Utilising Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6)

by

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DECLARATION

I, **Mitchell Melvyn Messina**, hereby declare that **Utilising Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6)** is submitted by me for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Curriculum Studies at Stellenbosch University. The work contained in this thesis is original, and I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), and I have not previously in its entirety or in part, submitted it for obtaining any qualification. I do further cede copyright of the thesis in favour of Stellenbosch University.

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Signature (M.M. Messina)   Date: 6th March 2023

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that I assisted **Mitchell Melvyn Messina** with the language editing of his doctoral thesis for the Department of Curriculum Studies at the Faculty of Education, Stellenbosch University, entitled: **Utilising Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6)**, while he was preparing the manuscript for submission. His supervisors was Prof Michael le Cordeur with Prof Patricia Robey as co-supervisor. I went through the entire draft making corrections and suggestions with respect predominantly to language usage. Given the nature of the process, I did not see the final version but made myself available for consultation as long as was necessary. I may be contacted personally (details below) for further information or confidential confirmation of this certificate.

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ABSTRACT

In South Africa, learners' standard of reading in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) is cause for considerable concern. The 2016-PIRLS findings have provided overwhelming evidence that South African Grade 4 learners struggle with reading comprehension (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016). In addition, key findings of the same study showed that 78% of Grade 4 learners in South Africa do not have basic reading skills by the end of the Grade 4 school year. Therefore, the reading comprehension standard in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of South Africa is in dire need of reconsideration.

This study investigated how Choice Theory, as an explanation of human behaviour, can provide a foundation to enhance the teaching of Reciprocal Teaching reading comprehension strategies. The study highlighted that Choice Theory in education provides an intrinsic model of teaching that could be utilised to promote the explicit teaching of the four reading comprehension strategies of Reciprocal Teaching. This study was a real effort to shift the focus from the learners to the teachers who have not been trained effectively to teach Reciprocal Teaching reading comprehension strategies explicitly.

The study was based on the theoretical framework of Social Constructivism, Choice Theory, and Reciprocal Teaching as underpinning theories for the development of the teaching of reading comprehension. A qualitative research approach was adopted to make sense of participants' experience of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. For the purpose of this qualitative research, a single-case study was chosen as the research design to obtain in-depth information from the participants. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, focus group meetings and reflective journals of teachers. The data from the observations and interviews were used triangulated to confirm or disconfirm findings and helped to control or correct the subjective bias of the individual. The researcher used ATLAS.ti, a CAQDAS software programme, to manage and manipulate the data.

Key words: reading comprehension, Reciprocal Teaching, Choice Theory, Social Constructivism, supportive relationships, basic needs, and cooperative learning.

OPSOMMING

In Suid-Afrika is leerders se leesstandaard in die Intermediêre Fase (graad 4 tot 6) rede tot groot kommer. Die 2016-PIRLS-bevindinge het oorweldigende bewyse gelewer dat Suid-Afrikaanse graad 4-leerders met leesbegrip sukkel (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016). Boonop het sleutelbevindinge van dieselfde studie getoon dat 78% van graad 4-leerders in Suid-Afrika nie oor basiese leesvaardighede beskik teen die einde van die graad 4-skooljaar nie. Daarom moet die leesbegripstandaard in die Intermediêre Fase (graad 4 tot 6) van Suid-Afrika dringend heroorweeg word.

Hierdie studie het ondersoek ingestel na hoe Keuseteorie, 'n interne sielkunde en verduideliking van menslike gedrag, 'n grondslag kan verskaf om die eksplisiete onderrig van die vier leesbegripstrategieë van Resiprokale Onderrig te bevorder. Die studie het uitgelig dat Keuseteorie in die onderwys 'n intrinsieke model van onderrig verskaf wat aangewend kan word om die onderrig van leesbegrip in die Intermediêre Fase (Graad 4 tot 6) te bevorder. Hierdie studie is 'n werklike poging om die fokus van die leerders na die onderwysers te verskuif wat nie doeltreffend opgelei is om Resiprokale Onderrig leesbegripstrategieë eksplisiet te onderrig nie.

Die studie is gebaseer op die teoretiese raamwerk van Sosiale Konstruktivisme, Keuseteorie en Resiprokale Onderrig as onderliggende teorieë vir die ontwikkeling van die onderrig van leesbegrip. 'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering is gebruik om sin te maak uit deelnemers se ervaring van Keuseteorie en Resiprokale Onderrig. Vir die doel van hierdie kwalitatiewe navorsing is 'n enkelgevallestudie as navorsingsontwerp gekies om in-diepte inligting van die deelnemers te verkry. Data is ingesamel deur klaskamerwaarnemings, semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude, fokusgroepvergaderings en reflektiewe joernale van onderwysers. Die data van waarnemings en onderhoude is getrianguleer om bevindinge te bevestig of te weerlê en het gehelp om die subjektiewe vooroordeel van die individu te beheer of reg te stel. Die navorser het ATLAS.ti, 'n CAQDAS-sagtewareprogram, gebruik om die data te bestuur en te manipuleer.

Sleutelwoorde: leesbegrip, Wederkerige Onderrig, Keuseteorie, Sosiale Konstruktivisme, ondersteunende verhoudings, basiese behoeftes en koöperatiewe leer.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to:

my wife, Grace,

for your love,

your belief in me,

your understanding and support throughout this journey.

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1.1   Introduction

Since 1994 the South African education system has seen many remarkable reforms and curriculum transformations. Nevertheless, many challenges remain, one of them being the performance of primary school learners in literacy, especially reading comprehension. Klapwijk (2011) states that in South Africa, the emphasis in teaching reading, in general, seems to be more on comprehension testing and an overemphasis on phonics in early reading instruction. Comprehension instruction is not getting the attention it deserves in South African primary school classrooms. Reading comprehension consists of more than just decoding or reading words.

By introducing Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching, this study aims to contribute to improving the reading comprehension dilemma our Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners are facing. Reading comprehension can be described as a strategic process whereby the reader makes meaningful connections between their cognitive processes, the text and their prior knowledge. A good definition of reading comprehension might be: "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language" (Snow, 2002:11).

1.2   Background and Rationale

The findings of the latest Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS[1], 2016), an international assessment of reading comprehension assessment of learners in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), confirm our South African learners' poor performance in this critical area. Sound reading skills form the basis

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[1] **The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)** is an international comparative assessment that measures student learning in reading. Since 2001, PIRLS has been administered every five years. PIRLS documents worldwide trends in the reading knowledge of 4th-graders as well as school and teacher practices related to instruction.

for all other learning that takes place in the school. Academic achievement requires learners to be able to understand, analyse, and apply the information they gathered through their reading.

The PIRLS-2016 findings have provided overwhelming evidence that South African Grade 4 and 5 learners struggle with reading comprehension (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016).

Specifically, key findings of the 2016 PIRLS Literacy Grade 4 study showed that South Africa was the lowest performing out of 50 countries: 78% of Grade 4 learners in South Africa do not have basic reading skills by the end of the Grade 4 school year (Howie, Combrinck, Roux, Tshele, Mokoena, & McLeod, Palane, 2017). Learners' standard of reading in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) is cause for considerable concern (Le Cordeur, 2011). Beck and Condy (2017) point out that the CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) document states that 'comprehension' should be taught but does not prescribe *how* it should be taught. Another point of concern is that of inadequate teacher training. According to Klopper (2012), a conclusion could be drawn that most intermediate and senior phase teachers did not receive sufficient training to teach reading explicitly as prescribed by the curriculum.

It is evident that the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) is in dire need of restructuring with regard to the way teaching of reading comprehension is approached.

1.3   Motivation for the study

The researcher is interested in exploring the possibility that using specific reading comprehension strategies integrated with the application of Choice Theory concepts will promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6).

This study is a follow-up of the researcher's previous research (Messina, 1993) on

Reciprocal Teaching with grade 11 Afrikaans-speaking learners in a high school. The findings of that research showed that:

1. The four strategies: predicting, clarifying, questioning, and summarising of Reciprocal Teaching, can be taugt explicitly and effectively to learners.

2. An urgent review of the teaching of reading comprehension is needed in South African schools.

3. The continuation of conventional comprehension testing is no longer viable.

The researcher's interest in the Choice Theory was triggered by the Phi Delta Kappan article (Glasser, 1997): "A New Look at School Failure and School Success". Glasser explains that: "The cause of both school failure and marriage failure is that almost all people believe in and practice stimulus/response psychology, Glasser contends. He suggests a better alternative - CHOICE THEORY™ - to nurture the warm, supportive human relationships that students need to succeed in school and that couples need to succeed in marriage.

This article intrigued and inspired the researcher to become a prolific reader of all of Glasser's books and helped him to gain a deeper understanding of the Choice Theory as an internal psychology and how it is diametrically the opposite of external control psychology. According to Bechuke (2015), misconduct and ill-discipline among educators and learners in the classroom are due to educators' dependence on external control psychology.

Brown and Palincsar's seminal work (1984), a large body of research literature, has clearly shown that explicitly teaching and modelling comprehension strategies can improve the comprehension abilities of readers. Reciprocal teaching is a methodology that uses four essential strategies: predicting, clarifying, questioning, and summarising, which provide struggling readers with techniques to better understand the text (McNair, 2019). Brown and Campione (1996) stressed that fundamental principles of learning and instruction underpin the Reciprocal Teaching technique. These principles include scaffolding, thinking aloud, meta-cognition and cooperative learning.

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Palincsar and Brown's (1984) seminal study on reciprocal teaching has found the teaching of reading strategies effective. This approach takes the form of a dialogue between the teacher and learners about text segments to construct the meaning of the text. Relton (2017) posits that Reciprocal Teaching is a metacognitive approach that promotes active learning. It shifts the teacher's role to helping students acquire specific comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring activities that the students can use to monitor and facilitate their own comprehension (Rosenshine & Meister, 1994).

Reciprocal Teaching assumes a gradual shift of responsibility for the learning process from teacher to learner, which includes the teacher explicitly modelling the use of the four reading comprehension strategies. Ultimately, the students assume control and act as teachers to their peers using the strategies they have learnt (De Boer, 2003).

Reciprocal Teaching should be modelled explicitly and applied flexibly to promote learner autonomy, as it is expected that learners will eventually lead the small group sessions. Teachers should know how to model comprehension strategies for learners, and they need to know how to ensure learners are actively engaged in classroom dialogue for comprehension purposes (Zimmerman, 2010). Therefore, the teacher's role becomes central in teaching the four reciprocal teaching strategies.

Reciprocal Teaching has proved to be effective in enhancing the students' comprehension (Bess, 2007; Sarasti, 2007; Yoosabai, 2009; Salehi & Vafakhah, 2013; Oczkus, 2003). These findings could offer a framework to improve the reading comprehension of Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners in South Africa. Rosenshine and Meister (1994) conducted a meta-analysis of 16 early Reciprocal Teaching studies, including journal articles and dissertations, to determine the effectiveness of Reciprocal Teaching on reading comprehension. They found that "when standardised tests were used, the Reciprocal Teaching treatment was significantly superior to the control treatment".

Research has found that even if only one reading comprehension strategy is taught, this can improve learner comprehension (Gill, 2008). Internationally there is strong

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evidence that Reciprocal Teaching is an effective teaching method that produces notable improvements in reading comprehension (Hattie, 2009).

Reciprocal Teaching was selected as a vehicle to promote and develop the teaching of reading comprehension in this study. The study focuses on preparing three current Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) educators of one primary school to teach explicit reading comprehension strategies. Basson's (2016) research highlighted the fact that 84% of respondents of Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) educators in Afrikaans HL (Home Language) classes indicated that they do not explicitly teach comprehension strategies.

The three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers (1 Grade 4, 1 Grade 5 and 1 Grade 6) who were invited to take part in this study received professional development training in Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and Lead Management (27 hours) and Reciprocal Teaching (12 hours). The researcher conducted the training, which was ongoing over the first and second quarters of 2022. All training was undertaken after school hours.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

As human relationships are crucial for teaching reading comprehension, this study will draw from the Choice Theory developed by William Glasser as well as on Vygotsky's constructivist theory of social interaction.

Choice Theory is a framework that explains human behaviour and motivation. Applying this understanding as a practical approach to creating more satisfying human relationships in the classroom could promote reading comprehension when integrated with Vygotsky's theory. As evidence of the effectiveness of the use of Choice Theory in the classroom, Glasser posits that by the third or fourth grade in any Glasser Quality School, the early differences among learners were more likely caused by different rates of maturity than by an inability to learn, level off, and almost everyone becomes a competent reader (Glasser, 2000).

Knowing that there is already a substantial body of work on the Choice Theory, the

researcher aimed to explore this theory further and do research that might eventually be beneficial for promoting the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of the selected school.

According to Glasser (2000), learners come to school with common basic needs. They need to feel safe and secure. They need to feel they belong to the group. They need to feel a sense of competence, which is often experienced in classroom achievement, which in turn impacts on their sense of self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-confidence.

Sullo (2007:9) pointed out:

> "Each time we learn something new, we are having fun, another universal human motivator. It is our playfulness and our sense of discovery that allows us to learn as much as we do".

Learners also need freedom, which is often addressed by their desire to have choices and freedom to move about and engage with others. Social interaction is paramount in meeting these five basic needs (Irvine, 2015). When teachers recognise and understand the basic needs of their learners, the teachers' challenges are met with hard work and application from the learners.

Research shows that when children feel they belong and their interests are recognised as important, they become more engaged in the learning process and experience greater academic achievement (Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Bockern, 2006). Glasser combined the elements of cooperative learning with the principles of the Choice Theory and, in the process, improved the relationships in the classroom (Roy, 2014).

Constructivism and Lev Vygotsky's Social Development Theory are the theoretical underpinnings of Reciprocal Teaching. Vygotsky emphasised the fundamental role of social interaction (dialogue) in the development of cognition. According to Vygotsky (1978), critical learning by the child occurs through social interaction with a skilful tutor. Vygotsky's social constructivism is an interactive, student-focused approach which takes into account students' needs and their current abilities before prompting them into undertaking the new task.

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Even if Reciprocal Teaching were implemented in our current school systems, it would likely fail because both learners and teachers have internalised the hierarchy and autocratic external control management utilised by the current education system. We must move away from this external control-dominated environment, which destroys student-teacher-classroom relationships, towards a choice theory environment, which connects teachers, students, and parents (Glasser, 2000). We need a different approach to managing learners' behaviour in our schools. Bechuke (2015) posits that it is important for educators to understand and apply the Choice Theory in understanding learners' behaviours and actions to effectively manage and influence learners' behaviours in schools.

Louis (2009) postulates that Vygotsky demonstrates how cognitive development is dependent on effective social interactions (relationships) and how to make relationships (social interactions) effective. The call for good human relationships in the classroom is critical for introducing Reciprocal Teaching. By applying the Choice Theory in the classroom, learners would be able to satisfy their basic needs for love and belonging, freedom, fun and power when they take up their responsibility for assigned roles as a predictor, questioner, clarifier or summariser in the reciprocal teaching and learning process.

1.5   Problem Statement

From the introductory section, it is evident that we have a serious reading comprehension crisis in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) in South African primary schools. The poor performance of South African learners in the PIRLS studies emphasises the urgent need for explicit reading instructional practices within each classroom. One of the main reasons for this study is precisely the poor performance of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners in the selected school. The systemic 2019 results of WCED showed that the Grade 3 Language results showed a slight decrease of 0.9 percentage points from 45.8% in 2018 to 44.9% in 2019. For the selected school, the systemic tests of 2019 for Afrikaans Home Language for Grade 3 showed that only 44% of the learners could recall

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information from the text. According to the school, only 52,6% of those could recall information from the text in Afrikaans Home Language.

The possibilities for the effective teaching of reading comprehension strategies in the senior phase within the South African context were investigated by Klopper (2012). At the end of the study, the researcher did not doubt the value of the explicit teaching of comprehension strategies.

There are many reasons exist for the lack of focus on reading comprehension instruction. The focus so far was mainly on the learners, and not much research has been done on how to improve the skill set of teachers on how to improve their teaching of reading. Teachers do not seem to view comprehension as part of the reading process and cannot teach the concept (Klapwijk, 2015).

Stols (2010) concurs that the poor performance of Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners could be that teachers do not know how to teach reading comprehension and for many of them, it is just entails the mere retrieval of information. The researcher acknowledges the mention of reading comprehension activities in the CAPS documents. However, teachers lack the understanding of integrating theoretical knowledge with the practical implementation of reading comprehension strategies. It is, therefore imperative to teach reading comprehension strategies, as they play a significant role in learners' reading literacy achievement. This means there is an urgent need for research on the explicit teaching of comprehension strategies, especially in the Intermediate Phase, where learners should start reading to learn. Klopper (2012) established guidelines that would enable the effective teaching of reading comprehension strategies in the senior phase within the South African context.

To promote the teaching of reading comprehension, we need to start with relationship-building in the classroom. Positive and supportive relationships between teachers and students are essential for creating an effective learning environment for Reciprocal Teaching. The Choice Theory, according to Glasser, involves bringing learners to an awareness of their responsibility to make their own decisions about their learning and behaviour in the

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classroom (Bechuke, 2015).

Glasser (2000) also suggests teachers certain habits that he believes are more likely to create strong relationships. He refers to these habits as caring or connecting habits: encouraging, supporting, listening, accepting, trusting, respecting and negotiating differences. Connecting habits bring us closer together in our relationships and, therefore, help solve problems. Glasser also notes several habits that he believes harm the much-needed positive teacher/learner relationship and refers to the following habits as deadly or disconnecting: criticising, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing and rewarding to control (bribing). Disconnecting habits drive relationships further apart, and so the problem grows (Naderi, Baezzat & Motaghedifard, 2020).

Reciprocal Teaching is a model that researchers favour globally (Bess, B.R., 2007; Hampson-Jones, 2014; McNair, 2019; Ozckus, 2003) because this comprehension model gives learners a set of strategies that encourage comprehension of the text. Research has found that even if only one reading comprehension strategy is taught, this can improve learner comprehension (Gill, 2008). Internationally there is strong evidence that Reciprocal Teaching is an effective teaching method that produces notable improvements in reading comprehension (Hattie, 2009).

To summarise: the problem at the core of this study is the reading comprehension crisis in South African primary schools. To address this problem, the researcher will investigate how the utilisation of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching can promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase. The research could guide Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers to:

1. To apply Choice Theory and focus on building supportive relationships with their learners so that learners can satisfy their basic needs in the classroom and take responsibility for their learning.

2. To make a paradigm shift in terms of rote instruction to explicit instruction of reading comprehension strategies by challenging their perceptions of teaching reading comprehension.

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3. To model the four Reciprocal Teaching strategies flexibly to their learners and gradually shift the responsibility to learners to lead the cooperative learning activities.

1.6   Aim of the research

The primary purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate how the utilisation of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching can promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of one school. The secondary aims are outlined below:

1. To investigate to what extent an understanding of Choice Theory as an internal control psychology rather than external control psychology can promote the teaching of reading comprehension. This was addressed through observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and participants' reflective journals.

2. To investigate what teachers who embrace Choice Theory can do to create a classroom focusing on effective social interaction between learners as a key component of cognitive development. This was addressed through observation of learner participation in the classrooms and interviews with teachers.

3. To investigate how the explicit teaching of Reciprocal Teaching strategies can change Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension. This was addressed through in-service professional development training, interacting with teachers, interviewing them and observing them in their classrooms.

4. To investigate how the modelling of the four reciprocal teaching strategies by teachers to learners can promote reading comprehension and enable learners to construct meaning from text by taking responsibility for their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser. This was addressed through observing the teaching of the four Reciprocal Teaching strategies in the classroom, learners' social interaction, gradual release of the teachers' responsibility, individual interviews, and focus group discussions.

1.7 Research Questions

1.7.1 Main Research Question

How can Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching be utilised to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase *(Grades 4 to 6) in one school?*

1.7.2 Sub-Questions

The following sub-questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. To what extent can an understanding of Choice Theory as an internal control psychology of human behaviour assist teachers in enhancing their teaching of reading comprehension?

