STANINE GROUP: 84%

---

1) Mom has gon up to the sop see  
 wil<sup>get</sup> melk and brad.

**COMMENT**  
 (sh) sound. His spelling improved a lot since the 1<sup>st</sup> assess.  
 HF words: "mom, has, up, to, the, and". Silent 'e' in 'gone'.  
 He easily hears dominant sounds in words. Couldn't identify  
 the two sentences. WORK ON: HF words, (sh), sentence structure.

4.1.v) Running Record – Post-test

RUNNING RECORD SHEET

Name:  Date: 7 June D. of B.: 08-07-01 Age: 7 yrs 11 mths  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_ Recorder: N. Kidd

Text Titles	Running words Error	Error rate	Accuracy	Self-correction rate
1. Easy _____		1: _____	_____ %	1: _____
2. Instructional _____	<u>14/134</u>	1: <u>1</u>	<u>90</u> %	1: <u>134</u>
3. Hard _____		1: _____	_____ %	1: _____

Directional movement \_\_\_\_\_

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections  
 information used or neglected (Meaning (M) Structure or Syntax (S) Visual (V))

Easy \_\_\_\_\_  
 Instructional \_\_\_\_\_

Cross-checking on information (Note that this behaviour changes over time)

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections  
 (see Observation Survey pages 30-32)

Page	Text	E	SC	Information used	
				E MSV	SC MSV
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>Mary</u> <u>Marla</u>			(M=V)	
	✓ <u>wast</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓			m=V	
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>Mary</u> ✓ ✓			(M=V)	
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>by</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓			m=V	
7.	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>busy</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>car</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>Mari</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>ays</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>busy</u> ✓ ✓			(M=V) m=V m=V m=V	
8.	✓ <u>car</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>care</u> <u>Marie</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>Mary</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓			m=V (M=V) m=V	
9.	✓ <u>cold</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>cauldnt</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>Mary</u>			(M=V) (M=V)	
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>Mary</u> <u>paard</u>		1		m=V
10.	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>From/sc</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>for</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>wan</u> ✓ <u>car</u> ✓ <u>would</u> ✓ <u>care</u>	2		m=V m=V	
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	14	1		

## 4.1.vi) Writing Vocabulary – Post-test

WRITING VOCABULARY OBSERVATION SHEET

Name:  Age: 7y. 11m Date: 7 June 2010

Recorder: N. Kidd Date of Birth: 08-07-2002 TEST SCORE: 44/50

(Fold heading under before child uses sheet) STANINE GROUP: 88%

---

ure x Car ✓ pane x  
 came ✓ for ✓ at ✓  
 the ✓ me ✓ of ✓  
 there ✓ he ✓ of ✓  
 where ✓ is ✓ to ✓  
 little ✓ she ✓ too ✓  
 him ✓ or ✓  
 Should ✓ his ✓  
 on ✓ within ✓  
 it ✓ were ✓ I ✓  
 this ✓ see ✓ a ✓  
 that ✓ eat ✓  
 than x meat ✓ say ✓  
 take ✓ loud ✓ play ✓  
 can ✓ could ✓ clay ✓  
 up ✓ on ✓ man ✓  
 on ✓ other ✓ hoed x  
 more ✓ dad ✓ mane ✓

- Adds silent "e" to new words if he's not sure about the spelling
- Writes 'e' instead of 'a' or other way round. Cannot always hear the difference between 'a' & 'e'.
- almost no "phonics" words.
- words that came to mind were those he learnt to write in interactive writing within a sensible context.
- he is grasping Eng. basic spelling patterns.

**ADDENDUM 4.2.**  
**CAMERON**

4.2.i) Running Record – Baseline

RUNNING RECORD SHEET

Name:  Date: 05-03-10 D. of B.: 20-08-01 Age: 8 yrs 6 mths  
 School: - Recorder: N. Kidd

Text Titles	Running words Error	Error rate	Accuracy	Self-correction rate
1. Easy _____		1: _____	_____ %	1: _____
2. Instructional _____	<u>54/5</u>	1: <u>91% → 10,8</u>	_____ %	1: <u>27</u>
3. Hard _____		1: _____	_____ %	1: _____

Directional movement \_\_\_\_\_

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections  
 Information used or neglected [Meaning (M) Structure or Syntax (S) Visual (V)]

Easy \_\_\_\_\_

Instructional Uses "word attack" skills mostly. Influence of class program  
SC = based on spelling pattern, rather than meaning.

Hard Uses visual cues often.