2. What can teachers who embrace Choice Theory do to create a warm, supportive classroom that will enable them to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6)?

3. How can Reciprocal Teaching, with its explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies, change Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension?

4. How can the modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners promote the teaching of reading comprehension to enable learners to construct meaning from text by taking responsibility for their roles as a predictor, questioner, clarifier, and summariser?

1.8 Research Methodology

Research methodology refers to the specific procedures or techniques used in a study to identify, select, process, and analyse information about the topic. Although there are other distinctions in the research modes, the most common classification of research methods is between quantitative and qualitative. A fundamental distinction between quantitative and qualitative research is the form of data collection, analysis and presentation. Quantitative research makes use of questionnaires, surveys and

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experiments to gather data that is revised and tabulated in numbers. In qualitative research, different knowledge claims, enquiry strategies, and data collection methods and analysis are employed, where the focus is on interpretation and perceptions (Creswell, 2003).

The research approach chosen for this study is qualitative, using a single-case study from one school as a research design. Creswell (2007:2) defines qualitative research as "an enquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting."

The qualitative data sources included observation and participant observation (fieldwork), interviews and questionnaires, documents and texts, and the researcher's impressions and reactions.

These data sources offered the researcher the information needed to explore, understand and answer the research questions.

1.9   Research Paradigm

In this study, the researcher used the social constructivist paradigm to make sense of participants' experience of the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching by interacting with them, observing them and listening carefully to them. The social constructivist paradigm is concerned with understanding the world through the subjective experiences of individuals. Klapwijk (2012) posits that the social constructivist paradigm clearly states that teachers and learners must be active participants in learning and that teachers are responsible for creating an appropriate context that engages learners and promotes learning. According to Stols (2010), the learners in a social constructivist paradigm must take on the responsibility for their own learning with the guidance of the teacher or other more knowledgeable peers. A relaxed and caring learning environment should be created where a positive attitude and motivation will be fostered for the learner to succeed in acquiring and learning the target language. Choice Theory will enable teachers to create a warm, supportive classroom atmosphere conducive to learning.

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The social constructivist paradigm will allow the researcher to become part of the participants' teaching world by interacting with them, observing them and listening carefully to what they have to say. The unit of analysis for this study was a group of three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers from a primary school in the Western Cape.

1.10 Research Approach

The researcher considered the qualitative approach appropriate for this study, as it allowed the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of human behaviour. Qualitative research involves using and collecting various materials that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Qualitative research methods lend themselves well to investigating problems where participation, and observation are of interest (Shank, 2006). To this end, the reciprocal teaching process can be richly described as a phenomenon through qualitative research techniques.

According to Flick (2009), the essential features of qualitative research are the correct choice of appropriate methods and theories, the recognition and analysis of different perspectives, the researcher's reflection on their research as part of the process of knowledge production, and various approaches and methods.

For this research, a single-case study was chosen as the research design, and the decision to select only three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers was based on the need to obtain in-depth information. The quality of the study was not focused on the number of participants in the study but on the richness of the information that will be obtained from the participants. A further strong reason for the single-case study as the design was to investigate the perception and experience of teaching reading comprehension.

Creswell and Poth (2018) view case study research as a methodology: a type of design in qualitative research that may be a product of the inquiry. Case study research is defined as a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or uses multiple resources

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(interviews, observations, documents and reports) and techniques in the gathering of processes. The case study is helpful for studying educational innovations, evaluating programmes, and informing policy (Merriam, S.B. & Tisdell, E.J. 2015)

Merriam (2009) identifies three unique features of a case study: particularistic, descriptive and heuristic. Case study research is particularistic in that it focuses on a particular situation or phenomenon. The phenomenon on which this study focused was how the utilisation of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching can promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase. The study focused on the process of implementing the intervention and the outcomes.

Yin (2009) posits that a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident.

Zainal (2007) notes Yin's three categories of case studies, namely exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Exploratory case studies set out to explore any phenomenon in the data which serves as a point of interest to the researcher. Descriptive case studies set out to describe natural phenomena which occur within the data question. Explanatory case studies examine the data closely, both at a surface and deep level, to explain the phenomena revealed by the data.

This research adopted an explanatory embedded single-case study approach that enabled a mixture of qualitative research techniques to be incorporated into the overall research design. These included observations, individual semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and participants' reflective journals.

The semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with all the participants.

This took place in two phases, with an interval between the two phases. Phase one focused on the prior perceptions and experiences of the participants regarding teaching reading comprehension. Phase two of the interview was informed by classroom observations, focusing on the participants' current experiences.

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1.11   Selection of Participating Schools and Participants

Determining an adequate sample size in qualitative research is ultimately a matter of judgement in evaluating the quality of the information collected against the uses to which it will be put, the particular research method and purposeful sampling strategy employed, and the research product intended. Flick (2009) suggested that the individuals or cases are selected as participants for a qualitative study not because they represent their population (and, therefore, the issue of generalizability) but owing to their relevance to the research topic. This single-case study focused on the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of one quintile 2 (no school fees) primary school in Paarl, Western Cape, South Africa, where the language of instruction is Afrikaans HL (Home Language).

1.11.1 Criteria for Selection of the School

For this single-case study, the researcher has identified a previously disadvantaged

school in Paarl as the research school. The main reasons for the selection of this

school are:

- Only the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) classes with Afrikaans HL (Home Language) were considered for the research;

- There was one class per grade in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6);

- It was a rural school with learners coming from challenging socio-economic circumstances;

- It was an Afrikaans HL (Home Language) school;

- The literacy results of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) were below average.

1.11.2 Criteria for Selection of Participants

The participants for this study were carefully and purposefully selected, and the

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following criteria guided the selection:

- Only Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers were considered for the study;

- No requirements in terms of years of experience were needed;

- All participants were invited to do professional development training in Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching, and this was at no cost to them;

- Participation in this study voluntary, and they were allowed to withdraw at any stage;

- All teachers should be educated to a diploma or undergraduate level and regarded Afrikaans as their home language.

1.12   Research Intervention

For this research intervention, the researcher has decided on professional development that would support the application of the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching in the Intermediate Phase. Traditional professional development models usually rely on direct instruction during short in-service courses provided by outside experts or departmental representatives. There is little evidence that the typical "one shot" models of professional development have any lasting effects on gains made by participants (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

The intervention for this research was designed to actively involve Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers from the outset to familiarise them with Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. However, a teacher-driven intervention like this would mean that teachers needed clear guidelines, sufficient information, and ongoing training. What they would also need was continued encouragement, guidance and support. Duffy (1993) notes that studies have shown that the professional development of reading teachers is a long-term process that requires careful monitoring and intensive follow-up support.

All three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers were invited to do the 4-day Basic Intensive Training (27 hours) in Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and Lead

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Management during the first quarter of 2022. In the 2nd quarter of 2022, they received 10 hours of Professional Development training in Reciprocal Teaching. All the Professional Development training was facilitated by the researcher. During follow-up group discussions teachers shared their experiences with both Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching.

The broad aim of the professional development was to empower teachers with knowledge and skills that would enable them to:

1. Internalise the Choice Theory and use it to build supportive relationships with their learners, and

2. Change their perception of reading comprehension and learn how to use the Reciprocal Teaching model.

A programme for all the training was negotiated with the principal and the teachers. After the training, the researcher invited teachers to give their input in planning and to put together a programme for classroom observations, interviews, and follow-up group discussions. For the Professional Development of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers, Guskey's (1986) Alternative Model was used. The Alternative Model takes into account the effects of staff development, that is, change in teaching methods, change in teacher perceptions and beliefs, and change in the learning outcomes, have a complex and reciprocal relationship.
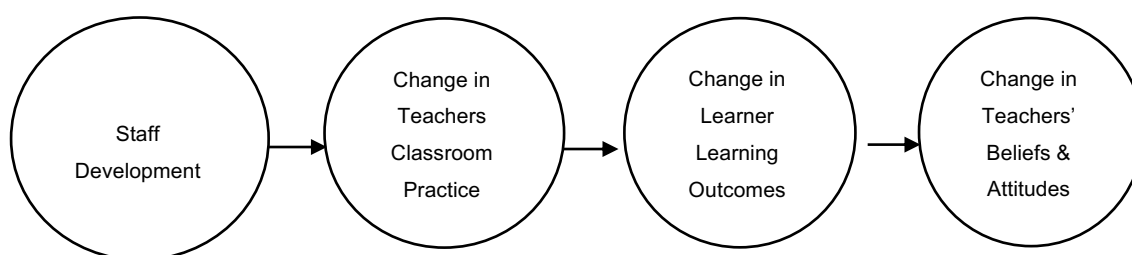
Figure 1: Guskey's Alternative Model

1.13   Data Collection Techniques

According to Cresswell (2003), data collection entails various activities to gather information to answer several research questions. For this qualitative single-case

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study, several data sources were used to gain an in-depth understanding of how Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching could be utilised to promote the teaching of reading comprehension. As a strategy for validating the procedures and results of this study, investigator triangulation was applied. Triangulation refers to observing the research issue and findings from various points (Flick, 2009). Triangulation has also been viewed as a qualitative research strategy to test validity of findings through converging information from different sources (Carter et al., 2014). Investigator triangulation means the employment of other observers or interviewers to control or correct the subjective bias of the individual.

The data collection techniques adopted are outlined below:

1.13.1 Classroom Observations

Qualitative researchers typically gather multiple forms of data from interviews, observations, and documents, rather than relying on a single data source (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Observation in qualitative research is an approach involving data using one's senses, especially looking and listening in a systemic and meaningful way (McKechnie, 2008). Classroom observations were negotiated with the principal and teachers so that the regular school programme was not interrupted. The purpose of the observations in this study was to gain a deep understanding of how the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching were applied to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase. Observation sheets and audio recordings were used for in-person classroom observations, and ATLAS.ti was used to capture the data from the observations and transcripts of audio recordings.

1.13.2 Individual interviews

According to Johnson and Christensen (2014), a qualitative interview allows the

researcher to enter another person's inner world and understand the person's perceptions, beliefs, and values. Particular attention was given to semi-structured reflective interviews to espress participants' insights, perceptions, experiences and

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choices after professional development. Triangulation was obtained by integrating different data-collection methods to ensure valid and reliable research**.** In addition, an independent Curriculum Manager from a private school group and a registered instructor of William Glasser International was asked to do semi-structured interviews with the teachers after the classroom observations. The interviews were conducted one on one with the three individual teachers, sometimes directly after a class observation and sometimes as part of maintaining regular contact with teachers during informal visits to the school. Notes taken during interviews were used to capture context, but the interviews were also audio-recorded and transcribed.

1.13.3 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions are particularly effective for obtaining information about why people think or feel the way they do. These discussions were conducted with the three intervention teachers to understand how they applied Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. This also allowed them to share the successes and challenges they experienced by using what they have learned from their professional development. The individual teacher interviews as well as the focus group discussions were conducted after school hours.

1.13.4 Reflective Practices

Reflective practice is 'learning through and from experience towards gaining new insights of self and practice' (Finlay, 2008). It is a process that facilitates learning and understanding and is the most important source of professional development and improvement. It brings theory and practice together. The researcher asked the teachers to keep a reflective journal to record their thoughts and feelings on their teaching and learning.

1.13.5 Initial Questionnaire

An initial questionnaire was used to obtain data on the teachers' perceptions,

thoughts and beliefs about an appropriate approach that yields better results for promoting and teaching reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase. The data collection started in the 3rd quarter of 2021 with an information session for the whole staff.

These data-collection sources were selected to capture the perceptions, experiences and responses of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers during participation in this study.

1.14   Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organising the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or in a discussion (Cresswell and Poth, 2018). The analysis involves "breaking up" the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships (Mouton, 2001). The data collected in this single-case study will allow the researcher to take a holistic view of how the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers understood, owned and practised the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. The researcher used thematic analysis to analyse the data. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. In analysing the data, the researcher will follow the six phases of thematic analysis as posited by Braun and Clarke (2006):

1.   Familiarising yourself with your data

2.   Generating initial codes

3.   Searching for themes

4.   Reviewing themes

5.   Defining and naming themes

      6.   Producing the report

ATLAS.ti, a data storage and processing software, was used to manage and manipulate the data. The researcher used ATLAS.ti, a CAQDAS software programme, to code and analyse transcripts and field notes, build literature reviews, create network diagrams, and visualise data.

With the assistance of the Research ICT, a Data Management Plan for storage and backing up of data on the university's MS One Drive was set up.

1.15   Ethical considerations

The researcher sought gatekeepers' permission from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED), William Glasser International, and the primary school where the research was going to take place. WCED guidelines for COVID-19 were strictly adhered to for all school and classroom visits, as well as Professional Development training of educators. The ethical issue of the researcher's role as a provider of Basic Intensive Training in Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and Lead Management has been clarified with the William Glasser International Board in the USA. In general, ethical clearance for the research project was also obtained from the Stellenbosch University Ethics Committee.

The researcher invited the principal and all the IP teachers to a briefing session to inform them about the scope of the research and their voluntary participation. The researcher also sought permission from individual participants willing to participate in the study through their informed consent. Participants were assured that all information they shared with the researcher during the study that can identify them as a participant was protected. They had the right to exit the research if they choose not to continue. This would be done by keeping the information and research information completely confidential and anonymous.

Although this research was mainly focusing on the teachers, an effort was made by the researcher to get consent from the parents. However, this was during the post-Covid-19 period and learners were attending school on a rotational basis. Parents were reluctant to fill out the consent forms. That is the reason why the researcher

sent a letter informing all parents about the research. Information would only be disclosed with the consent of the participants or as required by law. The data were stored with a password on the researcher's computer. Only the researcher and his supervisor would have access to the data. All participants and the organisation would remain anonymous during the final research report.

1.16 Chapter Division

Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

1. Context of the study

2. Motivation for the study

3. Problem statement

4. Aim of the research

5. Research questions

6. Research methodology

7. Data collection techniques and analysis

8. Ethical considerations.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

1. Social Constructivism

2. Choice Theory

3. Reciprocal Teaching

Chapter 3: Literature Review

1. Reading comprehension

2. Choice Theory

3. Reciprocal Teaching (predicting, clarifying, questioning, summarising)

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Data Collection

1. Main Research Question and Sub-Questions

2. Research Paradigm: Social Constructivism

3. Research Approach: Qualitative Research

4. Research Design: Case Study

5. Population and Sampling

6. Approach

7. Triangulation

8. Data Collection (classroom observations, interviews, focus group discussions, reflective journals)

Chapter 5: Presentation and Analysis of Data

Chapter 6: Discussion of the Findings, Limitations, Implications, Contributions, and Proposed Recommendations for Further Research

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

2.1   Introduction

This chapter will provide and discuss a theoretical framework for situating the results of this research study in the field of education. The researcher has chosen Choice Theory (Glasser, 1998) as the internal psychological model that provides the foundation for Reciprocal Teaching. According to Erwin (2010), Choice Theory offers a clear, comprehensive explanation of human behaviour, which is valuable to educators in helping students develop emotionally, socially, and academically.

Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching underpinned the theoretical framework of this study, and both relate to Vygotsky's Social Constructivism. Choice Theory can be integrated with Social Constructivism, and Reciprocal Teaching is based on the philosophy of Vygotsky's theory. Together, these two approaches can be utilised to develop a plan for establishing collaborative, need-satisfying relationships between teachers and learners. This is part of the initial strategy for creating an environment where learners get their needs met within the classroom.

2.2   Social Constructivism

As human relations are crucial for teaching reading comprehension, this study has drawn from Choice Theory developed by William Glasser and Vygotsky's Constructivist Theory of social interaction.

Creswell and Poth (2018) posit that social constructivism is another paradigm or worldview. According to Creswell (2013), social constructivism is an interpretive framework whereby individuals seek to understand their world and develop their own particular meanings that correspond to their experiences. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas. As a research paradigm, social constructivism research is based on the premise that social reality is shaped by way of human experience and social backdrop, thereby making it well suited to

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research human behaviours which are related in the context of its socio-cultural issues (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016; Bhattacherjee, 2012).

Palincsar (1998) states that social constructivist perspectives focus on the interdependence of social and individual processes in the co-construction of knowledge. Constructivists suggest that students learn best through social interactions in the classroom and that these interactions can result in changes in conceptual understanding and thinking. Social interaction is of great importance in Social Constructivism, and interaction between individuals creates a culture that is receptive to learning (Bruner, 1996). At the heart of Vygotsky's theory is that development occurs through social relations. According to Vygotsky, learning takes place in a socially and culturally embedded context, fosters students learning, shapes their awareness about their learning, and enhances their performances (Ramadan, 2017).

Alghamdi (2021) posits that the main concept of social constructivism is to engage students in a real social context to enhance their learning. This is based on Vygotsky's belief that learning cannot take place outside a meaningful context; there is an interwoven relationship between human cognitive aspects and social context. Ntuli (2019) states that Social Constructivism is a sociological theory of knowledge that states that human development is socially situated, and knowledge is gained as individuals interact with each other. Social Constructivism, as defined by Mutekwe, Machingambi, Maphosa, Ndofirepi, & Wadesango (2013), is an epistemology that foregrounds the social construction of knowledge through interactive teaching and learning activities in the classroom. According to Ntuli (2019), Social Constructivism highlights the significance of social interaction and the role of culture in the construction of knowledge. Social constructivism emphasises the importance of learners' experience, that is, the role of culture and social interaction.

Bruner (1996) posits that what an individual learns comes from the surrounding culture and, therefore, that culture is shared during the learning process. From a social constructivist perspective, it is impossible to separate an individual from social influences, and according to Palincsar (1998), the sociocultural context in which

teaching and learning occur is seen as culturally and contextually specific.

Palincsar continues (1998:10):

> "From social constructivist perspectives, separating the individual from social influences is not regarded as possible. The sociocultural contexts in which teaching and learning occur are considered critical to learning itself, and learning is viewed as culturally and contextually specific."

Akpan et al. (2020) state that Social Constructivism is a learning theory that views learning as a social process where students collaborate by engaging in group activities for meaningful learning. Social Constructivism favours cooperative learning, where individuals share ideas in a group. Vygotsky suggested that learners needed assistance to achieve goals. When students work cooperatively, they solve problems more quickly than when working individually. Batten and Ross (2021) posit that Social Constructivism as a learning theory emphasises that an individual's learning process consists of collaboration with others to create cognitive artefacts, constructing new knowledge based on previous knowledge obtained by the individual.

According to Klapwijk (2011), Social Constructivism clearly states that teachers and learners must both be active participants in learning and that teachers are responsible for setting an appropriate context that engages learners and promotes learning. From a social constructivist perspective, interactions such as those achieved through classroom discussion are thought to provide mechanisms for enhancing higher-order thinking (Palincsar, 1998). Basson (2016) postulates that socio-constructivists emphasise the role of teachers as active participants with pupils in constructing learning and believe the relationship between instruction and internal learning is very complex.

Ramadan (2017) posits that under the constructivist spectrum, the teacher's role is to assist learners in comprehending and processing what they read and train them to use strategies for making meaning out of reading (Leanne, 2003; Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Louis (2009) argues that if we assume that we find Vygotsky's theory credible,

then we want to use scaffolding to assist students with completing tasks within their Zones of Proximal Development, through which they will acquire the psychological tools they will use to explore their environment and interact with others.

Palincsar (1998) states that it is hard to imagine a more significant challenge to social constructivism than promoting meaningful learning for all children, especially for those who are linguistically and culturally diverse.

Social constructivist classrooms should therefore be centred around the learner, where the teacher acts as a facilitator, and the learners work in groups on tasks that allow them to integrate their own knowledge within their learning experience. Ardiansyah and Ujihanti (2018) posit that teachers should act as a facilitator to facilitate students in order to construct the knowledge of students that will lead to skill mastery. All learning processes taking place in the classroom are student-centred activities. Lynch (2016) states that teachers and school leaders must shift and reshape their perspectives to apply social constructivism theories in the education arena. Both must move from "people who teach" to "facilitators of learning".