Cross-checking on information (Note that this behaviour changes over time)

\_\_\_\_\_

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections  
(see Observation Survey pages 30-32)

Page	Party Time	E	SC	Information used	
				E MSV	SC MSV
	<u>Birthday</u> ✓			<u>(MSV)</u>	
	<u>Party</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				
	<u>s-aid</u> ✓ <u>berd/SC</u>			<u>(MSV)</u>	<u>(MSV)</u>
	<u>said</u> ✓ <u>bird</u>				
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				
	<u>s-aid/SC</u> ✓ ✓ <u>R</u>				<u>(MSV)</u>
	<u>said</u>				
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>R</u>				
	✓ ✓ <u>g-lig-</u>			<u>(MSV)</u>	
	✓ ✓ <u>alligator</u>				
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				
	✓ <u>he for</u> (becomes discouraged)			<u>(MSV)</u>	
	✓ <u>the frog</u>			<u>(MSV)</u>	
	✓ ✓				
		5	2		

4.2.ii) Word test – Baseline

**WORD TEST SCORE SHEET**  
Use any **one** list of words.

Date: 03-03-16

Name:  TEST SCORE: 9 15

Age: 8 y. 6 m. Date of Birth: 20-08-2001 STANINE GROUP: 60%

Recorder: N-Kidd

Record incorrect responses beside word

LIST A	LIST B	LIST C
I ✓	and	Father
Mother <u>motor</u>	to	come
are ✓ ✓	will	for
here <u>d.k. (don't know)</u>	look	a
me <u>d.k.</u>	he	you
shouted	up	at
am ✓	like	school
with ✓	in	went
car ✓	where	get
children <u>d.k.</u>	Mr	we
help ✓	going	they
not ✓	big	ready
too ✓	go	this
meet ✓	let	boys
away <u>d.k.</u>	on	please

COMMENT:  
Pronounces words in Afr.  
Sounds out words.  
Words out of context - hard to identify.



4.2.iii) Writing Vocabulary task - Baseline

WRITING VOCABULARY OBSERVATION SHEET

Name:  Age: 8y. 6m Date: 03.03.10

Recorder: N. Kidd Date of Birth: 20.08.2001 TEST SCORE: 11/50

(Fold heading under before child uses sheet) STANINE GROUP: 22%

---

on ✓ in ✓ box ✓ red ✓ bun ✓  
sun ✓ up ✓ hem ✓ fox ✓ pippet ✓  
pig ✓ dot ✓ te ✓ dog ✓

VC - words                      short vowels.  
CVC - words  
Names from books?

4.2.iv) Running Record – Mid Test

RUNNING RECORD SHEET

Name:  Date: 15 April D. of B.: 20-08-01 Age: 8 yrs 8 mths  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_ Recorder: N. Kidd

Text Titles	Running words Error	Error rate	Accuracy	Self-correction rate
1. Easy <span style="float: right;">✓</span>	<u>2/48</u>	1: <u>24</u>	<u>96</u> %	1: <u>48</u>
2. Instructional		1: _____	_____ %	1: _____
3. Hard		1: _____	_____ %	1: _____

Directional movement \_\_\_\_\_

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections  
 information used or neglected [Meaning (M) Structure or Syntax (S) Visual (V)]

Easy \_\_\_\_\_  
 Instructional \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hard \_\_\_\_\_

Cross-checking on information (Note that this behaviour changes over time)

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections  
 (see *Observation Survey* pages 30–32)

Page	Come Over (Level 6)	E	SC	Information used	
				E MSV	SC MSV
	<u>Call me over</u> ✓ come	1		(M)SV	
	✓ <u>I/SC</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>god</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓		1	(M)SV	
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>paintings</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>paints</u>		1	(M)SV	
	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				

2 1

## 4.2.v) Hearing &amp; Recording Sounds Task – Mid-Test

HEARING AND RECORDING SOUNDS IN WORDS (DICTATION TASK)  
OBSERVATION SHEET

Name:  Age: 8y. 8m Date: 15 April 2010

Recorder: N. Kidd Date of Birth: 20.08.2001 TEST SCORE:

(Fold heading under before child uses sheet) STANINE GROUP:

mōm hās gōn ūp tō thē  
sōp sē hel ġēē mēik  
ānā brēd

COMMENT

(NB) W - doesn't know the sound !!