The social constructivist learning theory includes Vygotsky's concept of zones of proximal development (ZPD), in which the learner can move beyond their "zone of proximal development" with the help of the teacher or the peer group that provide scaffolding of content and other social interactions with those more skilled in the current subject.

According to Akpan et al. (2020), Social Constructivism teaching methods can be grouped into two major groups, namely, discussion teaching method and activity: jigsaw:

Discussion teaching method

Omwirhiren (2015) defines the discussion method as a method that utilises guided interaction to highlight a particular subject matter to facilitate the students. The role of the teacher in this method is that of a facilitator. The teacher guides the students through informed discussion to discover things for themselves. This is a method of teaching in which students and teachers exchange ideas about a chosen topic.

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Activity: Jigsaw

A jigsaw is a form of guided discovery teaching method that utilises collaborative or cooperative learning techniques. Jigsaw as an instructional strategy adopts a cooperative learning method and its principles. In this teaching method, students are organised in groups, and the teacher creates situations encouraging students' cooperation in the teaching-learning process. Ikeh et al. (2016) posit what makes jigsaw an effective teaching method is that each student's success is needed for the group's success. This makes the group work as a team to achieve success.

According to Palincsar and Schutz (2011:348):

> "What unifies postmodern constructivist perspectives is a rejection of the view that the locus of knowledge is in the individual; learning and understanding are regarded as inherently social, and cultural activities and tools (ranging from symbol systems to artefacts to language) are regarded as integral to conceptual development."

In summary, social constructivism will enable learners to construct shared meaning through social interaction with educators and other learners. Social constructivism promotes collaborative learning for all learners with diverse learning styles.

Teachers in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) need to shift and change their perceptions of how they teach reading comprehension. Instead of just teaching lessons, they need to become facilitators of learning and involve learners in the learning process. Through the cooperative learning activities teachers demonstrated their willingness to gradually releasing their authority to the learners and in terms of Choice Theory learners' power need was satisfied by taking the responsibility for the four Reciprocal Teaching roles.

2.3   Choice Theory

The Choice Theory is a theoretical and practical approach to creating more satisfying human relationships. Hardigree (2011) posits that Glasser's Choice Theory was closely connected to the social constructivist theory of learning. Louis (2009) states

that Vygotsky's work has much to add to current educational practice, and William Glasser's Choice Theory helps us better understand how sociocultural cognitive development proceeds. Glasser (1998) agrees that learning is influenced heavily by what happens in the social realm.

Louis (2009) argues that understanding Glasser's Choice Theory provides teachers with the tools necessary to introduce and improve social interactions. Irvine (2009) states that if social interaction is absent, cognitive development does not proceed; if social interaction is inefficient or ineffective, cognitive development is hindered. Marashi (2018) posits that the use of the Choice Theory in a classroom provides learners with a more comfortable, stimulating, and friendly environment in which those who are learning English as a Foreign Language in a non-English-speaking country **(**EFL), learners take ownership and responsibility for their learning as well as sharing and exchanging their ideas to accomplish their aimed purpose. This was demonstrated in this study when learners took reponsilibity for their different roles (predictor, questioner, clarifier, summariser) in the Jigsaw cooperative learning activities.

Naughton (2019) suggests that one way to create an environment of love and belonging in the classroom is to have opportunities for interaction among the students. Boroomand-Rashti (2018) states that based on his work with the Choice Theory, Glasser developed an educational model that places the student at the centre of the schema to ensure they actively learn and improve. This is done by eschewing external control (presumably by the authority figure) in favour of strong student-teacher relationships and recognising the importance of choice for each student (Glasser, 2000).

Reasons for choosing the Choice Theory as the theoretical framework are:

1. The five components of the Choice Theory can be easily taught through analogies.

2. Choice Theory offers a clear, comprehensive explanation of human behaviour.

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3. The researcher is familiar with Choice Theory and has vast experience in teaching Choice Theory.

Glasser (1998) posits that Choice Theory is an internal control psychology; it explains why and how we make the choices that determine the course of our lives. According to Gabriel and Matthews (2011), Glasser theorised that behaviour is a choice made by an individual based on their attempt to get what they want and is, therefore, not determined or controlled by external circumstances. In other words, the power lies within each person to determine how they will respond to the demands of the social and physical environment. Humans, thus, should not be perceived as victims or slaves of circumstances but as self-determining beings who take responsibility for the consequences of their choices.

Hinton and Wubbolding (2011) state that using the Choice Theory framework for building better relationships with students can impact the number of discipline referrals, student attendance, achievement, and retention. The Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) participants noticed that when their relationships improved with their learners they had fewer disruptions of their lessons.

One way to create an environment of mutual support and trust in the classroom is to have opportunities for social interaction and conversations among learners and teachers. Glasser (1993) states that as the students get to know their teacher, they will, in turn, reveal more and more about themselves. As they do, teachers and students will gain much of the closeness needed to create a warm, supportive environment in the classroom. The grade 4 teacher who moved with the learners from Foundation Phase had the advantage of knowing the learners. It was therefore easier to create this supportive environment in the classroom.

Sims (2011) states that Glasser's Choice Theory in the classroom focuses on applying strategies of the theory within the classroom to begin to foster satisfying relationships between the teacher and the student, as well as between the students.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate how utilising Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching could create a conducive environment for promoting the teaching of reading comprehension skills in the Intermediate Phase.

The Choice Theory not only explains why and how we make the choices that determine our lives, but it also teaches us that:

1. All behaviour is purposeful.

2. Almost all behaviour is chosen.

3. We can only control our own behaviour.

4. Nobody can make us do anything that we do not want to do.

5. Everything we do is to satisfy our basic human needs (survival, freedom, fun, power, and belonging).

According to Bechuke and Oduaran (2020), Choice Theory suggests that children's behaviour is related to the five basic needs of survival, love and belonging, power and significance, freedom and autonomy, and fun. Glasser (2000) posits that learners are willing to work harder whenever they experience a strong sense of belonging in the school. The knowledge of Choice Theory enabled the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers to focus on the basic needs of the learners. They shared in their reflective journals stories of learners who experienced challenges with satisfying their basic needs and how they assisted those learners.

2.3.1 Components of Choice Theory

A basic understanding of the Choice Theory requires some knowledge and understanding of the five (5) key components: the basic human needs, the quality world, the perceived world, the comparing place and total behaviour. By getting to know the components of Choice Theory, educators might change their perceptions and previous beliefs based on the so-called old psychology of external control. They will learn about the importance of good relations for adequate pedagogical and educational activities, which might enable them to teach reading comprehension differently.

Glasser uses the metaphor of the brain chart to explain these components. For this study, the researcher simplified Glasser's brain chart (see below).

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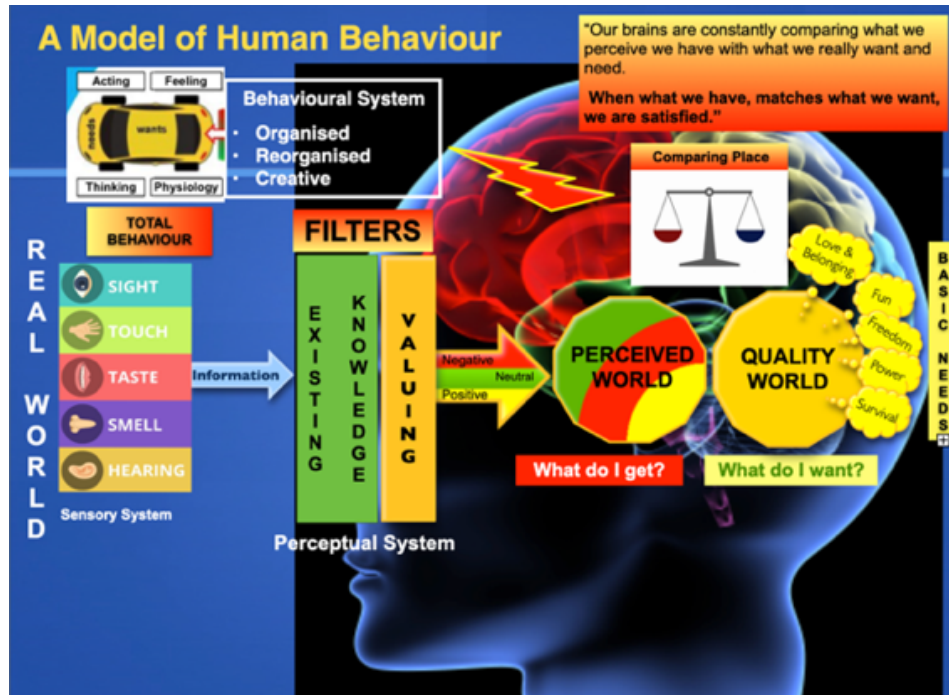
Figure 2: Choice Theory Brain Chart

2.3.2 Basic Needs

A core theoretical tenet of the Choice Theory is the concept of five basic needs (Glasser, 1998). Our basic needs are genetically encoded and have been affirmed by current neuroscience (Wubbolding, 2015; Glasser, 1998). According to the Choice Theory, all humans have five basic genetic needs: survival, (love and) belonging, power, freedom, and fun (Louis, 2009; Irvine, 2015; Boroomand-Rashti, 2018; Golubcow-Teglasi, 2016; Kelly, 2017; Paularinne, 2007). These needs are intrinsically structured, thus prompting us to choose our behaviours in a way that serves to meet these needs (Wubbolding, 2011).

Barker (2021) postulates that the first need, the survival need, is primal and somewhat supersedes the others. Survival includes the need for food, shelter, and security in the immediate environment. The other four needs are not hierarchical and consist of: Love and Belonging (the need to be part of a community and have quality relationships in one's life), Fun (the need to take part in activities, hobbies, or learnings that one enjoys); Freedom (the freedom to do what one chooses to do

and/or the freedom from imposed restrictions); and Power (the experience of achievement, recognition, and esteem).

Glasser (1998) states that the most important need is love and belonging because connectedness with others is required to satisfy all other needs. The classroom should therefore be a needs-satisfying place for all learners, and they need to feel that their work in school satisfies their basic needs. To meet and satisfy any learner's five basic human needs, social interaction is paramount for the cognitive development of all learners.

The Choice Theory assumes that all behaviour represents the individual's constant attempt to satisfy one or more of five basic genetic needs. These needs are the general motivation for "everything we do" (Glasser, 1998:3). The best way for a teacher to apply the Choice Theory is to be aware of the five basic needs of each of their learners, to not try to force, coerce or punish their learners, but rather to explore what need is not being met. Allowing learners to self-evaluate their behaviour and helping them recognise what is needed to meet a particular need would curb misbehaviour.

Bechuke (2015) posits that the Choice Theory involves bringing learners to an awareness of their responsibility to make their own choices about their learning and behaviour in the classroom. If they are privileged to help in this decision, they will then have ownership of their learning, pride in their participation, higher self-esteem, and greater self-confidence and cognition. The participants in this study developed a Window of Safety with their learners. This is a framework that served as a foundation for unity and cooperation in the classroom and it created a relationship of trust in which both educator and learners feel safe, comfortable, relaxed and willing to share experiences with others and also learn from them. The whole class participated in the discussion in order to ensure that they begin to accept responsibility for their decisions and behaviour.

Glasser (1994) stated that schools should implement the Choice Theory in the classroom through the addition of learning teams of students (Cherveny, 2016). If this were to occur, the needs of students would be more readily met, affording the

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students a sense of belonging, freedom, and power through the adoption of the learning team environment (Glasser, 1994). The Choice Theory explains that we perceive much of reality differently from others due to another important world, unique to each of us, called the quality world. The cooperative learning activities enabled learners to satisfy their basic needs of freedom, power, fun, love and belonging by taking up their different roles and responsibilities in the reading lesson.

2.3.3 Quality World

Glasser (1998: 44-45) uses a metaphor to describe the quality world:

> "that place in our brain where we store pictures that relate to memories of those people, things and ideas or systems of belief that we perceive to be need-fulfilling."

The Quality World consists of people, activities, events, beliefs, possessions, and situations that fill personal needs (Wubbolding, 2000). Our quality world is like a personal photo album in which we put all our "photos" and use these pictures to satisfy our basic human needs. Glasser (1998) believed that we have, since birth, kept track of anything we do that feels good, and we store this knowledge in our Quality World picture book (Paularinne, 2007; Sims, 2012; Golubcow-Teglasi, 2016).

Paularinne (2007) states that the importance of the quality world and how it relates to education and classroom management strategies cannot be ignored. When a person, an idea or a thing is placed into students' quality world, it is interpreted as a needs-satisfying source. If a school, schoolwork, and teachers are not perceived as important in students' quality worlds, they will not be able to satisfy students' needs. It became evident from this study that the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners started to put their teachers and learning in the classroom into their Quality World.

 According to Hale and Maola (2011), Glasser purported that the Choice Theory is effective in the classroom because students begin to operate from an internal locus of control rather than an external locus of control. The act of learning becomes a part

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of a student's quality world, and intrinsic motivation becomes more meaningful than extrinsic rewards (Glasser, 1998).

During the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), there is an expectation that learners will be able to read to learn, and so begins a chain of events that can lead toward a mindset of victory or defeat, depending upon the child's readiness to read with comprehension. Learners who understand what they read get good marks; they progress faster and consequently place a picture in their quality world of reading being a need-satisfying activity. On the other hand struggling readers who may not have reading, teachers or schools in their Quality World are left behind (Glasser, 2000).

Bechuke (2015) states that seemingly once the educator, school, classmates, and school work are established in a student's quality world, discipline "incidents" may occur, but discipline "problems" is non-existent.

Glasser (1993) suggests that a school is often taken out of the quality world picture book if it was ever put in because it does not meet many students' ideal picture and basic needs. According to him, if teachers attempt to manage learners without knowing the part the quality world plays in their lives, they will not be effective (Glasser: 1998).

Therefore, teachers must know what is in their learners' quality world and try to support it since that will bring them closer to their learners. Teachers should realise that learners need to experience them as warm, caring, friendly and supportive human beings. These might be learners' criteria for admitting teachers into their quality world.

2.3.4 Perceptual World

Glasser (2002) explains that our perceptual system is the only way we experience t the real world. Information about the real world comes to us first through our sensory system: our eyes, ears, nose, mouth and skin. Next, these sensations pass through our perceptual system, beginning with what Glasser calls our *total knowledge*

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filter, representing everything we know or have experienced.

When information passes through our knowledge filter, one of three things happens:

1. We decide that the information is not meaningful to us, and the perception stops there and does not go to the valuing filter.

2. We do not immediately recognise the information but believe it may be meaningful to us, so we have some incentive to gain more information, or

3. the information is meaningful to us and therefore passes through the next filter, *the valuing filter*.

When information passes through the valuing filter, we place one of three values on it. If something we have learned is needs-satisfying, we place a positive value on it. If it is something we have learned that hinders our ability to meet our needs, we place a negative value on it. If it neither helps nor hinders us in meeting our needs, we may place little or no value on it; it remains neutral.

Because we all come to every situation with different knowledge and experience, different cultures, different traditions, and different religions, the value that we put on the information might be different, and therefore our perceptions of the real world are different. We must remember that two people might look at the same thing but perceive it differently.

Glasser (1998:53) postulates that:

"If everyone could learn that what is right for me does not make it right for anyone else, the world would be a much happier place."

The Choice Theory not only provides the key concepts necessary to our understanding of human behaviour but also how critically important effective social interactions are to cognitive development. Without the Choice Theory, teachers are left in the unsatisfactory position of depending on social interactions without knowing how to produce them (Louis, 2009).

2.3.5 Comparing Place

Glasser (2002) posits that as we experience life, we are constantly comparing **what we want** (our quality world pictures) with **what we have** (our perceived world) and to show the comparing place on the brain chart, a metaphor of a scale is used. According to Gabriel and Matthews (2011), the comparing place builds on the notion that the purpose of all behaviour is to create a match between what people perceive and what they really want. When the picture from our quality world matches fairly well with the picture from our perceived world, we are happy and feel good. When there is a mismatch, the scale tips, and we feel a degree of frustration.

2.3.6 Total Behaviour

Choice Theory states that behaviour is actually a product of four inseparable components: *acting, thinking, feeling, and physiology*. As Glasser (1998) described, Total Behaviour is the culmination of a person's actions, thoughts, feelings, and physiology in response to a need to behave. We have the most control over our thoughts and actions, which influence our feelings and physiology. While humans may not be able to control every component, they choose the sum of the components (Scott, 2006; Sims, 2012; Cherveny, 2016). According to Paularinne (2007), the four components of total behaviour are equally important when dealing with classroom management problems. To promote responsible behaviour on the part of students, it may be beneficial for teachers to treat all misbehaviour as total behaviour. This strategy may help students better understand their own misbehaviour. When teachers noticed in the study that some learners did not participate in the reading comprehension activities they focused on the total behaviour of those learners. With their knowledge of Choice Theory they could talk about the four components of Total Behaviour and guide learners to choose a different behaviour.

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2.4   Reciprocal Teaching

Reciprocal Teaching is grounded in social constructivism, a theory developed by Vygotsky, which claims that learning takes place through human interactions (Tseng & Yeh, 2017; Ardiansyah & Ujihanti, 2018; Ramadan, 2017; O'Malley, 2017; McCallum, 2014; Ting, Swanto & Pang, 2021).

Tracey and Morrow (2012) posits that the premise of Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism is the belief that children learn due to their social interactions with others. Palincsar (2004) states that underlying the model of Reciprocal Teaching is the notion that expert-led social interactions play an important role in learning and can provide a major impetus to cognitive development. Based on the theory of social constructivism, reciprocal teaching is a process in which students interact with others. Therefore maximum learning will result (Malley, 2017).

From a social constructivist perspective, discourse is the primary symbolic, mediational tool for cognitive development (Palincsar, 1998). Dialogue is a critical element of socially mediated instruction since it is how experts provide and adjust support to novice learners. According to Palincsar (2004), Reciprocal Teaching is an example of such a socially mediated instruction in which the teacher and students engage in dialogue to construct meaning from text.

The theoretical framework for Reciprocal Teaching, as discussed by Palincsar and Brown (1984), is based on three sociocultural theories, namely, Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD), proleptic teaching, and expert scaffolding (Rosenshine & Meister, 1994; Westera, 2002; Ahmadi & Gilakjani, 2012; Pilton, 2016; Williams, 2018).

2.5   Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Golubcow-Teglasi (2016) argues that explaining the concept of the ZPD will help to clarify what social constructivists mean when they say that all learning is social – and what the implications might be for student-teacher relationships.

The most frequently referenced definition of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is: The ZPD refers to the distance between the actual developmental level as

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determined by independent problem-solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (Vygotsky, 1978; Brown & Palincsar, 1984; Westera, 2002; Gilakjani, 2012; Brown, 2015, Swanepoel, 2016, Relton, 2017, Ramalepe, 2018, Islam, 2020, Zayyad, 2020).

Yoosabai (2009) posits that it is Vygotsky (1978) who pointed out that all learners have two levels of thinking development: an actual development level and a potential development level. The actual development refers to the thinking level at which children can solve problems by themselves, and the potential development refers to the thinking level at which learners need help from an expert or a more capable partner. Hampson-Jones (2014) states that using the zone of proximal development, the teacher guides children to understand concepts they are unable to understand on their own but which are not beyond their understanding when they are helped by a 'more capable other'.

According to Golubcow-Teglasi (2016), Vygotsky has become required reading in schools of education, and the ZPD has become a watchword of modern instructional practice. He thinks that explaining the concept of the ZPD will help clarify what social constructivists mean when they say that all learning is social - and what the implications might be for student-teacher relationships.

Louis (2009) identifies the congruence of Choice Theory with Vygotsky, and he lists the Zone of Proximal Development as one of the major propositions of Vygotskyan educational theory.

Palincsar (1998) posits that the ZPD was regarded as a better, more dynamic and relative indicator of cognitive development than what children accomplished alone. According to Palincsar (1998:4):

> "Hence, from a Vygotskian perspective, cognitive development is studied by examining the processes that one participates in when engaged in shared endeavours and how this engagement influences engagement in other activities. Development occurs as children learn general concepts and principles that can be applied to new tasks and problems."

For this study, the Zone of Proximal Development strategy was used effectively to explicitly teach reading comprehension skills in Afrikaans Home Language to Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners. The rationale for choosing the ZPD as a theoretical framework was to allow teachers to reflect and assist them in changing their perception of teaching reading comprehension. Participants in this study regularly shared their successes and challenges in the group discussion meetings.

2.6   Proleptic Teaching

Yoosabai (2009) states that the second concept that forms the theoretical ground of Reciprocal Teaching is called proleptic teaching. The important feature of proleptic teaching is the transfer of responsibility from teacher to student. The teacher explains and models the problem-solving process and, while decreasing his or her role, transfers the responsibility of solving problems to the students (Rogoff & Garner, 1984).

According to Relton (2017), proleptic teaching (Stone & Wertsch, 1984) is an approach that involves an adult anticipating students' ability and success. Part of this involves engaging pupils in tasks that exceed their current performance with the expectation that they will succeed.

O'Malley states that proleptic teaching consists of the teacher gradually releasing the responsibility of implementing the strategy to the students. This requires the teachers to gradually remove themselves as the sole providers of information during the process. As a result, students support one another (Pilonieta & Medina, 2009).

Seymour and Osana (2003) defined proleptic teaching as teaching in anticipation of competence. According to them, a proleptic teacher could be described as one with high expectations and believes in his or her students' ability to meet them. Regardless of a student's perceived ability or level of intelligence, the teacher assumes that the student is capable and will eventually be able to accomplish the task as an expert would.

Ting, Swanto, and Pang (2021) posit that another prominent characteristic of proleptic teaching is the teacher's empowerment of the learning process to students.

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A proleptic teacher describes and instantiates the learning process, has high expectations, believes in the students' ability to excel beyond their current performance and gradually empowers the cognitive responsibility to the students (Brown & Palincsar, 1989; Rogoff & Garner, 1984).

2.7   Expert Scaffolding

Within the framework of social constructivism, scaffolding could be defined as a learner's interaction and collaboration with an expert, the teacher, whereby help is provided through dialogue that will enable learners to solve problems.

Swanepoel (2016:51) postulates that scaffolding can be defined as: "a metaphor for the interaction between an expert and a novice engaged in a problem-solving task or the adult controlling those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learner's capacity, thus permitting him to concentrate upon and complete only those elements that are within his range of competence" (Attarzadeh, 2011:5).

According to Palincsar and Brown (1984:123):

> "Vygotsky believed that a great deal of development was mediated by expert scaffolding. Children first experience a particular set of cognitive activities in the presence of experts, and only gradually come to perform these functions by themselves."

The expert acts as a guide, shaping the students' learning efforts and supporting the learning until the students do not need it (Rosenshine & Meister, 1994). McCallum (2014) posits that reciprocal teaching was designed by Palincsar and Brown (1984) using an interactive instructional model that provoked novice learners to engage. They recognised that if, by scaffolding, learners become active, then learning transfer and long-term sustainability were more likely to be achieved. Scaffolding procedures include limiting the tasks to make them manageable, motivating students, pointing out critical features, demonstrating solutions to problems and explaining them to the students (Palincsar & Brown, 1984).

Brooke (2007:23) posits that the classroom should become more of a learning

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community with the teacher collaborating with the students and the students collaborating with each other. This allows students to learn in ways that are meaningful to them.

Brown (2015) states that in reading, a teacher models how to use a strategy or a skill to comprehend text. As students begin using the strategy or the skill, the teacher supports students by giving feedback and guidance for using the new knowledge.

Gradually, the students become independent and can apply the strategy or the skill to new situations. Ting, Swant and Pang (2021) posit as readers become more competent in applying the new knowledge or skill, the scaffolding is removed with the expert 'fades' or reduces his or her interference through the provision of minimal cues, treatments and feedback. Nevertheless, substantial assistance that shapes readers' understanding can be given if they encounter challenging texts. According to Lewis (2016), over time, the expert relinquishes all responsibility to the learners, acting solely as a coach, at which point the students share and subsequently assume full responsibility for their own learning and practice of the strategies. The students are now "experts" within their own rights.

According to Lewis (2016), the expert anticipates the learning difficulties and displays the requisite learning skills, gradually transferring the responsibility of thinking and learning to the novices as they acquire greater confidence and the ability to replicate the practices

2.8   Summary

This chapter outlined the theoretical framework for the study and focused on social constructivism as the guiding principle for Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. It was also the common denominator for both since it emphasised the importance of social interaction for learning. In this study it became evident that by using the zone of proximal development the teachers' could guide the learners to understand the four Reciprocal Teaching reading comprehension strategies. As proleptic teachers participants gradually transferred the responsibility to learners. This increased the collaboration and interaction between the learners and they took control of their own

reading comprehension. Learners became engaged in the learning process and enjoyed taking up their roles as predicator, questioner, clarifier and summariser.
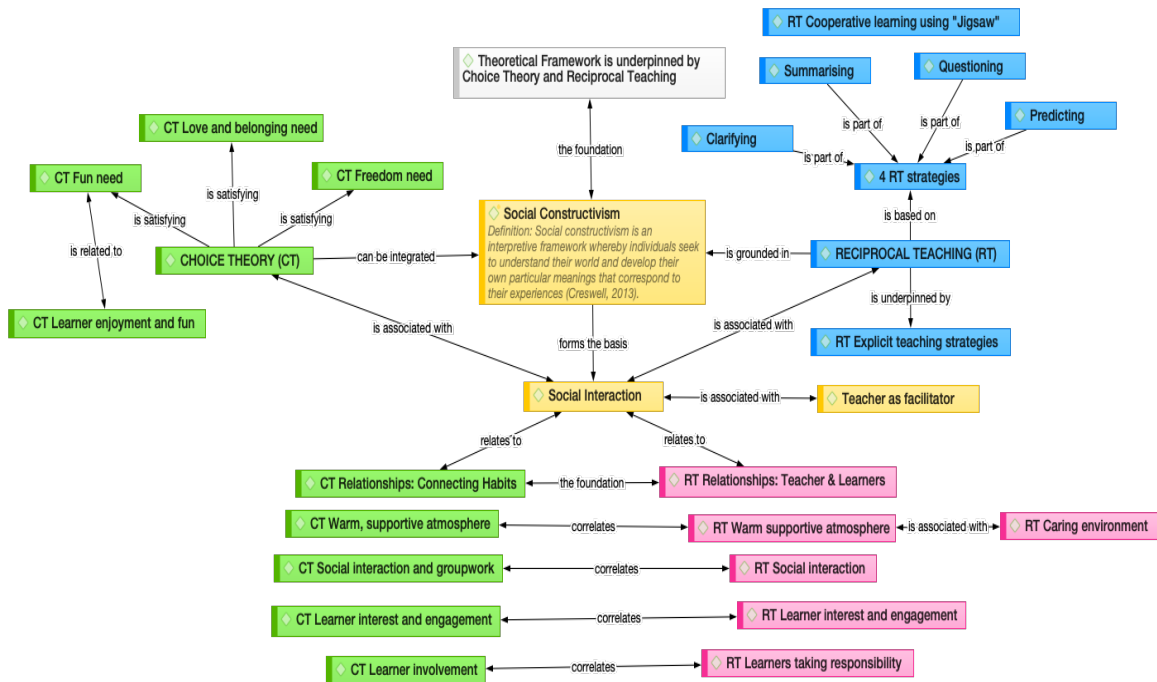
Figure 3: Atlas.ti network: Visual presentation of chapter 2

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1   Introduction

This chapter contained a review of literature on Reading Comprehension, Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching and provides a summary of key aspects related to the study. The first section focused on Reading Comprehension, the researchers' definitions, and the standing of reading comprehension in South Africa. The second section will focused on Choice Theory, an internal control psychological model, which is diametrically the opposite of external control or coercion. The third section examined Reciprocal Teaching, defining it and explaining the foundations, purpose, process, four strategies, and the use of Reciprocal Teaching in Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading lessons.

This study focused on the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers of one rural primary school, where Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching was utilised to promote the teaching of reading comprehension. The researcher's interest in this study was sparked by the fact that the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) in South Africa is where most learners struggle with reading comprehension.

3.2   Reading Comprehension

Cunningham and Stanovitch (1997) posit that reading is an essential skill that students need to gain in the early grades because it will be the foundation of learning in all academic subjects throughout their education. Mastering 'learning to read' skills before learners reach grade four is especially critical because when they start with grade four, they should be able to 'read to learn' to construct meaning from various texts.

According to Beck and Condy (2017), grade four, as the starting of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) in South Africa, is frequently characterised by learners who face comprehension difficulties (McNamara, Ozuru & Floyd, 2011), and this is also evident from the PIRLS (2016).

Many international studies have been done on reading comprehension, indicating a concern for learners' comprehension. Reading theorists have grappled with how to comprehensively and meaningfully portray reading comprehension, and many different theoretical models have been proposed in recent decades (Perfetti & Stafura, 2014).

3.2.1 Defining Reading Comprehension

The RAND Reading Study Group (SG) defines reading comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. It consists of three elements: the reader, the text, and the activity or purpose for reading (RAND Reading Study Group, 2001).

One of the essential components of reading that learners have to master that will enable them to move from "Learning to Read' to 'Reading to Learn' is reading comprehension. It requires students to move beyond decoding individual vocabulary and statements to constructing a solid understanding of the entire passage (Woolley, 2011).

Comprehension is a complex process that requires an active interaction between the student's background knowledge of the context, the purpose of the reading material, and the level of vocabulary and language used by the authors to gain meaning from a text (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002; Snow, 2002; Woolley, 2011). What makes it complex is the fact that it requires the readers to engage in multiple cognitive activities, processes, and skills.

Rosenblatt (1982) posits that "reading is a transaction, a two-way process, involving a reader and a text at a particular time under particular circumstances" (p. 268). Her description of the reading process is in line with the definition of reading comprehension, and it mirrors the sentiments of Reading Comprehension previously defined by the RAND group: reading is a process where the reader gains meaning through particular interactions with a text.

Cambourne (2001) argues that one of the main reasons for a large number of

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struggling readers in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) is that reading strategies are not demonstrated effectively to learners. As learners progress through the grades, they encounter more complex texts with higher reading levels. Their struggle continues if learners are not provided with the skills and strategies to comprehend these complex texts. According to De Lange, Winberg and Dippenaar (2020), international studies have shown that the explicit teaching of comprehension strategies is key to improving reading levels among Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners (National Reading Panel 2000).

3.2.2 Traditional way of teaching Reading Comprehension in South Africa

Traditional comprehension instruction often had students answering questions asked by the teacher. Generally, teachers would compile questions based on the text and consider this sufficient and effective comprehension instruction (Klapwijk, 2015).

Olifant et al. (2020) posit that in their study, most teachers used questioning to probe for more information from the learners. However, these teachers' questioning technique reflected their dominance of the lesson, and they did not allow learners to ask them or other learners questions. This relates to what Paulo Freire (1972), in his seminal work "Pedagogy of the Oppressed," calls the Banking System of Education, where the teacher makes "deposits" in the learner instead of a relationship between learner and teacher. According to Freire, the learner is passive and merely a receptor of information which, for him, is a dangerous model that inhibits the creative and reflective abilities of the learner.

According to Beck and Condy (2017), many teachers opt for an implicit approach when teaching comprehension, meaning that they do not teach reading comprehension and its related strategies but rather assume that learners will improve their comprehension ability by simply completing comprehension exercises without any instructional input.

Sailors (2008) contends that new teachers still enter schools 'with the understanding of how to teach comprehension [...] based on how they were taught to read' (Klapwijk, 2016).

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A common finding in school-based research is that teachers simply do not have knowledge of effective reading pedagogies and, as a result, cannot teach reading effectively despite their efforts to do so (Taylor 2014).

There is an urgent need in South Africa to empower teachers with reading comprehension skills that will enable them to understand all the reading process elements and allow them to teach reading comprehension strategies explicitly.

3.2.3 Current standing of teaching Reading Comprehension in South Africa

The concern about the low reading proficiency levels of South African learners is supported by considerable research claiming that South Africa has a reading crisis (Rule & Land, 2017; Spaull, 2016; Howie, van Staden, Tshele, Dowse & Zimmerman, 2011). In the last PIRLS (2016), South Africa was the lowest-performing country out of 50 countries. Around 78% of South African Grade 4 learners do not reach the international benchmarks and therefore do not have basic reading skills by the end of the Grade 4 school year. The PIRLS (2016) findings and recommendations will be discussed under a sub-heading later.

Klapwijk (2012) posits that a closer look at the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and in-service and pre-service teacher training confirms that while teachers are trained to teach reading, very little, if any, the focus is placed on training them how to teach comprehension. Mudzielwana (2012) states that with regards to reading comprehension, the RNCS (DoE, 2002) requires the following: "The learners will be able to read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional contexts." Therefore, the learner must "read a printed text fluently with understanding" (DoE, 2002).

Although meaningful comprehension is the goal of reading instruction, local research suggests that teachers spend far more time focusing on the mechanical skills of decoding rather than on meaning and comprehension (Verbeek, 2010; Mather, 2012). According to Basson (2016), some research studies suggest that very little comprehension instruction takes place in classrooms because some teachers assume that if pupils can decode, they can comprehend. Mather (2012) posits that

comprehension will be neglected as long as teachers believe reading is decoding text to speech. Comprehension needs to be viewed as part of the reading process.

Olifant et al. (2020) concluded in their study that teachers' approach to reading comprehension instruction reveals their lack of knowledge of how to incorporate reading strategies in the teaching of reading. This manifests in the teachers' inability to refer to the reading strategies, let alone model them.

3.2.4 PIRLS (PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL READING LITERACY STUDY) 2016

PIRLS is an international comparative assessment of reading comprehension in the fourth grade that has been conducted every five years since 2001. The PIRLS is one of the largest, most complex and influential assessments of reading literacy internationally.

In 2006, 2011 and 2016, South Africa and 49 other countries from around the world participated in the PIRLS international assessment of reading comprehension in the fourth grade.

In the PIRLS 2016 study, South Africa was the lowest-performing country out of 50 countries. Internationally, out of 50 countries assessing Grade 4 learners, the top-performing countries were the Russian Federation, Singapore, Hong Kong SAR, Finland and Ireland, with four out of the five the same as PIRLS 2011. Around 78% of South African Grade 4 learners do not reach the international benchmarks and therefore do not have basic reading skills by the end of the Grade 4 school year, in contrast to only 4% of learners internationally (Howie et al., 2018).

The PIRLS study significantly contributes as it describes trends and international comparisons for literacy performance and shows how South African learners perform against other countries. The PIRLS study was quantitative research to describe

trends and international comparisons for the following:

- The reading achievement of Grade 4 learners.

- Learners' competencies about goals and standards for reading education.

- The impact of the home environment and how parents foster reading literacy. The organisation of time and reading materials for learning to read in schools.

- Curriculum and classroom approaches to reading instruction.

According to (Howie et al., 2018), the results overall for South Africa were low (406 points) compared to the international average (500 points), given that these were Grade 5 learners. The Eng/Afr/Zulu sample of Grade 5 South African learners achieved the lowest results of the benchmarking participants. In relation to the 50 participating countries against which they could only be benchmarked, the South African Grade 5 learners achieved significantly below 45 other participating countries' Grade 4 learners (Howie et al., 2018).

There is a list of contributing factors to the lower achievement of South African learners. However, I would like to highlight a few which could be relevant to this study:

- South African teachers indicated that they spent a total of 19% of their total instruction on Language Instruction which includes reading, writing, speaking, literature and other language skills (p. 198).

- The teaching of more complex reading skills (such as making generalisations, describing text style and structure, and determining the author's perspective) is introduced at a much later stage for South African learners than internationally.

- An association between teacher behaviour and learner reading literacy achievement was observed both internationally and nationally. Those schools where there were more serious problems with teacher behaviour reported that learner achievement tended to be lower. Absenteeism and failure to complete the curriculum were a problem, as were teachers arriving late for school to a lesser extent.

- In schools where bullying occurred, the learners' achievement was lower than their peers, who reported that they were almost never bullied at school.

Based upon many concerning findings overall, in terms of the current classroom conditions and pedagogical strategies that do not appear to be effective in achieving the levels of reading literacy, Howie et al. (2018) made the following recommendations:

a. Increasing the time on task for reading is needed, and this should be achieved by increasing the proportion of time spent on reading, specifically at the Foundation and Intermediate Phases, consistent with the top-performing countries in PIRLS 2016.

b. Secondly, the high levels of learner and teacher absenteeism should be reduced.

c. Decreasing the class sizes would allow more time per learner with the teacher in the classroom.

d. Increasing access to books and reading materials in the classroom, inculcating a love for reading and making time to visit libraries and take books out for reading at home are essential ingredients in the classroom.

e. Encouraging and supporting teachers in the latter stages of the Foundation and Intermediate Phases to concentrate on higher-order reading skills and to train teachers in utilising the more advanced comprehension strategies in earlier stages. More exposure of learners to non-fiction and informational-type texts is needed.

f. Furthermore, teachers' expectations of their learners must be increased to develop them beyond failure and mediocrity.

According to Fesi and Mncube (2021), one of the findings of their study was that teachers need robust training to implement reading strategies. Le Cordeur (2010) posits that struggling readers must be empowered with strategies that will assist them in successfully addressing reading problems. One of this study's aims is to empower teachers to explicitly teach reading comprehension strategies to the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners.

3.2.5 TIMMS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) 2019 – Grade 5

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is a recognized international assessment study designed to measure the effectiveness of an education system within a country concerning mathematics and science. TIMSS data have been collected from students in grades 4 and 8 every 4 years since 1995.

Worldwide more than 580,000 learners in 64 countries participated in TIMMS 2019. In South Africa, 297 schools and 11,900 learners participated in Grade 5, and 520 schools and 20,800 learners participated in Grade 9.

South Africa's performance in both mathematics and science is amongst the lowest of the 64 countries and entities that participated at the Grade 4/5 level. It found that 63% of grade 5 pupils did not acquire basic mathematics knowledge, and 72% did not gain basic science knowledge.

Successful learning is likely to be influenced by the calibre of educators, the quality of the classroom environment and instructional activities, and the resources available to support instruction.

A few of the findings from the TIMMS 2019 relevant to this study are:

a. To answer the TIMSS assessment successfully, 60% of the Grade 5 items require learners to use higher cognitive skills of application and reasoning. The South African assessment framework places a greater focus on the skills of knowing and solving routine problems, and there is limited emphasis on applying and reasoning skills. School and national assessments should include more items at higher cognitive levels.

b. South African educators attended the highest number of professional courses compared to other countries. However, the learners' mathematics and science achievements do not match the level of tertiary education and the extent of professional development courses that educators have attended. It seems that educators might experience challenges with implementing what they have learned, and it could also be that they do not receive the necessary support

from district offices.

c. A positive school climate is one where schools emphasize academic success, where learners feel safe and are not bullied. Compared with other countries, South African learners experienced higher levels of disciplinary, safety and problems.

One of the goals for the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) (2019–2024) is that our schools will have better educational outcomes and our learners will be able to read for meaning. Van Staden, Graham and Harvey (2020) posit that if the basic skill of reading is not adequately developed in the early grades of a learner's school career, it spells continued underperformance and bleak future prospects for a majority of South African learners who come from contextually varied and challenging circumstances. With a foundation of Choice Theory and Reiprocal Teaching framework this study could improve the reading comprehension of Intermediate Foundation (Grades 4 to 6) learners.

3.2.6 CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement)

Since the new democratic dispensation, education in South Africa has seen many commendable changes. The first major move was to unite the 16 different education departments into a single unified national department. After the first democratic election in 1994, many educational reforms were introduced. A brief history of those reforms is:

- In 1997: the South African Ministry of Education launched Curriculum 2005, also known as the Outcome Based Education (OBE) system.

- 2002: The National Curriculum Statement 2002 (NCS) was introduced due to the challenges identified as constraining OBE.