- Did not insert full stops or recognise 2 sentences.
- Knows a lot of HF-words.
- Hears dominant sounds easily.
- Needs lots of practice & exposure



## 4.2.vii) Writing Vocabulary – Post-test

WRITING VOCABULARY OBSERVATION SHEET			
Name: <u>C. Volschenk</u>	Age: <u>8y10m</u>	Date: <u>1 June 2016</u>	
Recorder: <u>N. Kidd</u>	Date of Birth: <u>10.08.02</u>	TEST SCORE: <u>26/50</u>	
(Fold heading under before child uses sheet)			STANINE GROUP: <u>52%</u>

~~a b c d e f g~~ d p p e l \* red hen  
 open sent e big run  
 bus ~~at's nuts~~ bet's  
 Cat the wh ch sh  
 Then I is a nankie  
 kan waan can  
 plane fast is on and  
 of up most e road  
 he she him

**ADDENDUM 4.3.**  
**ERIC**



4.3.ii) Writing Vocabulary task - Baseline

Ehen sush

WRITING VOCABULARY OBSERVATION SHEET

Name:  Date: 03-03-08

Age: 8y 11m

Recorder: N. Kidd Date of Birth: 15-03-2001 TEST SCORE: 6

(Fold heading under before child uses sheet) STANINE GROUP: 12%

dy ✓ bee  
myt ✓ mate ✓  
cat ✓  
cat ✓  
Fat ✓ foot  
fan ✓  
sun ✓  
leg ✓  
vet ✓ fat  
pig ✓ pig  
san ✓ sun  
booi ✓ boy

group ✓ grow up  
nets ✓

Comments:

- Thinks in Afr.
- Follows strict phonics approach.
- knows spelling list words :
- vcv - words.
- Spells in Afr. manner.





## 4.3.iv) Hearing &amp; Recording Sounds Task – Mid-Test

HEARING AND RECORDING SOUNDS IN WORDS (DICTATION TASK)  
OBSERVATION SHEET

Name:  Age: 9 y. 1 month Date: 15 April 2010

Recorder: N. Kidd Date of Birth: 15.03.2001 TEST SCORE:

(Fold heading under before child uses sheet) STANINE GROUP:

---

Mam has jon ap  
 too the shop she well  
 jet milk and bread

- he forgot "g" sound  
 - u - a confusion  
 - too

COMMENT  
 - always forgets full-stop

(A) - Teach him to monitor his work carefully. (READ AGAIN)



ADDENDUM 5  
FIELD NOTES: EXAMPLES OF LESSON  
OBSERVATIONS

**ADDENDUM 5.1.**  
**WILLIAM**

5.1.i) Running Record Example

15.03.10

OBSERVATION SHEET

<u>GENERAL:</u>	<u>BOOKS &amp; RUNNING RECORDS:</u>
- ABC: in English. h, i, j, k, q, r, t, u, v, w, y	<u>Together</u> ✓✓✓✓✓ I ✓ grocery ✓
- practical notions:	✓✓✓ the ✓✓
- Talk about reasons for R&W. ↳ each book has a meaning/purpose. Introduction: "Shoo Fly"	✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓
Liedjie: - "skoert vlieg" - connection to prior knowledge.	✓✓✓✓✓ doctor's office doctor's office
- tells nse how he doesn't like flies.	✓✓✓✓✓ bakkerij bakery
- Prediction - knows it's at a school coz of bus.	✓✓✓✓✓ station (break up word)
- struggles to find meaning in book.	✓✓✓✓✓ SC = 3/68 E = 5/68 myself
- Na die naweek (breek van oefening) het hul bietjie geroes.	<u>After Reading:</u> How did u do today? What part did u read well? Where did u struggle? he says: station & grocery Why did u read the last word well? ↳ broke up into parts. ↳ Taught reading strategies.
- <u>Inter. Writing:</u>	
- Monitors & self-corrects	
- Cross-checks	
- Looks to word wall.	

5.1.ii) Static Electricity Experiment

5 May 2010

OBSERVATION SHEET

GENERAL:

Int. Writing

Experiment: Balloon Power

↳ very excited! (Static electricity)

After each step he writes down what happens.

- I help him to listen to what he says.

- He enjoyed it thoroughly!

BOOKS & RUNNING RECORDS:

RR: Messy Sister (Lev. II)

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ blanket ✓ ✓  
blankets

✓ ✓ ✓ floe  
floor

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ cherry ✓  
cereal

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ dressing

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ drywet ✓  
drawer

I ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

↳ Read it very well + fluently.

Teaching Points:

look for word that starts with "d"

↳ 'dressed' - he found it.

- he sounds out words successfully.

- looks @ pic's

- writes: blankets, cereal, dressed  
3 times in diff. colours.

Reread:

Max & Mutt.

↳ block 4 word that was most diff. 4 u.

E = 5/95

97%

New: Almost Ready (Lev. II)

- he vertical dit in Afr - "amper gereed".

- struggle with : touch, (th) sound 'ed'

- he asked Q's whilst reading.