- 2008: Revised National Curriculum 2006, 2007, 2008: Implementation of Grades 7, 8 and 9, and the first General Education and Training Certificate for the revised National Curriculum Statement in 2008

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In 2012 the CAPS (Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement) was introduced, and this has become the document that guides or describes the teaching, learning, and assessment process in the South African Education System at both primary and post-primary phases of learning.

Findings revealed that teachers are confronted with a series of challenges that limit the effectiveness of CAPS documents in South African schools: lack of adequate teaching and learning resources, lack of consistent professional development training for teachers on CAPS, overcrowded classrooms etc.

According to De Lange, Winberg, and Dippenaar (2020), the CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) document, 'Introducing Home Language in the Intermediate Phase', has only two mentions of teaching comprehension, one related to requirements ('You will also set a variety of comprehension activities to ensure that learners understand what they read', DoBE 2011:10), and the other a guideline ('Pause occasionally to check your comprehension and to let the ideas sink in', DoBE 2011:10).

The importance of reading instruction is emphasised in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) CAPS document, which prescribes that 5 hours per two-week cycle should be spent on reading instruction (DoBE 2011). Teachers must implement different reading strategies such as shared reading, group guided reading, paired reading, and independent reading. It recommends that shared reading be used at the beginning of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) to guide pupils into the phase. Teachers must also compile different comprehension activities to ensure pupils understand what they read (DoBE 2011).

Mudzielwana (2012) posits that concerning comprehension, the CAPS (2012) only explains to the teacher that during the reading lessons, the teacher must engage the learners in a range of thinking and questioning activities. The CAPS explains that the teacher may use various reading comprehension strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising to develop learners' understanding of the text. However, there is a lack of explanation to teachers on how these reading comprehension strategies work or that they should explicitly teach and model it to

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their learners.

Minimal attention is given to the effective teaching of comprehension or its assessment in the CAPS document itself. This is despite the importance of reading comprehension in the teaching plans, in which teachers are instructed to set comprehension exercises 'every second week' (CAPS 2011), and in the programme of assessment, which requires comprehension tests for 'formal' assessment, that is, for both examinations and continuous assessment towards the learners' final marks (CAPS 2011).

The CAPS document proposes only two reading strategies, neither of which is mentioned in the text itself. These strategies only appear in the glossary:

- Rereading – rereading is a reading strategy that gives the reader another chance to make sense of a challenging text. During the reading stage, teachers should guide pupils to engage in the following activities: occasionally pausing to check comprehension, comparing the content to their predictions, using the context to work out the meaning of unknown words as much as possible, visualise what is being read, keep going even if parts that are read are not understood, rereading a section if it is not understood at all, reading confusing sections aloud, at a slower pace, or both, adding reading marks and annotating key points as well as reflecting on the text being read (DoBE 2011). According to Klapwijk (2011), research about rereading can be used as an example of the need to understand "how cognitive processes change with repetition" and provides a window for "observing knowledge influences on reading skill development" (Collins & Levy, 2008). Mather (2012) posits that by monitoring comprehension, the skilled reader can validate her/his understanding and make repairs where this understanding does not make sense by rereading the apparent inconsistency. According to Almutairi (2018), teachers help their students improve their reading fluency by implementing rereading strategies that provide them with a good model of reading.

- Restating – restating is a reading strategy where the reader will retell, shorten, or summarise the meaning of a passage or chapter, either orally or in written

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form. (CAPS 2011). Restating is a basic strategy (Gill 2008), and according to Swanepoel (2016), learners learn to preview the text, monitor comprehension and use fix-up strategies, identify the main ideas by restating them, and summarize the text. Kim (2013) posits that summarizing fiction can take the form of restating what happens in the beginning, middle and end of the story.

3.2.7 Previous studies on reading comprehension in South Africa

Maharajh, Nkosi and Mkhize (2016) suggest in their findings that, in theory, CAPS is a viable policy, but the implementation is erroneous. The CAPS is fallible because of a lack of favourable conditions, including resources, suitably qualified and experienced teachers, and support from the DoE. For example, teachers are not adequately trained to implement CAPS.

Mather (2012) posits that it would not be possible for an educator to develop their learners' reading comprehension skills if they were not adequately trained. According to Ajani (2021), participants in his study indicated that they lacked regular professional development training that could familiarise them with the CAPS document's contents to effectively unpack it in their classroom practices.

From the research, it is evident that a lack of effective professional development of teachers for implementation of the curriculum is a major setback for curriculum reforms in South Africa. Any intervention that does not effectively address teacher professional development, or provide complementary/ supplementary teaching in the interim, will not significantly impact the literacy development of South African learners (Meiklejohn et al., 2021).

Basson (2016) highlighted that very little explicit teaching of comprehension strategies occurs in Afrikaans Home Language classes and that pre-service training of Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers should be adapted to keep up with the changing demographics in South African schools. From Klapwijk's (2011) observations of pre-service teachers teaching reading, it seems clear that teaching reading continues to neglect or exclude the explicit teaching of comprehension. Le Cordeur (2010) states that struggling readers must therefore be empowered with

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strategies that will assist them in successfully addressing reading problems.

Klapwijk and Pretorius (2016) recommended that future research move toward implementing, monitoring and evaluating well-planned and well-designed comprehension intervention programmes in the diverse classroom contexts that characterise South African schools.

The CAPS focuses on WHAT should be done and not HOW it should be done, creating a gap between policy and practice. Intermediate Phase, teachers need to know how to teach reading comprehension skills explicitly, how to model these strategies for learners, and they need to know how to ensure learners are actively engaged in classroom dialogue for comprehension purposes. Unless this is done, the comprehension levels of South African Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners are unlikely to change in future TIMMS assessments.

This study focused on utilising Reciprocal Teaching to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase.

3.3   Choice Theory

The Choice Theory, developed by William Glasser, is an internal control psychology that offers a clear, comprehensive explanation of human behaviour (Erwin, 2004; Sullo, 2007; Boroomand-Rashti, 2018; Bechuke, 2015; Kelly, 2017; Lečei & Vodopivec, 2014; Gabriel & Matthews, 2011; Cherveny, 2016; Hale & Maola, 2011). According to Glasser (1998), behaviour is a choice made by an individual based on his or her feelings and needs and is therefore not determined or controlled by external circumstances. Roberts (2005) posits that a central aspect of the Choice Theory is the belief that we are internally and not externally motivated, and while other theories suggest that outside events cause us to behave in certain predictable ways, the Choice Theory states that outside events never make us do anything. Therefore, no behaviour is caused by a "trigger" (any situation or person outside the individual). Bechuke (2015) states that accepting this idea requires a paradigm shift on the part of those who view life according to the stimulus-response theory.

Lois DaSilva-Knapton commented in her interview with Robey (2020) that the public school system is completely built on an external control system. According to Sims (2012), most educational systems accept external control as a means of classroom management. Many teachers are trained in many ways in which to coerce students into learning by reward or punishment. Erwin (2004) posits there was a belief that it was not important if students liked or trusted their teachers as long as they respected or even feared them. As educators get to know Glasser's Choice Theory, there is a shift from an external control mentality to an internal control mentality (Lečei, & Lepičnik Vodopivec, 2014).

In South Africa, education is still basically authoritarian, where teachers determine what learners' should learn, when they should learn it and how they should learn it.

Govender and Sookrajh (2014) posit that although teachers may have varied perceptions regarding corporal punishment, the authoritarian approach to classroom control still holds. The teachers in their study have indicated that their approach to discipline alternatives to corporal punishment is aimed at obtaining compliance from the learners. According to Camp (2011), authoritarian control often squashes the inquisitive nature of the student in the primary grades, and upper-grade teachers usually experience difficulty managing and motivating children. Many classrooms are still characterised by teachers who believe in coercing learners to behave in the way they consider right and thus frustrate the learners (Bechuke, 2015). It seems as if many teachers are afraid that they might lose their authority in the classroom when they become friendly.

Glasser (2000) posits that this coercive system of external control in schools stifles the love for learning and, if it is continued, destroys the warm and supportive relationships needed in the classroom. Coercive practices in the classroom could lead to resistance, frustration, and disconnected relationships. As Glasser (2004) explains, "students don't listen to people they do not have a positive relationship with, they hear them, but they don't really listen". Bechuke (2015) believes that the continuous rise of disciplinary problems in South African schools results from failing to apply the Choice Theory. Since relationships are essential for learning, the Choice

Theory offers a framework for building caring, supportive teacher-learner relationships. This study wants to explore how teachers who embrace the Choice Theory could create a classroom focusing on effective social interactions as a key component for cognitive development and reading comprehension.

According to Kianipour and Hoseini (2012), Glasser purported that Choice Theory is effective in the classroom because students begin to operate from an internal locus of control rather than an external locus of control. In order to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase, teachers need to move away from external control or the current authoritarian leadership style in their classrooms and replace it with the Choice Theory.

Erwin (2004:5) posits that people are in a teacher-student relationship when two conditions are met:

1) the teacher has the knowledge and desire to impart information and skills to his students, and,

2) the students are interested in learning the knowledge and skills that are being offered.

Inspiring teachers understand that positive relationships with students are the foundation for successful teaching and learning (Sullo,1999). Learners who perceive their educators as caring and supportive of their basic and educational needs are more engaged in learning.

One of the aims of this study was to train the three (3) Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers in Choice Theory and help them understand that the success of any human endeavour – learning in school certainly included - *"is directly proportional to how well the people involved in the endeavour get along together"* (Glasser, 2000:13). Teacher training has shown to be beneficial in helping to improve the positive climate of their classrooms (Kianipour & Hoseini, 2012). The Choice Theory could help to replace external control psychology in the classroom with internal control psychology enabling teachers to relate to their learners so that learners feel the teachers care about them and respect them.

A well-managed classroom based on the Choice Theory could build caring, trusting relationships between educators and learners. Omar and Barzan (2012) state that for many students, their successes or failures largely depend on the relationships they enjoy or fail to enjoy with their teachers. Ellis (2018) posits that by engaging their students, getting to know them better, and building relationships, teachers maintain a classroom environment that endorses learning and dissuades undesirable behaviours. By developing caring and supportive relationships, learners can effectively fulfil their basic needs and achieve happiness and success in school. We live in an external control world, and almost all of us use what Glasser calls the Seven Deadly Habits that are the hallmarks of this belief: Criticizing, Blaming, Complaining, Nagging, Threatening, Punishing, and Bribing and Rewarding to Control. However, we can learn to replace these Deadly Habits with Seven Caring Habits: Supporting, Encouraging, Listening, Accepting, Trusting, Respecting, and Negotiating Differences (Boroomand-Rashti, S. 2018; Paularinne, R.P.J. 2007; Bechuke, A.L. & Debeila, J.R. 2012; Lečei, A. & Lepičnik, J. 2014: Sims, B.E. 2012).

Almost all the problems teachers encounter in schools are caused by unsatisfactory relationships with learners, colleagues, parents and officials from the department. Sims (2012) posits that if we want our students to choose to learn, we must focus on fostering positive, satisfying relationships within the educational system. External control must be abandoned, as it only harms those relationships. According to Ellis (2018), Choice Theory provides a viable option to help teachers rethink their instructional planning and strategies to engage, motivate, guide, and instruct their students in an environment that encourages learning.

3.3.1 Benefits of Choice Theory for Schools

Ellis (2018) posits that teachers who have replaced external control strategies with the seven caring habits: Supporting, Encouraging, Listening, Accepting, Trusting, Respecting, and Negotiating Differences have experienced greater connections with students and more productivity from students.

Paularinne (2007:29) states that the importance of the quality world and how it relates to education and classroom management cannot be ignored. If teachers can put their students into their quality world and, more importantly, get themselves into their students' quality world, then "everything that concerns you as a schoolteacher will start to work".

Pooravari et al. (2016) conclude that the Choice Theory training reduces physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. Teaching students to help others meet their needs is not as difficult as it might sound, and when teachers recognize students' strengths and connect to their needs, their challenges are met with hard work and effort from students (Walter et al., 2008; Camp, 2011; Louis, 20009; Marashi & Erami, 2018, Naughton, 2019).

According to Louis (2009), the Choice Theory provides the key concepts necessary to understand how critically important effective social interactions are to cognitive development. Hardigree (2011) states that the knowledge he has gained through the study of the Choice Theory will ultimately benefit the entire school, as he will be able to conduct staff development built upon the principles of Choice Theory.

Cherveny (2016) concludes that the Choice Theory, developed by William Glasser, promotes the responsibility of each individual in choosing actions and thoughts that affect personal feelings and physiology.

3.3.2 Challenges of Choice Theory for Schools

Glasser (1997) points out that continuing to teach within a stimulus/response mindset destroys the warm and supportive relationships that are an innate need of all students. Training in the Choice Theory could help teachers to challenge their belief system about external control and provide them with a "new" mental model for human behaviour.

Hardigree (2011) posits that a short study is certainly not enough to judge whether Glasser's Choice Theory increases student knowledge. He thinks that to get a realistic measure of the Choice Theory's effectiveness, it needs to be a part of the

learning environment for at least an entire school year.

Scott (2006) states that the Choice Theory training may not help children overcome the effects of poverty, neglect or abuse, but it may give them some tools to more effectively manage their behaviour choices in their life circumstances.

Walter (2008) warns that educators must also remain aware of their own values and cultural backgrounds and learn about the values and social forces that impact the cultures of the students with whom they work.

According to Tamone (2018), there is a scarcity of research providing evidence of the efficacy of the Choice Theory implementation in classrooms. A recent search study (Irvine, 2015) of one popular education database (ERIC) using the search terms "Choice Theory" and "behaviour" resulted in only one research project, a case study by one teacher with second-grade students. Irvine found this startling. The researcher's own literature search of the Choice Theory in South African education revealed only one doctoral study on the application of Choice Theory in managing and influencing challenging learner behaviour.

3.4 Reciprocal Teaching

3.4.1 Definition of Reciprocal Teaching

Reciprocal Teaching can best be defined as an evidence-based instructional strategy for explicitly teaching metacognitive skills to help struggling readers improve their reading comprehension (Brown & Palincsar, 1984; Brown, 2015; Hampson-Jones, 2014; McNair, 2019; Relton, 2017; Ramadan, 2017; Navaie, 2018; Zimmerman & Smit, 2014).

According to Rasti (2007), Reciprocal Teaching as an intervention has been researched for over 20 years. Out of this research, two meta-analyses of reciprocal teaching have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of the process. Reciprocal Teaching occurs when the teacher and learners are involved in a dialogue about what the learners are reading (McNair, 2019; Aquilera, 2018; Brown, 2015; Hampson-Jones, 2014; Kim, 2013; Relton, 2017). According to Ramadan

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(2017:31), dialogue is the heart of reciprocal teaching and is considered the primary feature of this methodology. Students and teachers actively participate in this dialogue that focuses on a section of text being read, taking turns in leading the dialogue.

The dialogue is not teacher-centred but rather reciprocal, as learners later take on the role of teacher for their small reading group and assume the responsibility for leading the dialogue. Readers should be allowed to share stories from their own experiences to make connections throughout the text with the other readers (Brown & Palincsar, 1985).

Reciprocal teaching assumes a gradual shift of responsibility for the learning process from teacher to student (Okkinga et al., 2018; Williams, 2018; Tarchi & Pinto, 2016; Hampson-Jones, 2014; Rosenshine & Meister, 1994). Basson (2016) posits that teachers who teach reading in this way are using what we have come to call the gradual release of responsibility (from teacher to student) to help readers become more independent and self-sufficient readers. According to McCallum (2020), reciprocal teaching shifts the balance of power towards students and enables student voice through conversations that acknowledge the experiential base that a learner brings to the learning.

Reciprocal teaching is used to explicitly teach learners metacognitive skills using a scaffolded discussion to coordinate the use of four comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring strategies, namely: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing to comprehend text (Oczkus, 2003; Brown, 2015; Basson, 2016; Williams, 2018; Relton, 2017; McNair, 2019; Hampson-Jones, 2014).

Palincsar (2004) posits the following reasons for selecting these 4 strategies:

- *Predicting* requires students to hypothesize what the author might discuss next in the text. In order to do this successfully, the student must activate the relevant background knowledge that they already possess regarding the topic.

- *Questioning* reinforces the summarizing strategy and carries the learner one more step along with the comprehension activity.

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- *Clarifying* is an activity that is particularly important when working with students who may believe that the purpose of reading is saying the words correctly; they may not be particularly uncomfortable that the words, and in fact, the passage, are not making sense.

- *Summarizing* provides the opportunity to identify, paraphrase, and integrate important information in the text.

After the explicit instruction of these strategies, the teacher models how to use the strategies by discussing each one during reading (Brown, 2015; Aguilera, 2014; McNair, 2019; Ramadan, 2017; Basson, 2016; Williams, 2018). According to Francis (2018), the encouragement of a teacher who models how to read and comprehend in a positive, responsive and spontaneous fashion is vital in helping struggling readers.

It is interesting to note that none of these four strategies is novel to Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers in South Africa because the CAPS document refers to them. What is unknown to teachers is the nature of instruction.

3.4.2 Purpose of Reciprocal Teaching

Palincsar and Brown (1984), in their seminal work, explained that the purpose of reciprocal teaching is to promote the reader's ability to construct meaning from texts and facilitate their path to comprehension (Yoosabai, 2009; Rangkuti, 2018; Gilakjani, 2012).

According to McCallum (2020:3), Reciprocal Teaching has developed three main purposes over time:

1. It is a framework for explicit instruction and the practice of four specific comprehension-fostering strategies to develop the self-monitoring central to effective comprehension.

2. It uses a clearly-defined process for interactive engagement. This process has been shown to ensure that learning is maintained over time, is generalised across settings, and is transferable within conceptual domains.

3. It is a vehicle for inclusive practice (Westera, 2002).

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Senen and Sartono (2018) posit that the purpose of the reciprocal teaching method is to facilitate students' communication and help each other in their group understand the text or reading provided by the teacher. The structure of dialogue and intergroup interactions in the learning process requires the participation of all students in fostering healthy competition relationships that help to create a conducive learning atmosphere.

According to Ahmadi and Gilakjani (2012), reciprocal teaching aims to use discussion to improve students' reading comprehension, develop self-regulatory and monitoring skills, and improve motivation.

3.4.3 Foundations of Reciprocal Teaching

Oczkus (2005) attributes the favourable impact of reciprocal teaching to its implementation of four critical "foundations," namely i) expert scaffolding, in which experienced practitioners model and guide the learners as needed, providing them with additional feedback, and encouraging independent- and team-work, ii) think-a-louds, in which individuals verbalize their thought processes, iii) metacognition and finally iv) cooperative learning, or the use of small interactive groups. Brown and Campione (1996) referred to these foundations as key principles of learning and instruction that underpin the technique of Reciprocal Teaching.

3.4.3.1   Scaffolding

Palincsar (2004) stated that scaffolding is the assistance the adult provides to novices, supporting their learning to enable them to accomplish the task or solve the problem. Ramadan (2017) states that when the word scaffolding is mentioned in reciprocal teaching, it directly connotes the role of the teacher in providing help to learners through dialogue or conversation and enabling them to perform a task they otherwise would not be able to do alone. Therefore, the goal of scaffolding is to foster the student's capacity to perform the task on his or her own later.

According to Westera (2002), scaffolding procedures shift the patterns of the dialogue toward student independence by using the four cognitive strategies.

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Throughout the instructional session, the adult teacher scaffolds guidance and feedback so that it is tailored to the needs of the current discussion leader and each of the group members (Brown & Palincsar, 1989b).

Reciprocal teaching is a model that emphasizes interactive dialogue and collaboration between teacher and learners as well as learners and learners. McNair (2019) posits that group interaction allows students to participate in four different phases of social interaction (Gavelek & Raphael, 1996). Within the first phase, students in a group learn with the members of their group by sharing new information with one another, participating in meaningful dialogue, and peer tutoring. Within this phase, students are exposed to new knowledge and negotiate the knowledge they have acquired. Students share different ideas and concepts and bring their perceptions and understanding of the text to the dialogue (McKeown, Beck, & Blake, 2009).

As mentioned earlier, dialogue is considered the primary feature of Reciprocal Teaching and guided dialogues enable learners who haven't mastered reading yet to engage in meaningful learning from the text. Learners begin to participate and lead discussions more. According to Diehl (2005), given its central importance in learning, it becomes clear that the role of dialogue assumes similar importance in learning to comprehend. The teacher models each strategy through dialogue, explaining the specific thought processes.

3.4.3.2 Think-alouds

Palincsar and Ransom (1984) suggested that teachers explicitly instruct how to use metacognition and use various strategies to help comprehension. To teach this, the authors suggested teachers share their metacognition through "think-alouds," in which teachers share their thought processes during reading (Brown, 2015). Hampson-Jones (2014) posits that thinking aloud provides valuable information about how a reader builds a situation model. The teacher models what is going on in their heads as they read by predicting from the title, headings and illustrations and then by stopping to add thoughts as they occur throughout the text. The teacher

might clarify a word or a sentence, ask questions about the text and summarise each paragraph.

The social aspect of Reciprocal Teaching allows students to learn from each other. Each member of the Reciprocal Teaching group is responsible for a strategy while sharing one's thinking to develop a collective understanding of a text (Palincsar, 2004).

According to Westera (2002), the teaching role involves demonstrating by thinking aloud using the four strategies on a segment of text, explicit and direct instruction, explanations, descriptive praise and modelling of the four strategies.

Aquilera (2014) posits that the teacher explains the strategy and how it works, followed by an example within a real and clear context. He models the process by thinking aloud about all the processes he follows to make a decision and its rationale. This procedure helps students become aware of how the silent processes would work when the learners work independently. In a relative context, Kucan and Beck (1997) defined thinking aloud as verbalizing the cognitive processes readers resort to while reading.

For this study, Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers attended professional development workshops and learn how to model the use of reading strategies during plenary instruction by thinking aloud when reading text. They were encouraged to allow learners to take over this role in plenary and small group sessions. The primary objective of encouraging learners to work in groups was to have them collaboratively apply reading strategies while thinking aloud during text reading.

3.4.3.3 Metacognition

According to Palincsar (2004), metacognition refers to (1) the knowledge that we have about ourselves as learners, the demands of learning tasks and the strategies we employ, and (2) the ability to monitor and regulate learning.

According to Aquilera (2014), metacognition is defined as knowledge about and the regulation of cognition. It is the process that helps students to gain an awareness of

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their cognitive processes. In the field of reading, it has been described as the process that helps students to know when and why to use reading strategies. Metacognition is the awareness of one's own thought process, also known as thinking about thinking (McNair, 2019; Relton, 2017; Yoosabai, 2009; Ramadan, 2017; McCallum, 2020, Kalleskog, 2005; Ahmadi, 2012; Gilakjani, 2012; Mudzielwana, 2012).

Bess (2007) posits that the explicit teaching of the strategies that compose the reciprocal teaching process provides students with the tools they need to successfully utilise the metacognitive processes necessary to be effective at comprehending informational text and constructing scientific knowledge.

Ramadan (2017) posits that metacognitive processes allow students to regulate their tasks from the beginning to the end for higher achievement. According to Cooper and Greive (2009), one way of promoting the early development of reading comprehension and critical thinking skills is to teach primary students a metacognitive approach to reading. Metacognitive readers are aware that:

- focused attention is required in order to comprehend text.

- attention wanes over time.

- attention is greater if the reading material is interesting, and comprehension is greater if the material is familiar.

Klopper (2013) states that effective comprehension instruction can indeed be obtained through transactional instruction, providing that the foundation is laid through an explicit explanation of what metacognition is and how that will assist the struggling reader to become a proficient reader. Beck and Condy (2017) state that the teaching of metacognition should be implemented from the start of a learner's school career, enabling the learner to access and utilise this skill throughout the school career.

3.4.3.4 Cooperative Learning

Johnson and Johnson (1994) define Cooperative Learning as the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. Cooperative learning is working together to accomplish shared goals. They believed that Cooperative Learning comes from three different theoretical perspectives: social interdependence, cognitive development, and behavioural learning.

According to Khori and Ahmad (2018), cooperative learning is an approach to teaching that maximizes the use of active activity involving pairs or small groups of learners in the class. They define cooperative learning as a group of systematic learning activities which depends on the information exchange between the learners in the groups in which each learner is given responsibility for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others. Tarchi and Pinto (2016) posit that cooperative learning is an interaction pattern where the goals of separate individuals are linked together so that there is a positive correlation among attainments.

Westera (2002) states it is likely that, due to the roots of reciprocal teaching in cooperative learning and its role as an introduction to group discussion techniques aimed at understanding and remembering text (Brown & Palincsar, 1989b), the method has untapped potential, and is likely to demonstrate outcomes in wider areas than reading comprehension alone.

Hlalethwa (2013) posits that in cooperative learning, learners work on activities in small heterogeneous groups and often receive rewards or recognition based on overall group performance.

The emphasis throughout reciprocal teaching is on a cooperative effort by the teacher and students to bring meaning to the ideas in the text rather than merely restating the words. In addition, during the dialogue, students are provided instruction on why, when, and where such activities should be applied to new text (Palincsar & Brown, 1984).

With the group sharing the responsibility for collaborative thinking, the anxiety in the whole group is reduced. In this non-threatening and supportive climate, learners start

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building their self-confidence, they start taking risks and improving their reading comprehension. According to Tarchi and Pinto (2016), it is through cooperation that reciprocal teaching creates an ideal environment for participants to practice their emergent abilities.

3.4.3.5 The Four Strategies of Reciprocal Teaching

Williams (2018) posits that in Reciprocal Teaching, (a) the focus is on teaching students specific, concrete, comprehension-fostering strategies which they can apply to the reading of the new text, and (b) this instruction takes place primarily in the context of a dialogue between the teacher and the students.

Palincsar and Brown (1984), in their original research, used four discrete reading comprehension strategies within reciprocal teaching: questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting. They selected these four particular comprehension strategies because they seem to provide a dual function; that is, they embody both comprehension-monitoring and comprehension-fostering activities.

Predicting

According to Malley (2017), predicting is the first strategy for reciprocal teaching. Predicting can be defined as the skill of making an educated guess by looking for clues about what will happen next in the text (Palincsar, 2004; Octavia and Fitriana, 2017; Afrizatama, 1994; Rodli & Pastryo, 2017). Palincsar and Brown (1984) believed that this strategy allows students to link the new knowledge they encounter in the text with the information they already know. Ting, Swanto & Pang (2021:4) posit prediction is attempted by using background knowledge and contextual cues to prognosticate forthcoming materials.

It combines the reader's prior knowledge, new knowledge from the text, and structure to create hypotheses related to the direction of the text and the author's intent in writing. Prediction not only provides an overall rationale for reading, but it engages the learners to think logically and allow them to have a high level of thinking.

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Questioning

Yoosabai (2009) states that questioning aims to test whether the readers understand the text and to help them identify important information. In addition, encouraging readers to generate questions related to the content of a text has a positive effect on the development of their reading comprehension.

According to Palincsar (2004), when students are first introduced to the questioning strategy, they are asked to generate a list of commonly used question words (e.g., who, what, when, where, how, why) and are asked to identify questions from among a set of questions and statements (Tseng & Yeh, 2017; Windawati, 2015; Almutairi, 2018).

Mostafa and Gomaa (2015) state that questioning not only involves the identification of information, themes, and ideas that are central and important enough to warrant further consideration but also provides a context for exploring the text more deeply and assuring the construction of meaning (Diehl, 2005; Ting, Swanto & Pang, 2021).

Almutairi (2018) posits that questioning is a beneficial assessment that allows teachers to determine whether or not their students have understood the information in the text and organized it to higher-order thinking. According to Hacker and Tennent (2002), questioning, which is found in all studies of RT, as well as many other reading comprehension programs, is the single most important strategy.

It is the opinion of the researcher that by teaching learners how to create questions (the 5 W's and the H), we are getting them actively involved in the reading process, and they will enjoy it and pay more attention. Spending time and effort on questioning will be time and effort well spent.

Clarifying

According to Palincsar (2004), clarifying is an activity that is particularly important when working with students who may believe that the purpose of reading is saying the words correctly; they may not be particularly uncomfortable that the words and, in fact, the passage are not making sense. When teaching students to clarify, their

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attention is called to the many reasons why the text is difficult to understand (Hampson-Jones, 2014; Bales, 2020; McNair, 2019; Relton, 2017).

Mostafa and Gomas (2015) state that clarifying involves identifying and clarifying unclear, difficult, or unfamiliar aspects of a text. These aspects may include awkward sentence or passage structure, unfamiliar vocabulary, unclear references, or obscure concepts. Clarifying motivates to remediate confusion through re-reading, the use of context in which the text was written and/or read, and the use of external resources.

Ozckus (2003) posits that a teacher should model how to reread the confusing parts of the text, continue reading to find clues, use prior knowledge or discuss the confusing part with another person.

Basson (2016) states pupils should be taught to become aware when they do not understand a text. Attempts to correct comprehension failure can only be made if there is an awareness that failure has occurred. Pupils should therefore be taught to discontinue reading when something does not make sense.

Diehl (2005) states that when readers clarify the text, they critically evaluate their own reading. O'Malley (2017) adds that clarifying helps students monitor their own comprehension as they identify problems that they are having in comprehending portions of text or figuring out difficult words.

Bess (2007) posits that clarifying is the most difficult for students to use and would prove to be the most challenging strategy. Windawati (2015) agrees that clarifying is a complex strategy that involves two basic steps: (1) identifying or admitting that one is stuck on a word or idea and then (2) figuring out how to remedy the situation. This will help the students monitor their own comprehension.

Clarifying may be one of the major challenges for Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners who come from the Foundation Phase, where they have learned to read, and many of them can say the word correctly. But they do not understand the meaning of the word.

Summarising

Summarising is the process of identifying the important information, themes, and

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ideas within a text and integrating these into a clear and concise statement that communicates the essential meaning of the text (Palincsar, 2004; Yoosabai, 2009; Hampson-Jones, 2014; Mostafa & Gomaa, 2015; Basson, 2016; Oktavia and Fitriana, 2017).

Summarising provides the impetus to create a context for understanding the specifics of a text. Hashey and Connors (2003) state that summarising is an effective strategy for comprehension because it requires students to focus on key points, not restate everything. According to Duke and Pearson (2002), the ability to summarise information requires readers to sift through large units of text, differentiate important from unimportant ideas, and then synthesize those ideas and create a new coherent text.

Summarising is a complex process that requires merging multiple skills and strategies (Dew, Swanto & Pang: 2021). It is a vital, though sometimes challenging, skill for readers of all ages. Students must use a summarising strategy to identify the text's main idea and key points. Then, the students must put that information together to concisely explain the meaning and content of the passage in their own words (Bales, 2020; Ahmadi, 2012).

3.4.4 Process of Reciprocal Teaching

The structure of Reciprocal Teaching is founded on explicitly teaching the 4 reading comprehension strategies of summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting through teacher modelling (Westera, 2002; Oczkus, 2004; Diehl, 2005; Sarasti, 2007; Ahmadi, 2012; Gilakjani, 2012; Brown, 2015; Ramadan, 2017). Explicitly teaching students how to use various comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading plays an important role in improving their ability to comprehend what they are reading (Bess, 2007; McAllum, 2014; McNair, 2019). These strategies help learners monitor their development of reading comprehension by themselves (Hosenfeld et al., 1993). The four reciprocal teaching strategies are not only explicitly taught but also modelled and practised within deliberate conversations with others to predict, clarify, question and summarise (McNair, 2019; Brown, 2015; Relton, 2017;

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Helou, 2018)

Takala (2006) states that the two main features of reciprocal teaching are instruction in the four comprehension strategies and dialogue between the teacher and the pupils that will contribute to using the strategies while discussing the text. Islam (2020) agrees that Reciprocal Teaching is a dialogue between teachers and students. According to Ramadan (2017), dialogue is the heart of Reciprocal Teaching and is considered the primary feature.

Diehl (2005) posits that many reciprocal teaching studies targeted fourth- and fifth-grade struggling readers because reciprocal teaching was designed to meet the needs of adequate decoders but poor comprehenders, specifically. Eilers and Pinkley (2006) state that explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies should begin early during reading development; that is, it should begin in primary school. De Lange et al. (2012) posit that international studies have shown that the explicit teaching of comprehension strategies is key to improving reading levels among intermediate-phase learners (National Reading Panel 2000).

According to the Reading Strategy (DoE, 2008), numerous educators in South Africa have an inadequate perception of teaching literacy, reading and writing. Many educators simply possess a modest understanding of teaching reading. Educators are not familiar with methods of teaching reading which may be suitable for all learners' learning approaches. The Reading Strategy (DoE, 2008) emphasises that educators are unfamiliar with motivating reading inside and outside the classroom (Naidoo, 2012).

De Boer (2003) states that the need for explicit instruction in the area of reading comprehension continues to be largely ignored in most schools. Klapwijk (2012) points out that it seems teachers seldom teach reading strategies explicitly in South African schools and may not know how to teach comprehension (Zimmerman & Smit, 2014).

If this is evident in most South African primary schools and a contributing factor to the poor PIRLS results of grade 4 learners, Reciprocal Teaching could help to alleviate this problem.

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One of the aims of this study is to investigate how Reciprocal Teaching can promote the teaching of reading comprehension to Intermediate Phase-learners. Therefore, the Professional Development training of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers in Reciprocal Teaching and how to use these four strategies effectively will become imperative.

3.4.5   Reciprocal Teaching used in other subjects

Since the seminal study of Palincsar and Brown (1984), Reciprocal Teaching has been used in various learning areas, including mathematics, science, social studies and foreign languages, and with almost all ages, including kindergarten and at the tertiary level.

Kurshumlia and Vula (2021) posit that since Reciprocal Teaching is flexible and adaptive for different levels of students, reciprocal learning effectively supports students in solving mathematical word problems. A study of Year 5 students in New Zealand using the RT approach to solve mathematical word problems found that the students gained confidence when solving word problems and that both the teacher and the students found the approach useful when using a five-stage process applied to word problems focused on statistics (Quirk, 2010).

DiLorenzo (2010) conducted a study using the reciprocal teaching method in science literacy. Following a 20-day study and follow-up period, DiLorenzo's study showed that the 4th and 5th graders combined scores increased by 33%, and students began to take on leadership roles in their small groups

Lederer (2000) examined the effectiveness of reciprocal teaching during social

studies instruction with several students with learning disabilities in fourth-, fifth-, and sixth grade and found that all students improved their performance on comprehension measures.

According to Brown (2015), researchers suggest Reciprocal Teaching can be used when learning a foreign language and mentions the study of Sun (2010), who researched the effects of Reciprocal Teaching on eighth-graders in Taiwan who

were learning English. In the experimental group, the English teacher modelled how to use each strategy, controlled the dialogue and gradually released the leadership to students. After 10 weeks of treatment, pretest and post-test analysis showed that students in the treatment group scored higher on English comprehension assessments than those students who received traditional instruction.

3.4.6 Reciprocal Teaching research done in countries outside the USA

Takala (2006) researched RT in Finland's fourth- and sixth-grade classrooms. All students in the mainstream classes used explicit instruction in the four RT strategies. Relton (2017) refers to a study based in Auckland, New Zealand, which involved 12 EAL learners aged 11-13 who spoke Mandarin as their first language and English as their second or third language.

Tarchi and Pinto (2016) posit that in their project, 43 students attending Grade 3 (between 8 and 9 years old) at three different schools in Tuscany, Italy, participated in a qualitative study.

Reichenberg and Löfgren (2014) investigated the effects of reciprocal teaching on the reading comprehension of Swedish students in the third grade. This grade level was chosen because no previous study of Swedish education had investigated the effects of reciprocal teaching on text comprehension among students in grade 3.

Ramadan's (2017) study examined the effects of Reciprocal Teaching on students' reading comprehension in the Palestinian school context and explored the attitudes of the 11th graders who learned reading using this strategy-based approach.

3.4.7 Benefits of Reciprocal Teaching

The reciprocal teaching approach focuses on giving students the skills of reading to learn through a four-stage process: predicting, question generating, clarifying, and summarizing (Palincsar & Klenk, 1992). Aguilera (2014) posits that, to date, reciprocal teaching is one of the most-studied approaches, and its procedures have been widely replicated. This approach has been found the most beneficial to

students who have a large discrepancy between their ability to decode text and comprehend text, with the students lacking in their ability to comprehend what is read (Palincsar & Herrenkohl, 2002).

According to Brown (2015), once each strategy was taught explicitly, students began to utilise each strategy with the support of the teacher. Islam (2020) posits that the students were more motivated to study because Reciprocal Teaching promoted workgroups in which the students could learn from one another by sharing ideas with the teammates

According to Kurshumlia and Vula (2021), Reciprocal Teaching can help students improve reading comprehension and a variety of skills, especially collaborative skills. One of the important achievements of the reciprocal teaching technique is that students develop their metacognitive thinking skills (Bruce & Robinson, 2000). According to Williams (2018), some benefits included increased confidence among the students involved in the Reciprocal Teaching groups, and students can use it from kindergarten to high school.

3.4.8   Challenges with Reciprocal Teaching

McNair (2019) points out that the time it takes for students to learn and implement the strategies independently is time-consuming and can take time away from learning content from reading. According to Francis (2018), Reciprocal Teaching is consistently confusing: there were – and are – so many different forms of how to do Reciprocal Teaching in the literature and on the internet. Even its name is uncertain: is it Reciprocal Teaching or Reciprocal Reading?

Aquilera (2014) states that a drawback of the studies is that no criterion was set to evaluate the quality of the instruction. Moreover, lack of observation of instruction was a common problem. Relton (2017) posits that researchers found that there was a difference between what the teachers said they did and what they actually did.

According to Williams (2018), budget constraints strongly impact whether teachers can attend workshops or Professional Development to learn about best practices in

teaching, which could be a reason for not having all teachers exposed to Reciprocal Teaching. According to Hacker and Tenant (2002), literature on reciprocal teaching is mostly quantitative, and there is a lack of qualitative studies which can highlight the process (beneath the intervention.

Cooper and Greive (2009) discovered that strategies of predicting and summarising appeared to be more difficult to master, and the evidence suggests that internalising these latter skills takes more time than questioning and clarifying.

3.5   Summary

Chapter Three presented a review of related literature, which started with a review of literature on Reading Comprehension, detailed discussions on Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching, and provided a visual summary (Atlas.ti) of key aspects related to the study.