5.1.iii) Reading with Emotion

6 May

OBSERVATION SHEET

<p><u>GENERAL:</u></p> <p><u>Int. Writing</u></p> <p>- Exp. MAGNETS: wrote down in one column all the items &amp; in 2<sup>nd</sup> column <del>all</del> YES/NO - does it attract the magnet or not.</p> <p>- was not such a good exercise, because the items are difficult to spell.</p> <p>① <u>New</u>: Burnt Cookies</p> <p>Can read: 15 minutes, cookie, Ring, tray, game, play, they, smell forget</p> <p>Struggles: timer, dough, oven</p> <p>Read so well!</p> <p>② The B-day Present - (Lev. 12)</p> <p>- exclaims bold words <del>tr</del> louder! - He has really improved his reading!</p>	<p><u>BOOKS &amp; RUNNING RECORDS:</u></p> <p>Reread: ① <u>Max &amp; Mutt</u></p> <p>↳ he has read it many times, but he has not memorised it. He reads every word &amp; rereads when he <sup>doesn't understand</sup></p> <p>↳ Asked Q: did they dream about the same thing?</p> <p>② <u>Messy Sister</u></p> <p>Reads well! Ask Q's!!</p> <p><u>RR</u>: Almost Ready!!</p> <p>✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓</p> <p><u>It</u> ✓✓✓✓ <u>Yes</u> ✓✓✓✓</p> <p><u>Bloed</u> ✓✓ <u>Blood</u> ✓✓✓</p> <p><u>Likes/SC</u> ✓✓✓ <u>Liz</u> <u>Snaggle IT</u> ✓</p> <p>✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓</p> <p>✓✓ <u>love</u> ✓✓✓ <u>Eissi</u> ✓✓ <u>touch</u> <u>tissue</u></p> <p>✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓</p> <p>✓ <u>touch</u> ✓✓ (ITA) touched</p> <p>✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓</p> <p>↳ He retells me what happened in Afr. - Read with emotion - Read p. 6 again - Reading for meaning.</p>
--	---

E = 6/94  
95%



## 5.1.iv) Reading for Meaning

7 May 2010

**LESSON PLAN**

---

Read Familiar Books:

Book/s of choice! : Burnt Cookies

Running Record of Yesterday's Book:

Level 12 → Birthday Present

Teaching Point : Deeper meaning +  
break up words.

Word-making and/or Word-breaking:

th, ch, sh. + letter names

Interactive Writing:

Exp: Kissing Fish!

Write down observations

Introduction & Reading of New Book:

Level 12 : Gingerbread Man.

↳ Focus = Reading to understand.

5.1.v) Moving up a Text Level

18 May

OBSERVATION SHEET

GENERAL:

- \* No int. writing
- \* Writes out words from books:
  - Mutt goes 2 school (lev. 13)
  - Bell on the Cat (lev. 13)
  - words he learnt: could, idea, should, then, would, when, tried, cried, tie, fence, thought, goes, obey, above, talk, almost, town,

BOOKS & RUNNING RECORDS:

- PR: Mutt Goes to School
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ TR ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ want ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ TTA ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ~~triet~~ tried ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ fensie fence
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ s-
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ run ran ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ playground
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ~~thoot~~ though ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ presen
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ voil/SC voice
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ pr/T offenc principal's office
- ✓ ✓ ✓ gas/T goes ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ epi/SC obey

New: The Bell on the Cat (13)  
 Read it so well. I am moving him up a level tomorrow.  
 His reading vocabulary is extending daily.

$$E = \frac{12}{199}$$

92%

## 5.1.vi) Reading for Meaning

21 May 2010	
<p><b>GOOD STRATEGIES:</b> Don't Drop your Jellybeans (Level 13)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reads for meaning</li> <li>- rereads + self-corrects.</li> <li>- Fluency &amp; speed is ↑ increasing</li> <li>- Recognises + uses words on word wall - visual cues</li> </ul>	<p><b>TEACHING POINTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HF words - expand his vocabulary.</li> <li>- difference between the, w, v, f</li> </ul>
<p><b>EMERGING STRATEGIES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- letter confusions: v/w, k/c, sh/ch</li> </ul>	

## 5.1.vii) Reading for Meaning

Name: L. HynesDate: 28 May

## LESSON PLAN

---

**RUNNING RECORD**

Smoke Detector (Lev.14)

↳ Read for meaning

↳ Consider punctuation

**WORD-MAKING & -BREAKING**

Break-up new words OR

Another word test!

**INTERACTIVE WRITING**

Exp. Colouring a Rose

**READING OF NEW BOOK**

Lev.15 - Hanging around / Lizzie

OR

Magnets (Lev.14)

Read to him!

5.1.viii) Difference between "k" and "c"

8 March 2010.

OBSERVATION SHEET

GENERAL:

Teaching points:

k → c, ex. soccer

v → f

double c.

- self-corrected end → and!

- look to previous sentence to see correct form of spelling.