Many Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers still opt for the traditional way of teaching comprehension, meaning that they assume that learners will improve their comprehension ability by simply reading the text and completing comprehension questions. This study made teachers aware of the importance of teaching reading comprehension strategies explicitly. The literature research have shown that there is a scarcity of research providing evidence of the efficacy of the Choice Theory implementation in classrooms. This study hoped to show that Choice Theory can serve as a foundation for teaching reading comprehension skills. The lack of observation as a drawback has been addressed in this study by using three independent triangulators.
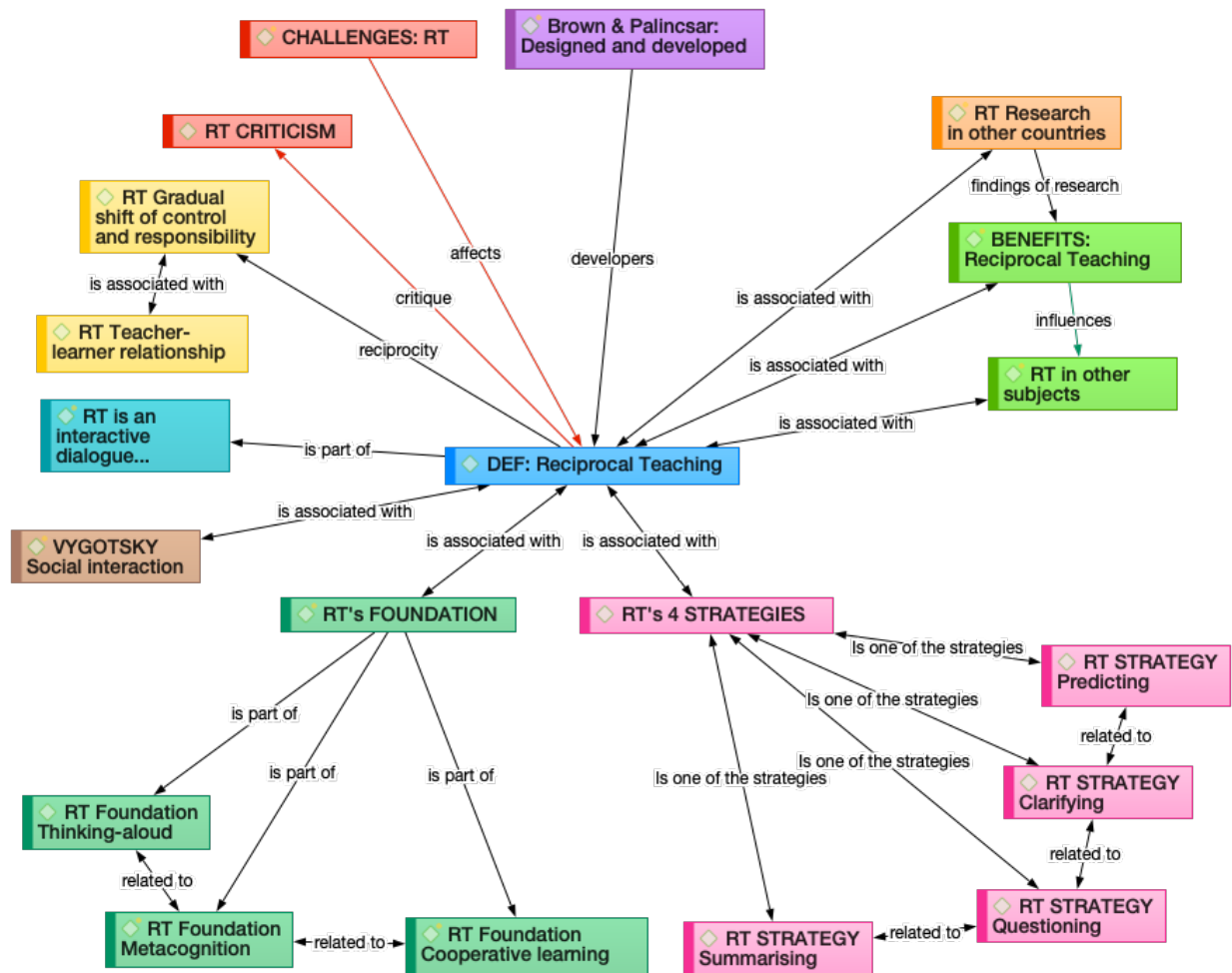
Figure 4: Atlas.ti network: Visual presentation of Reciprocal Teaching

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION
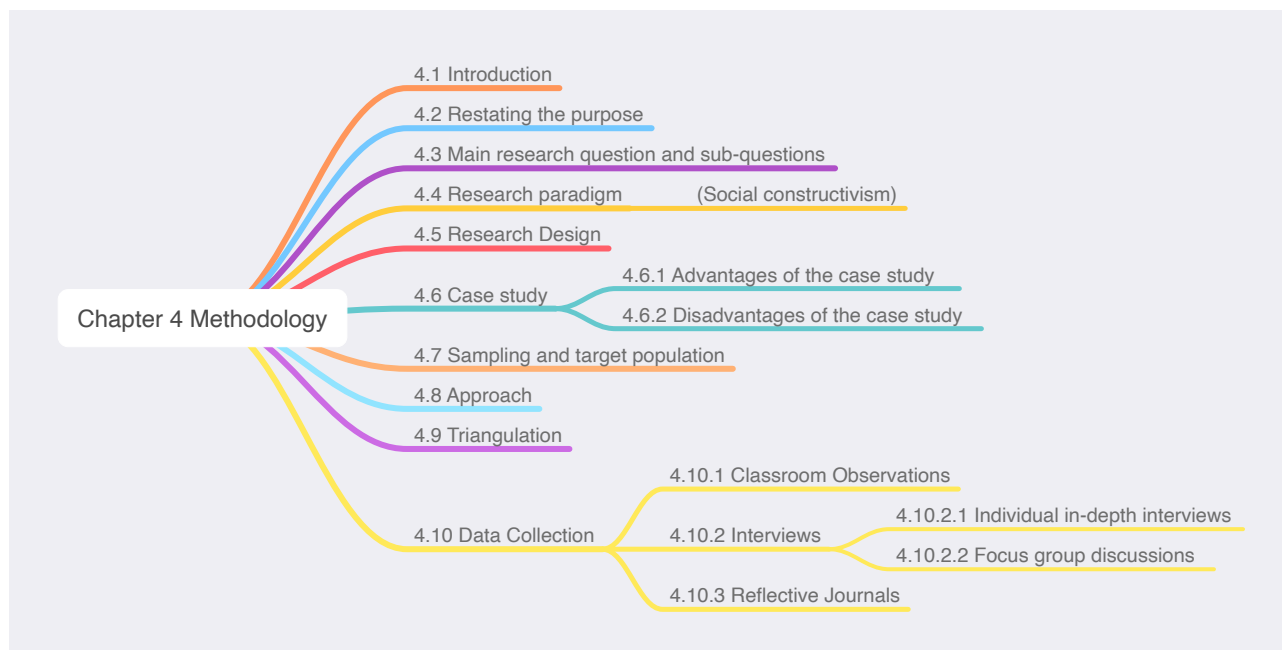
Figure 5: Mindnode layout of chapter 4

4.1   Introduction

According to Dawson (2019), a research methodology is the primary principle guiding your research. Research methodology encompasses the complete research process: the research approaches, procedures, and data collection or sampling methods used (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Research methodology is the specific procedures or techniques used in this study to identify, select, process, and analyse information about the topic under discussion.

The purpose of this social constructivist, qualitative, explanatory single-case study was to describe the experiences of three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers as they utilised the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote the teaching of reading comprehension.

This chapter restated the purpose of the research and the research questions and explained the research paradigm, the research design, as well as all the instruments and techniques that were used for data collection, namely observations, interviews,

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focus-group interviews, and reflective journals.

4.2   Restating the Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this social constructivist qualitative single case study is to investigate how the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching can promote the teaching of Reading Comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of one school. The secondary aims are as follows:

- To investigate to what extent an understanding the Choice Theory as an internal control psychology rather than external control psychology can promote the teaching of reading comprehension. This was answered by observation of the lesson plans and classroom management, semi-structured interviews, and teachers' reflective practices.

- To investigate what teachers who embrace the Choice Theory can do to create a classroom focusing on effective social interaction between learners as a key component of cognitive development. This was answered by observation of learner participation in the classrooms and interviews with teachers.

- To investigate the effects of Reciprocal Teaching on Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers' perception of reading comprehension instruction using in-service professional development training, interacting with teachers, interviewing them, and observing them carefully in the classroom.

- To investigate how the explicit teaching and modelling of the four reciprocal teaching strategies can promote reading comprehension. This was answered by observing the teaching of the four Reciprocal Teaching strategies in the classroom and learners' social interaction, interviews, and self-evaluation with teachers.

4.3   Main Research Question

The main research question that underlied this research was: How can the Choice

Theory and Reciprocal Teaching be utilised to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) in one school?

The following sub-questions were formulated to guide the study:

- To what extent can an understanding of the Choice Theory as an internal control psychology of human behaviour assist teachers in enhancing their teaching of reading comprehension?

- What can teachers who embrace Choice Theory do to create a warm, supportive classroom that focuses on effective social interactions and help learners to satisfy their basic needs as a key component of cognitive development and reading comprehension?

- How can Reciprocal Teaching, with its explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies, change Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension?

- How can the modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners promote the teaching of reading comprehension to enable learners to construct meaning from text by taking responsibility for their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser?

4.4   Research Paradigm

Patton (2015:89) states that a paradigm

> "is a worldview – a way of thinking about and making sense of the complexities of the real world."

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), social constructivism is another paradigm or worldview in which individuals seek an understanding of the world in which they live and work. They develop subjective meanings of their experiences—meanings directed toward certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or ideas. The goal of the research, then, is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation.

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Leavy (2017) posits that the social constructivist paradigm examines how people construct and reconstruct meanings through daily interactions. When working within this paradigm, attention is drawn to people's patterns of interaction and the interpretive processes by which they assign meanings to events, situations, and experiences. Creswell and Creswell (2018) state that for social constructivists, the goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied. Kim (2014) posits that the social constructivist paradigm, strongly influenced by a Vygotskian perspective, tends to identify research, particularly qualitative educational research, as discovering meaning and understanding through the researcher's active involvement in constructing meaning.

Thornhill (2014) posits that in a social constructivist paradigm, the learners must take on the responsibility for their own learning with the guidance of the teacher or other more knowledgeable peers. This could be linked to the fourth sub-question of this research, asking how the modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners promotes the teaching of reading comprehension so that learners are enabled to construct meaning from text by taking responsibility for their roles as a predictor, questioner, clarifier, and summariser.

The researcher used meaning (versus measurement) oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects. From a social constructivist perspective, researchers tend to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and its complexity in its unique context instead of trying to generalise it. The social constructivism as a research paradigm in this study highlighted the social interaction that took place between teachers and learners and this contributed to promoting the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6).

4.5   Research Approach.

This study is qualitative in nature and used a social constructivist paradigm to understand how teachers utilise Choice theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote the teaching of reading comprehension.

Denzin and Lincoln (2018:43) define qualitative research as follows:

> "Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them."

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), the key to qualitative research is to learn about the problem or issue from participants and engage in the best practices to obtain that information. Qualitative research aims to purposefully select participants or sites that best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question. Creswell and Poth (2018) state that one general guideline for sample size in qualitative research is not only to study a few sites or individuals but also to collect extensive detail about each site or individual studied.

According to Patton (2015), the credibility of a qualitative study depends less on the sample size. Credibility depends more on the richness of the information gathered and the analytical skills of the researcher. Creswell (2013) states that qualitative research studies involve a small number of participants who share similar perceptions of a specific experience.

Maxwell (2012) posits that qualitative researchers typically study a relatively small number of individuals or situations and preserve the individuality of each of these in their analyses rather than collecting data from large samples and aggregating the data across individuals or situations. The sample size of this research was only three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers of one school, and the aim was to get a deeper understanding of what is happening in the classroom in terms of how the teachers connect with their learners and how they explicitly teach reading comprehension skills.

Creswell (2013) and other researchers state that the researcher is the primary instrument in data collection rather than some inanimate mechanism (Eisner, 1991; Frankel & Wallen, 1990; Merriam, 1988). They collect data by examining documents, observing behaviour, and interviewing participants. They may use an instrument, but it is one designed by the researcher using open-ended questions. They do not tend to use or rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers. Flick, Kardorff and Steinke (2004) state that a further feature of qualitative research is that the reflective capability of the researcher about his or her actions and observations in the field of investigation is taken to be an essential part of the discovery and not a source of disturbance that needs to be monitored or eliminated.

The researcher's background, prior experience, and knowledge are very important in the process of selecting an appropriate research approach (Creswell, 2014). The researcher's interests and strengths are likely to point them to either a quantitative approach, a qualitative approach or mixed methods approach to research. In this study the researcher's background knowledge and education experience pointed him in the direction of qualitative research. The primary goal of this qualitative research study was to examine how the utilisation of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching can promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of one school.

4.6   Research Design: Case Study

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), research design refers to the entire process of research, from conceptualizing a problem to writing research questions, including data collection, analysis, interpretation, and report writing.

Yin (2009:29) commented:

> "The design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions".

The case study is an established research design that is used extensively in a wide variety of disciplines, particularly in the social sciences. Yazan (2015) posits that in qualitative research, the case study is one of the frequently used methodologies and

that the three influential authors who provide procedures to conduct case study research are Robert K. Yin, Sharan Merriam, and Robert E. Stake.

According to Yin (2018:15):

> "A case study is an empirical method that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used."

Merriam (2009) states that qualitative case studies share with other forms of qualitative research the search for meaning and understanding, the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, an inductive investigative strategy, and the end product being richly descriptive.

According to Patton (2015), the case study approach to qualitative analysis constitutes a specific way of collecting, organizing, and analyzing data; in that sense, it represents an analysis *"process".* The purpose is to gather comprehensive, systematic, and in-depth information about each case of interest. The analysis process results in a *product*: a case study.

Zainal (2007) states that a case study method enables a researcher to closely examine the data within a specific context. In most cases, a case study method selects a small geographical area or a very limited number of individuals as the subjects of study. Creswell and Poth (2018) posit that in case study research, a single case is typically selected to illustrate an issue, and the researcher assembles a detailed description of the setting for the case. According to Flick, Kardorff and Steinke (2004), a single case may be an individual, a group, or an organisation. The underlying philosophy of single-case study is "not to prove but to improve".

For the purpose of this qualitative research, a single-case study was chosen as the research design. The decision to select only three Afrikaans (HL) Home Language Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers from one school was based on the need to obtain in-depth information regarding the improvement of the teaching of reading comprehension. The quality of the study is not oriented on the number of

participants in the study but on the richness of the information that will be obtained from the participants. A further strong reason for the single-case study as the design is to investigate a thick description of participants' perception and experience of teaching reading comprehension.

According to Yin (2009), there are several case studies categories: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. First, exploratory case studies are set to explore any phenomenon in the data which serves as a point of interest to the researcher. Exploratory case study design attempts to define questions of a subsequent study or determine the research procedures' feasibility (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016). The exploratory case study typically attempts to answer "what" questions.

Second, descriptive case studies are set to describe the natural phenomena which occur within the data in question. The goal set by the researcher is to describe the data as they occur. A descriptive case study design attempts to present a complete description of a phenomenon within its context.

4.6.1 Explanatory case study

Explanatory case studies examine the data closely, both at a surface and deep level, to explain the phenomena in the data. Patnaik and Pandy (2019) state that in contrast to the exploratory case study, the explanatory case study design seeks to establish cause-and-effect relationships. The primary purpose, in this case, is to determine how events occur and which events can influence one particular outcome of interest.

This research adopted an explanatory case study design and focused on how the utilisation of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6). This embedded approach enabled a mixture of qualitative research methods and techniques that were incorporated into the overall research design. These included observations, individual semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, reflective practices and analysis of the professional development training.

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According to Cohen et al. (2018), case studies have several advantages that make them attractive to educational evaluators or researchers and they, list the following:

- Case studies allow generalizations either about an instance or from an instance to a class. Their peculiar strength lies in their attention to the subtlety and complexity of the case in its own right.

- Case studies recognize the complexity and 'embeddedness' of social truths. By carefully attending to social situations, case studies can represent some of the discrepancies or conflicts between the viewpoints held by participants.

- Case studies are 'a step to action'. They begin in a world of action and contribute to it. Their insights may be directly interpreted and put to use.

- Case studies present research or evaluation data in a more publicly accessible form than other kinds of research reports and can serve multiple audiences.

4.6.2 Advantages of the case study

According to Yin (2009), one of the main advantages of case study research is the capacity for an in-depth study of social phenomena in a real-life context, allowing the researcher to retain the meaningful characteristics of real-life events. Krusenvik (2018) agrees and states that one of the advantages of studying individual cases in-depth is that we can find the information we did not anticipate finding from the start.

Cohen et al. (2018:235) posit that the peculiar strength of case studies lies in their attention to the subtlety and complexity of the case in its own right. Flyvbjerg (2006) states that: "The advantage of the case study is that it can "close in" on real-life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice". Case studies allow investigators to retain a holistic view of real-life events, such as individual life cycles, small group behaviour, organizational and managerial processes, neighbourhood change, school performance, international relations, and the maturation of industries (Yin, 2009)

Merriam (1994) posits that the unique strength of case studies is their ability to handle and combine multiple kinds of data collection methods (documents, interviews, questionnaires, objects, and observations). Murphy (2014) explains this strength by saying that case studies as a research method are non-prejudicial. The ability to triangulate data using a mixture of methods is seen to be the main advantage (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) and can enhance the credibility of a study (Robson, 2011).

Case study research is a very good method for creating hypotheses that can help structure future research and therefore plays an important part in advancing a field's knowledge base (Merriam, 2009). Zainal (2007) posits that some longitudinal studies of individual subjects, for instance, rely on qualitative data from journal writings that give descriptive accounts of behaviour.

4.6.3 Disadvantages of the case study

Case studies are very prone to researcher bias, given their subjective nature. The researcher's values and beliefs may interfere with the objectivity of the analysis. Garger (2013) posits that the researcher essentially becomes a part of the research itself, and knowing the expected results, the researcher may subconsciously guide the subjects towards those results, thereby confirming the expected results. In this study, the researcher limited his own bias by using multiple observers as investigator triangulators. Different data resources like observations, interviews, focus group interviews, and reflective journals were also used to verify the data.

According to Yin (2009), the greatest concern with the case study is its lack of rigour. He means that all too often, the case study investigator has so much freedom that he becomes sloppy, does not follow systematic procedures, or allows dubious evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions. For this study the researcher included investigator triangulators with a pre-planned programme for observations and interviews with the participants.

Another disadvantage is that the results do not provide sufficient evidence for the study to be generalised to benefit a wider population. Case studies provide very little

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basis for scientific generalisation since they use a small number of subjects, some conducted with only one subject.

Merriam (2009) agrees that although a rich, thick description and analysis of a phenomenon may be desired, a researcher may not have the time or money to devote to such an undertaking. Usually, the studies take a long time to execute (Yin, 2009), and the product may be too lengthy, too detailed, or too involved for busy policymakers and practitioners to read and use (Merriam, 2009).

4.7   Population and Sampling

According to Patton (2002), the samples for qualitative research are mostly assumed to be chosen purposefully to locate cases that are ''information rich''. Ishak and Bakar (2014) posit that purposive sampling is the more acceptable sampling procedure for qualitative research, particularly when it involves selecting participants for special situations.

Purposeful sampling allows the qualitative researcher to identify and choose individuals or groups of individuals who are sharing similar knowledge or experiences about a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano, 2011). For this study it was important to focus on the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 – 6) and the participants who were sharing the same knowledge of teaching Afrikaans Home Language.

According to Yin (2011), purposive sampling is deliberate and will most likely yield the most relevant and plentiful data. Creswell (2013:185) states that "purposive sampling refers to a selection of sites or participants that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question".

Creswell (2013) states that qualitative research studies involve a small number of participants who share similar perceptions of a specific experience. For that reason, three teachers from one school who practice and share similar practices and experiences in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) were identified for this study.

In many cases, purposive sampling is used to access 'knowledgeable people', that

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is, those who have in-depth knowledge about particular issues, maybe by virtue of their professional role, power, access to networks, expertise, or experience (Cohen et al., 2007:115). This single-case study allowed the researcher to look at the participants (the study sample) closely to understand the process of teaching reading comprehension strategies.

Using a purposive sampling approach, the participants for this study were deliberately chosen on the ground of the following criteria:

- A rural, public combined school of WCED with a total enrolment of 659 learners.
- GRR to GR7 have a total of only 243 learners, and GR.8 to GR.10 has a total of 416 learners.
- The number of Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) is 94 learners.
- A quintile 2: no school fee school.
- Unemployment percentages of parents: Gr.4 = 57%; Gr.5 = 32% and Gr.6 = 29%
- Feeding scheme for: Gr.4 = 68%; Gr.5 = 72% and Gr.6 = 54%
- The literacy achievement levels for the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) were average.
- Three Intermediate Phase-teachers (one per grade 4, 5, and 6) identified who teach Afrikaans Home Language.

The researcher applied the list above for the richness of the data.

PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION	GRADE	GENDER	AGE	QUALIFICATIONS	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
Participant 1	Grade 4	Female	38	B.Ed	1
Participant 2	Grade 5	Female	52	HDE	20
Participant 3	Grade 6	Female	25	B.Ed	2

Table 1: Participant identification

4.8 Approach

This study was divided into four phases.