- past tense: t

BOOKS & RUNNING RECORDS:

Party Time | I

✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ brid/sc  
bird

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ alligrinte  
alligator

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓

98%

(blank & kyle)

E = 1/54

SC = 1/54

Word wall : friend  
soccer  
played  
school.  
the  
they  
by



### 5.1.x) WRITING – Understanding of Past Tense Improved

11 May

#### OBSERVATION SHEET

##### GENERAL:

Int. writing

wrote half of the writ. piece. He wrote well! Spelling good.

confusion: v, w, th (still?!)

Do alphabet again.

Understanding of past tense is improving.

New:

Shearing Time, Max (Lev. 13)

Read well: Has diff. words!

##### BOOKS & RUNNING RECORDS:

RR: Shoe Grabber

✓✓✓✓✓  
✓✓✓✓✓  
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓  
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓

Gavel ✓✓✓✓✓

✓ halled

✓✓✓✓✓

✓✓ run ✓ laughing | T

✓✓✓✓✓

✓ havet ✓✓

haven't

✓ cold ✓ ✓ bar ✓  
could bare

✓✓✓  
✓✓ grabet run ✓✓✓  
ran

✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓  
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓ run stran ✓  
ran through.

✓  
✓✓ grabbet  
grabber

✓✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓✓✓✓✓

through | T ✓✓

✓✓✓

✓✓✓✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓✓✓ run ✓✓✓✓

Swit Swit Swit  
swish ✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓✓✓  
Swis Swis Swis

$E = \frac{31}{248} \cdot 80\%$

✓ get ✓

✓✓✓ grabbet  
grabber.

✓✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓✓✓ grabbet  
grabber

run ✓  
ran ✓✓✓✓

pick ✓✓✓✓  
picked dis ✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓ paint ✓✓  
baar ✓  
bare

✓✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓✓✓

✓ run ✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓✓✓

✓✓✓ dis but ✓✓

**ADDENDUM 5.2.**  
**CAMERON**



5.2.i) Level 11 - Challenging

30 April 2010

OBSERVATION SHEET

<u>GENERAL:</u>	<u>BOOKS &amp; RUNNING RECORDS:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Corne read "Little Red Hen" for fun and for the challenge!</li> <li>- He only read one new level book to me!</li> <li>- He came even before I called him all by himself - good sign!</li> <li>- All of them enjoyed not writing. They rather prefer reading.</li> </ul>	<p><u>RR: Goldilocks (Lev. 11)</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>the</u> ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ <u>baby bear</u> ✓ ✓                      <u>bears</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ <u>was</u> <u>sc</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓                      <u>saw</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ <u>was</u> <u>sc</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓                      <u>saw</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ R ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p><u>year</u> <u>sc</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  <u>yelled</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>
	$E = \frac{3}{109}$ <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">98%</span>
	<p><u>New: Burnt cookies (Lev. 11)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Didn't recognize "them".</li> <li>- Reads very slowly.</li> <li>I'll have to stay few days on this level.</li> <li>- Finds this level hard.</li> </ul>

5.2.ii) Vocabulary Expanded

23 April '10

OBSERVATION SHEET

<u>GENERAL:</u>	<u>BOOKS &amp; RUNNING RECORDS:</u>
<p>- bad mood</p> <p>- ate choc. in class &amp; was fine after that.</p> <p>- he rushes to finish &amp; go to class</p> <p><u>Int. writing:</u></p> <p>- wrote the most creative continuing story inspired from 'Growing Pumpkins'.</p> <p>- He called it: "Baking a Pumpkin Cake".</p>	<p><u>RR: Favourite Snowman (Lev. 8)</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ <u>fed</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ <u>found</u> ✓ ✓</p> <p><u>under</u> ✓ ✓</p> <p><u>around</u> ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ <u>fac/SC</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>the snowman's</u> ✓</p> <p>✓ <u>found</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>his</u></p> <p><u>lovely/SC</u> ✓</p> <p><u>favourite</u> ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓</p> <p><u>Don't</u> ✓ ✓ <u>cute/I</u></p> <p><u>doesn't</u> ✓ ✓ <u>nice</u></p>
<p>* <u>HF words are expanding:</u></p> <p>we, a, I, made, to, put, his,</p> <p>don't, tell, her, have, head, hat,</p> <p>the, there, were, my, likes,</p> <p>puts, big, and, eat, fly, them,</p> <p>away.</p>	<p>↳ sensible substitutions</p> <p>↳ shows he reads for meaning.</p> <p><u>New Book: Feeding the Birds (lev 8)</u></p> <p>- wants to read it all by himself without introduction</p> <p>- I helped with: "small, round bird feeder, square, night, chases, daddy."</p> <p>- He copes well with Level 8</p>
	<p><math>E = 4/64</math></p> <p>1:16 →</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">94%</p>



5.2.iv) "Three Little Pigs" – Book with Familiar Context

15. April 2010

OBSERVATION SHEET

<u>GENERAL:</u>	<u>BOOKS &amp; RUNNING RECORDS:</u>
<p>- He loves reading.</p> <p>- very competitive. Wants to know if he's better <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> before the rest w/ reading</p> <p> he was very restless, but reading made him sit still...!!!</p> <p>↳ reading makes him feel confident, because he <u>CAN</u> do it well.</p>	<p><u>Reread</u>: Dan, the flying man.</p> <p><u>RR</u>: Soccer Game</p> <p>✓✓✓</p> <p>✓✓✓✓</p> <p>✓ <u>welt</u> ✓✓    <u>were</u></p> <p>Then ✓✓✓✓</p> <p>they</p> <p><u>tigger</u> / <u>SC</u></p> <p>together</p> <p>✓✓✓✓✓</p> <p>✓✓✓✓✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓✓✓✓✓</p> <p>✓✓✓✓✓</p> <p>✓ <u>goalie</u>    <u>goal</u></p> <p><u>It</u> / <u>IT</u> ✓✓</p> <p>It</p> <p>✓✓✓</p>
	<p>E = 4/47</p> <p>1:12 → (91%)</p>
	<p><u>3 little pigs (level)</u></p> <p> - he knows the story. ∴ he reads it fluently, even though it has <sup>unfamiliar</sup> diff words.</p>

5.2.v) Writing a Letter to a Friend

17.03.10

OBSERVATION SHEET

<u>GENERAL:</u>		<u>BOOKS &amp; RUNNING RECORDS:</u>
- Read "keeping warm" for fun.		<u>My snowman</u>
- Read My snowman + our van - he read VERY well today.		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <sup>my</sup> ✓
<u>Int. Writing</u>		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ R ✓
- Read previous letter to parents		✓ ✓ ✓ <sup>a</sup> my ✓ ✓
- write letter to Fanus, his friend.		<sup>my</sup> neck ✓
- At This activity showed him that, he wrote for a purpose.		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>on</u> ✓ ✓
- Therefore, he wrote a sincere letter to his friend. One that Fanus would enjoy to read.		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
		✓ <sup>the</sup> head ✓
		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
		✓ ✓
		✓ ✓ R ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
		<u>Our Van</u>
		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ (meaning)
		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
		<u>This is</u> ✓ ✓
		she's ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
		<u>New book:</u>
		Mom likes blue.

(93%)

E = 5/12

(98%)

E = 1/43

**ADDENDUM 5.3.**  
**ERIC**



5.3.ii) Strategies Acquired & Reason for Writing "My Map" (Level 3)

10.03.10.

OBSERVATION SHEET

<u>GENERAL:</u>		<u>BOOKS &amp; RUNNING RECORDS:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1st 2 books too easy</li> <li>- I'll have to give him harder texts!</li>   <li>- Finish writing the book</li> <li>- I like, I like then we changed it to I have a....</li> <li>- <span style="color: red;">*</span> Mixes up like &amp; love.</li> <li>- He made a comment when I said we have to change the sentences:</li> <li><span style="color: red;">*</span> He said, "But the other books have the same sentences on each page!" Good observation</li> <li>- Strategy : ① Word wall</li> <li style="margin-left: 20px;">② page back to words already written or prev. read books.</li> <li style="margin-left: 20px;">③ break up words.</li> <li style="margin-left: 20px;">④ Self-correcting</li> <li style="margin-left: 20px;">⑤ Rereading.</li> <li>- Don't do word to word matching anymore.</li> </ul>		<p><u>Good Morning:</u> (Level 3)</p> <p><u>Went to</u> ✓✓✓ <u>when</u> ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓ <u>mom/sc</u> <u>mommy</u></p> <p>- too easy!</p> <p><u>Party Time!</u> (Level 3)</p> <p>✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓</p> <p>100%</p> <p>✓ <u>My Map</u> (Level 3)</p> <p>✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓ (pause) <u>I</u>   R. <u>sign</u></p> <p>✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓ <u>to</u> <u>sidewalk</u></p> <p>✓ <u>for</u> <u>over</u></p> <p>94%</p> <p>34 2</p>
		<p>- He said "My Map" was written for giving directions to friends for a party.</p>





5.3.iv) Difference between Afrikaans "k" sound and English "c"

13 April 2010

OBSERVATION SHEET

<p><u>GENERAL:</u></p> <p>- very big imagination</p> <p><u>Int. writing</u></p> <p>- knows "the", k-c rule, v-w, "we"</p> <p>- still very unsure about words.</p>	<p><u>BOOKS &amp; RUNNING RECORDS:</u></p> <p><u>Rereads:</u> Mom likes blue.</p> <p>Reacts very well ✓</p> <p><u>Max on a hill</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ <del>jump</del> jumps</p> <p>✓ <del>jump</del> jumps</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ <u>says</u> Max</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ <u>said</u> Min</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ <del>roll</del> rolls</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ <u>came</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ <u>came</u></p> <p>Max ✓ ✓ <u>steat</u> ✓</p> <p>Min <u>stead</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ <u>eat</u> ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ <u>eats</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>legs and</u> ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>bbs of</u></p> <p><u>let</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p><u>It</u></p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>sheep <u>R</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ <del>roll</del> rolls</p> <p>✓ ✓ <u>eat</u> ✓ ✓</p> <p>✓ ✓ <u>eats</u></p> <p>No new book!</p>
---	--

E = 14/80

1:6 → 83%





5.3.vii) Looks to Me for Help

18 May

OBSERVATION SHEET

GENERAL:	BOOKS & RUNNING RECORDS:
<p><u>New words</u> : come (write it out)    came                           where                           when                           were                           there                           wish                           white                           that                           couldn't                           back                           outside                           ran                           run                           I'm.</p>	<p><u>RP: Gingerbread Man</u>            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓    <u>wif</u>                      <u>wife</u>            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓    <u>bl/sc</u> ✓ ✓ ✓                      <u>black</u>            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓    <u>buttons/piecs</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓                      <u>piece</u>            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>wery</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓                      <u>were</u>            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓    <u>put/sc</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓                                      <u>opened</u>                                      <u>aray/sc</u> ✓ ✓ ✓                                      <u>around</u>            ✓ ✓ <u>around</u>                      <u>outside</u>            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>jelled</u> ✓ ✓                      <u>jelled</u>            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>bake IT</u>                      <u>back</u>  <u>Ran</u> <u>ran</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓              <u>run</u> <u>run</u>            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  <u>In</u> ✓ ✓ ✓  <u>I'm</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ (ITA)            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>then</u> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓                              <u>that</u>            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  <u>Op</u>  <u>hop</u>            ✓ ✓ <u>crap</u>                      <u>gulp</u>            ✓ <u>can't</u> ✓ ✓              <u>couldn't</u>            ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ <u>the</u> ✓            ✓ ✓</p>
<p><u>New</u>: What shape is H<sub>2</sub>O (lev. 12)                      only up to p. 8.</p>	
<p>- Looks to me for help when he encounters an unknown word.</p>	
<p>- We don't use word wall as much anymore.</p>	
<p><u>Joke</u>: Mississippie River                  Crap - gulp.</p>	

$E = \frac{15}{194}$   
93%









5.3.xi) "Goldilocks" – Book with Familiar Context

5 May 2010

OBSERVATION SHEET

GENERAL:

BALLOON  
Int. Writing: EXPERIMENT

- looked for 'paper' & guessed 3 times before he saw it on the word wall.
- struggles with many words.
- not all there - not focussing
- writes small then big and untidy. confused.
- writes in diff. colours: blew paper rubbed small

\* I do need a FULL 30min with them!!

BOOKS & RUNNING RECORDS:

~~RR: My Messy Sister (Lev.11)~~

RR: Reading @ Home (Lev.9)

✓ likes ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  
 ✓ like

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ R fin IT

✓ like ✓ like ✓ ✓ ✓  
 ✓ laugh ✓ laugh

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  
 ✓ for ✓ ✓ ✓  
 ✓ to

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  
 ✓ midnight ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  
 ✓ myself

At ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  
 I ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

and then ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  
 I (ITA)

Reread: None!

No time!

New: Goldilocks (Lev.11)

- Reads without emot.

- Quite difficult

- He knows story though!

and can predict words by

looking at first letters.

(He knows the story)

E = 10/100

90%

5.3.xii) Sheepdog Max (Level 9)

OBSERVATION SHEET

Name:

Date: 21 May

GENERAL:

Excited

REREAD: None

INTERACTIVE WRITING:

Exp: Wiggle Worm

He enjoyed it & found it amazing.

Wrote 3 sentences.

RR: Max, the sheepdog (Lev. 9)

New Book.

No RR.

He read this book easily and it boosted his confidence after the difficult text of yesterday.

WORD WORK:

Write out new words:

"came, came, when, where, were"

NEW BOOK: Max, the sheepdog (Lev. 9)

He's degraded in his reading ability. He struggles more than previously. Therefore, I gave him level 9 book to read.

## ADDENDUM 6 – Example of a Grade 3 Reading Text (Level 11)

115 words  
(level 11)

Read the story:

### Kay's special pet

Kay has a pet.

It is still a baby.

A very big baby!

It is a baby lion.

Bad men killed the baby's mother.

Kay's dad found the lion baby in the bush.

Now Kay looks after  
the baby lion.

She feeds the cub with  
a bottle and  
calls her Dolly.

Dolly lives in Kay's house.

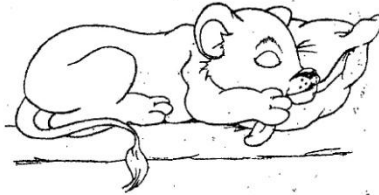
She has her own bed, but she likes to sleep  
on Kay's bed when Kay is not looking.

Dolly can fetch a ball  
and play hide-and-seek.

Kay loves Dolly  
and Dolly loves Kay.

One day Dolly will be  
too big to be kept as a pet.

Then she will have to go  
back to the bush.



# ADDENDUM 7 – Reading Recovery Levels and Related Groups and Bands

Getting ready for guided reading

65

**Australia / NZ**

Reading Recovery Levels	1	2	3	4	5	12	13	14	15	16	17
Developmental Stages	EMERGENT					TRANSITIONAL					
National Curriculum Levels	Group A					Group F					

**England (Ref: Baker et al. 1998)**

Reading Recovery Levels	1	2	3	4	5	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Developmental Stages	EMERGENT					TRANSITIONAL						
National Curriculum Levels	Working towards Level 1					Band 5		Band 6		Band 7		Working towards Level 2

**USA (Ref: Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, 1999)**

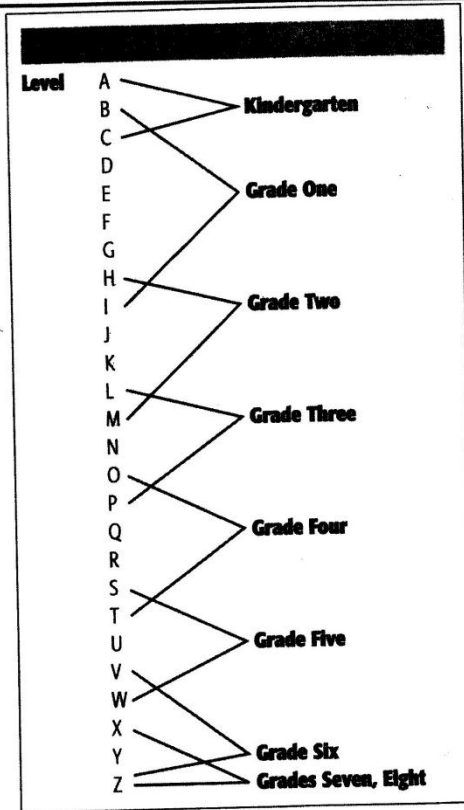
Reading Recovery Levels	I												
Developmental Stages	EMERGENT	TRANSITIONAL											
National Curriculum Levels	A	H		I		J		K		L		M	

Criteria for the "Fountas & Pinnell" levels are described up to Level P.

Figure 3.1 Reading Recovery levels and related groups or bands

## ADDENDUM 8 – Fountas and Pinnell Text Gradient Chart

FIG. I-2 Fountas and Pinnell Text Gradient Chart



the place of specific instruction devoted to helping students develop as writers. Through the writing workshop, teachers help young writers continually expand their learning of the craft, conventions, and process of writing for the purpose of communicating meaning to an audience. The writing continuum in this book lists specific understandings for each grade level related to craft, conventions, and process. It also suggests genres for students to learn how to write at each grade level.

*Oral, visual, and technological communication* are integral to all literacy processes; you'll see their presence in all other continua. This continuum singles out particular behaviors and understandings for intentional instruction.

# ADDENDUM 9 – University of Stellenbosch Ethical Clearance Letter



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY  
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

19 April 2010

Tel.: 021 - 808-9183  
Enquiries: Sidney Engelbrecht  
Email: sidney@sun.ac.za

Reference No. 287/2010

Ms N Kidd  
Department of Curriculum Studies  
University of Stellenbosch  
**STELLENBOSCH**  
7602

Ms N Kidd

## APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE

With regards to your application, I would like to inform you that the project, *A Levelled Literacy Intervention for Foundation Phase Learners*, has been approved on condition that:

1. The researcher/s remain within the procedures and protocols indicated in the proposal;
2. The researcher/s stay within the boundaries of applicable national legislation, institutional guidelines, and applicable standards of scientific rigor that are followed within this field of study and that
3. Any substantive changes to this research project should be brought to the attention of the Ethics Committee with a view to obtain ethical clearance for it.

We wish you success with your research activities.

Best regards



  
.....  
**MR SF ENGELBRECHT**

Secretary: Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Non-Health)

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Afdeling Navorsingsontwikkeling • Division of Research Development

Privaat Sak/Private Bag XI • 7602 Stellenbosch • Suid-Afrika/South Africa

Tel +27 21 808 9111 • Faks/Fax: +27 21 808 4537