The first phase was to identify the school and set up a meeting with the principal to explain the purpose of the research. After seeking the relevant permission from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED), a consent form was given to the principal, who agreed to be part of the study. A follow-up meeting was then arranged with the three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers to explain the broad aim and outcomes of the study. After they agreed to participate in the study, they were asked to sign the consent forms.

The second phase was to do a needs analysis in terms of the literacy achievement levels of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of the school. Based on the findings of a initial questionnaire completed by the three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers, a professional development programme for the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching was developed.

The Choice Theory training was a 4-day introductory intensive course developed by William Glasser International (WGI) and only offered by registered instructors. The learning outcomes of the course were the following:

1. Understand that Choice Theory is an internal psychology and diametrically the opposite of External Control Psychology.

2. Know how the brain works in terms of Situation A (not in effective control) and Situation B (gaining effective control).Use Reality Therapy to help unhappy people deal with personal and professional problems and enable them to take charge of their lives.

3. Improve the quality in the workplace by demonstrating and modelling lead management to co-workers. Effective lead management directly influences working relationships, individual work satisfaction, and an organisation's quality of work performance.

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The Reciprocal Teaching training consisted of a 1-day workshop with the following learning outcomes:

1. Introduction, origin, and research findings of Reciprocal Teaching.

2. Understanding the importance of explicit teaching of reading strategies.

3. Focusing on the importance of the foundation for Reciprocal Teaching: scaffolding, thinking aloud, metacognition, and cooperative Learning.

4. Applying and modelling the four reading strategies of Reciprocal Teaching: prediction, clarification, questioning and summarising.

5. Compiling an intervention program for Reciprocal Teaching.

6. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

The third phase involved classroom observations and individual interviews, during which the observers acted as non-participant observers. The objective of the classroom observations was to establish whether what the teachers have learned during the training sessions was applied in their teaching. Three independent observers (a retired, experienced Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teacher, a Curriculum Manager from a Private School, and a Choice Theory instructor) were considered as investigator triangulators to do the observations and individual interviews.

The fourth phase of the research project involved regular focus group discussions with the three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers and also analysing the reflective journals kept by the teachers. The group discussions focused on sharing best practices and challenges experienced by teachers and offered essential insights into utilising the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. The reflective journal helped the teachers to reflect critically on their lessons and learning process.

4.9   Triangulation

Denzin and Lincoln (2018) define triangulation as the different perspectives researchers take on an issue under study in answering the research questions. Almutairi (2018) posits that qualitative researchers use triangulation to verify the

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information and ensure that their evidence is credible. In this technique, the researchers are required to compare evidence from different data sources to check and establish the validity of their study. As mentioned earlier the bias of the researcher was limited by involving investigator triangulators to do observations and interviews.

Patton (2015) states that triangulation within a qualitative inquiry strategy can be attained by combining interviewing and observations, mixing different types of purposeful samples, or examining how competing theoretical perspectives inform a thorough analysis. According to Creswell (2013), triangulation occurs by reviewing the evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification of themes. This study triangulated all the classroom observations, open-ended interview transcripts, focus group interviews, and teachers' reflective journals. Finally, McNair (2019) posits that qualitative research maintains its validity and reliability through multiple data collection methods.

Investigator triangulation was considered to bring more observers into the study to provide multiple observations and interviews. This type of triangulation provided both confirmations of findings and different perspectives and helped to control or correct the subjective bias of the individual. The use of investigator triangulators also ensured the validity, consistency, and reliability of data.

4.10 Data Collection

Creswell (2007) indicates that the procedure of data collection in qualitative research involves four basic types: observations (field notes and reflective journals, participant and non-participant observations); interviews (individual in-depth interviews producing narrative data and focus group interviews); documents (literature survey, document analysis); and audio-visual materials.

Yin (2018:113) identifies six sources of evidence found in case study research: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation, and physical artefacts.

According to Yin (2018:115), documentation might include the following:

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- Emails, memoranda, letters, and other personal documents such as diaries, calendars, and notes.

- Agendas, announcements and minutes of meetings, and other reports.

- Administrative documents include proposals, progress reports, and other internal records.

- Formal studies or evaluations related to the case that you are studying, and

- News clippings and other articles appearing in the mass media or in community newspapers.

PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION	OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS									
	Years of experience in the Intermediate Phase?	Weekly time spent on reading ?	Activities during the reading lesson ?	Reading programmes in place at school?	Regularity of IP meetings?	Last attendance of professional development training?	Topic or theme?	Prior knowledge of Reciprocal Teaching?	Use of reading comprehension strategies?	Willingness to participate in this study?
Participant 1										
Participant 2										
Participant 3										

Table 2: Open-ended initial questionnaire

Documentation played an essential role in the data collection for this single-case study as it provided a thorough review of all the documentary evidence. Since the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers of this school were the key informants, the data collection process started with an initial open-ended questionnaire they completed. This was done to enable teachers to share personal data and prior knowledge on the topic under study. This qualitative research was further underpinned by information gathered from classroom observations, semi-structured

interviews, focus group interviews, and reflective journals of the educators. Based on the information received an intervention for professional training of the three participants was planned.

TIMELINE FOR DATA COLLECTION											
Grade Teachers	Phase 1			Phase 2		Phase 3			Phase 4		
	Classroom Observations			Semi-structured Interviews		Focus Group Discussions			Reflective Journals		
	IP July	RT Aug	CT Aug	RT Aug	CT Aug	March	July	Aug	July	Aug	Sept
Grade 4											
Grade 5											
Grade 6											

Table 3: Timeline for data collection

Abbreviations: IP = Intermediate Phase, RT = Reciprocal Teaching and CT = Choice Theory

4.10.1 Classroom Observations

Merriam (2002) argues that observations are the major means of collecting data in qualitative research. Malterud (2001) focuses on both the observation and interview aspects of qualitative research and states that qualitative research involves the systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of textual material from talk or observation. Observation is a way of collecting data through observing. The observation data collection method may involve watching, listening, reading, touching, and recording behaviour and characteristics of phenomena.

For this study structured observations were considered to allow the triangulators to observe the participants for specific behaviour from a either CAPS, Choice Theory or Reciprocal Teaching perspective.

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Yin (2018:122) states that a common procedure to increase the reliability of observational evidence is to have more than a single observer making an observation and that case studies, when resources permit, should allow for the use of multiple field persons.

For this reason, investigator triangulation was considered for this study. According to Flick (2004), investigator triangulation is characterized by using different observers or interviewers to balance out the subjective influences of individuals. Three investigator triangulators conducted the classroom observations of the Afrikaans Home Language reading lessons of the Intermediate Phase-teachers. Altogether nine observations per educator were done over a period of four months.

PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION	GRADE	GENDER	AGE	QUALIFICATIONS	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	DATES OF OBSERVATIONS		
						May	August	August
						IP Triangulator	RT Triangulator	CT Triangulator
Participant 1	Grade 4	Female	38	B.Ed. FPhase	1	10/5 (1 hr) 12/5 (1 hr) 17/5 (1 hr) Absent 24/5 (1 hr)	5/8 (1 hr) 10/8 (1 hr)	15/8 (1 hr) 16/8 (1 hr)
Participant 2	Grade 5	Female	52	SPCert	20	Absent Absent 17/5 (1 hr) 19/5 (1 hr) 24/5 (1 hr)	5/8 (1 hr) 10/8 (1 hr)	15/8 (1 hr) 16/8 (1 hr)
Participant 3	Grade 6	Female	25	B.Ed.	2	10/5 (1 hr) 12/5 (1 hr) 17/5 (1 hr) 19/5 (1 hr) 24/5 (1 hr)	5/8/ (1 hr) 10/8 (1 hr)	15/8 (1 hr) 16/8 (1 hr)

Table 4: Timeline for observations

The first round of observations was done by an experienced, retired, Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teacher familiar with CAPS (the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, which is a single, comprehensive, and concise policy

document). This person visited the school in May 2022 to observe Afrikaans Home Language reading lessons. The dates and times were negotiated with the teachers.

Analysis of these lessons focused on the following:

- The goal of the lesson,

- communication,

- interpersonal relationships,

- learner involvement and

- the use of a variety of strategies and resources.

PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION	GRADE	GENDER	AGE	QUALIFICATIONS	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	DATES OF OBSERVATIONS
						May
						Experienced Intermediate Phase Triangulator
Participant 1	Grade 4	Female	38	B.Ed	1	10/5/ (1 hr) 12/5/ (1 hr) 17/5/ (1 hr) Absent 24/5/ (1 hr)
Participant 2	Grade 5	Female	52	PTC	20	Absent Absent 17/5/ (1 hr) 19/5/ (1 hr) 24/5/ (1 hr)
Participant 3	Grade 6	Female	25	B.Ed	2	10/5/ (1 hr) 12/5/ (1 hr) 17/5/ (1 hr) 19/5/ (1 hr) 24/5/ (1 hr)

Table 5: Dates for FIRST classroom observations

The second round of observations was done by a Curriculum Manager from the Private School who were familiar with Reciprocal Teaching. This person will visit the school in August 2022 to do observations of the Afrikaans Home Language reading lessons. The dates and times have been negotiated with the teachers. Analysis of these lessons focused on the following:

- the goal of the lesson,

- classroom atmosphere,

- participation of learners,

- explicit teaching of 4 reading comprehension strategies,

- use of scaffolding, thinking-aloud, cooperative learning (jigsaw) and

- discipline management.

PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION	GRADE	GENDER	AGE	QUALIFICATIONS	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	DATES OF OBSERVATIONS August Reciprocal Teaching Triangulator
Participant 1	Grade 4	Female	38	B.Ed	1	5/8 (1 hr) 10/8 (1 hr)
Participant 2	Grade 5	Female	52	PTC	20	5/8 (1 hr) 10/8 (1 hr)
Participant 3	Grade 6	Female	25	B.Ed	2	5/8 (1 hr) 10/8 (1 hr)

Table 6: Dates for SECOND classroom observations

The third investigator triangulator did the last round of observations. This person was a former principal and William Glasser International instructor who is familiar with the Choice Theory. He visited the school during the second half of August 2022 to observe the Choice Theory application in the classroom. The dates and times were negotiated with the teachers. Analysis of these lessons focused on the following:

- creating a warm and safe environment for all learners

- satisfying learners' basic needs of fun, freedom, power and love and belonging in the classroom,

- social interaction of teacher and learners,

- discipline management without using external control.

The interactive nature of the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching contributed to promoting the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6).

PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION	GRADE	GENDER	AGE	QUALIFICATIONS	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	DATES OF OBSERVATIONS August Choice Theory Triangulator
Participant 1	Grade 4	Female	38	B.Ed	1	15/8 (1 hr) 16/8 (1 hr) 22/8 (1 hr)
Participant 2	Grade 5	Female	52	PTC	20	15/8 (1 hr) 16/8 (1 hr) 22/8 (1 hr)
Participant 3	Grade 6	Female	25	B.Ed	2	15/8 (1 hr) 16/8 (1 hr) 22/8 (1 hr)

Table 7: Dates for THIRD classroom observations

4.10.2 Interviews

The interview is one of the most important sources of the case study (Yin, 2018). As such, the three common types of interviews include: unstructured, semi-structured, and structured (Edwards & Holland, 2013; Stuckey, 2013; Jamshed, 2014).

Semi-structured interviews use an interview protocol to help guide the researcher through the interview process. Thornhill (2014) states that during semi-structured, in-depth interviews, predetermined, open, direct, and verbal questions are used to evoke detailed narratives and stories.

According to Patton (2015:428), an interview is an interaction and relationship. He identifies the following ten skills and competencies to cultivate interviews:

1. Ask open-ended questions	Ask relevant and meaningful open-ended questions that invite thoughtful, in-depth responses that elicit whatever is salient to the interviewee.
2. Be clear	Ask questions that are clear, focused, understandable, and answerable.
3. Listen	Attend carefully to responses. Let the interviewees know that they've been heard. Respond appropriately to what you hear.
4. Probe as appropriate	Follow up incomplete responses with clarifying probes. Interviewees will only then learn what degree of depth and detail you seek through probes.
5. Observe	Watch the interviewee guide the interactive process. Acknowledge what is going up. Adapt the interview as appropriate to fit the reactions of the person interviewed. Every interview is also an observation.
6. Be both empathic and neutral	Show interest and offer encouragement non-judgementally: emphatic neutrality.
7. Make transitions	Help and guide the interviewee through the interview process.
8. Distinguish types of sentences	Separate purely descriptive questions from questions about interpretations and judgements. Distinguish behaviour, attitude, knowledge, and feeling questions.
9. Be prepared for the unexpected	The world can intrude during an interview. Be flexible and responsive.
10. Be present throughout	Interviewees can tell when the interviewer is distracted, inattentive, or uninterested.

Table 8: Interview principles and skills

According to Yin (2011), interview questions should be open-ended, allowing for the participant to respond fully, and the questions should be a guide only that acts as a mental framework for the researcher during the qualitative interview.

Individual in-depth interviews

According to Boyce and Neale (2006), in-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique involving intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation. The individual in-depth interview allows the interviewer to delve deeply into social and personal matters. Johnson and Rowlands (2012) posit that a researcher who uses in-depth interviewing commonly seeks "deep" information and knowledge -

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usually deeper information and knowledge that concerns very personal matters such as an individual's self, lived experience, values and decisions.

Advantages of in-depth interviews

- Questions that are based on the participants' reality can be prepared ahead of time.

- Interviewers can establish rapport with participants, enabling them to generate more in-depth responses regarding the study.

- Participants who have a comfortable relationship with interviewers will communicate much more freely their underlying perceptions, attitudes, and their values.

- The sampling is more accurate and of a higher quality than other data collection methods.

- Interviewers need fewer participants to obtain useful and relevant information.

- Because in-depth interviews can potentially be so insightful, it is possible to identify highly valuable findings quickly.

According to Descombe (2007), a disadvantage of the one-to-one interview is that it limits the number of views and opinions available to the researcher. Listening to one person at a time effectively restricts the number of voices that can be heard and the range of views that can be included within a research project.

Other disadvantages of in-depth interviews

- In-depth interviews can be quite time-consuming, as interviews must be organised, transcribed, analyzed, and reported.

- The entire process can be undermined if the interviewer is not highly skilled and experienced.

- The process can be relatively costly compared to other methods.

- Participants must be carefully chosen to avoid bias.

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The researcher's decision to use this semi-structured interview approach was based on the fact that the individual in-depth interview would allow the three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers the opportunity to describe in detail the bases of their approaches to teaching reading. Another consideration for this approach was listening to the teacher's voice rather than the researcher's. The in-depth interview also created a climate conducive to teacher reflection on their teaching practices.

PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION	GRADE	GENDER	AGE	QUALIFICATIONS	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	DATES FOR INTERVIEWS	
						August	
						Reciprocal Teaching Triangulator	Choice Theory Triangulator
Participant 1	Grade 4	Female	38	B.Ed	1	12/8 (1 hr)	22/8 (1 hr)
Participant 2	Grade 5	Female	52	PTC	20	12/8 (1 hr)	22/8 (1 hr)
Participant 3	Grade 6	Female	25	B.Ed	2	12/8 (1 hr)	22/8 (1 hr)

Table 9: Dates for individual in-depth interviews

The triangulator for Reciprocal Teaching had one-on-one interviews with each Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teacher and ask open-ended, semi-structured questions based on the explicit teaching of reading comprehension and using the four Reciprocal Teaching strategies. The individual interviews took place after school, and a Reciprocal Teaching interview guide (see appendix A) was used to guide the interview. These interviews gained feedback from the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers regarding sub-questions:

1. How can Reciprocal Teaching, with its explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies, change Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension?

2. How can the modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners promote the teaching of reading comprehension to enable learners to

construct meaning from text by taking responsibility for their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser?

The triangulator for the Choice Theory also had one-on-one interviews with each Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teacher, and the open-ended, semi-structured questions was guided by a Choice Theory interview guide (see appendix B). These individual interviews took place after school, and the aim was to gain feedback from the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers regarding sub-questions:

1. To what extent can an understanding of the Choice Theory as an internal control psychology of human behaviour assist teachers in enhancing their teaching of reading comprehension?

2. What can teachers who embrace Choice Theory do to create a warm, supportive classroom that focuses on effective social interactions and help learners to satisfy their need for love and belonging, freedom, power and fun in the classroom as a key component of cognitive development and reading comprehension?

4.10.3 Focus Group Discussions

According to Gundumogula and Gundumogula (2020), focus groups are an extended way of the interview method, a more specific in-depth group interview with discussion in a structured and organised manner with the help of a facilitator or moderator to explore the selected topics. According to Ochieng et al. (2018), focus group discussion is frequently used as a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of social issues. The method aims to obtain data from a randomly selected group rather than from a statistically representative sample of a broader population. Ward (1991) posits that focus groups are guided group discussions intended to yield information on a specific topic from a selected population.

Thomas et al. (1995) state that focus groups are completely different from other methods because they promote interaction among participants with spontaneity. The type and range of data generated through the social interaction of the group are

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often deeper and richer than those obtained from one-to-one interviews.

The fundamental difference between individual in-depth interviews and focus group discussions is that interviews involve a one-to-one, qualitative discussion where the researcher adopts the role of an investigator who asks questions and engages in dialogue with a specific individual at a time. In contrast, in a focus group discussion, researchers adopt the role of a facilitator who moderates a group discussion between participants and not between the researcher and the participants.

Kumar (2011) states that in forming a focus group, the size of the group is an important consideration. It should be neither too large nor too small, as this can impede the extent and quality of the discussion. Denscombe (2007) agrees that a focus group should consist of a small group of people, usually between six and nine, who are brought together by a trained facilitator (the researcher) to explore attitudes, perceptions, and feelings about a topic.

The focus group discussion data complemented the individual teachers' classroom observations and interviews. Multiple focus group discussions with similar participants help to detect patterns and trends across the group. The fact that a small group of people can come together to discuss the same issue can result in an enhanced level of debate, with the facilitator often able to step back and allow the focus group to have an open discussion. This provides an opportunity to gather rich data from a specific population about a particular area of interest, such as teachers' perceived challenges when teaching reading comprehension skills.

From a participant's perspective, the focus group discussion provided a more relaxing environment than a one-to-one interview. Participants felt more comfortable expressing their views when others share them in the group. Focus groups also allowed participants to 'bounce' ideas off each other, sometimes resulting in different perspectives emerging from the discussion. However, focus groups are not without their difficulties. As with interviews, focus groups provide a vast amount of data to be transcribed and analysed, with discussions often lasting 1–2 hours. For this study the focus group discussions were informal and mainly focusing on sharing of best practices and challenges to promote the teaching of reading comprehension. The

preplanning and design of the discussion and its environment are essential in conducting focus group sessions. Krueger and Casey (2000) state that focus groups are carefully planned discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment. In a focus group discussion, you explore the perceptions, experiences and understandings of a group of people with some shared experience concerning a situation or event.

Gundumogula and Gundumogula (2020) state that the venue for the focus group session should be accessible and convenient to all participants, and it should be decided beforehand. Selecting the venue in a central place would be optimal for all the participants to reach it on time without difficulty finding it. There should not be any disturbance or noise in or around the venue place. All the participants should be informed about the focus group session's date, time and venue in advance once it is confirmed so that everyone can plan it accordingly. The participants in this study had focus group discussions ever fortnight on a Friday afternoon after school and they would rotate the venues.

Regular focus group discussions were conducted with all three Intermediate Phase-teachers teaching Afrikaans as First Language. The focus group discussions represented an open conversation where the researcher asked questions on utilising the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching.

TIMELINE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS			
Grade Teachers	Focus Group Discussions		
	23rd March	29th July	12th Aug
Grade 4	✓	✓	✓
Grade 5	✓	✓	✓
Grade 6	✓	✓	✓

Table 10: Timeline for group discussions

These interviews lasted 60 minutes. This information complemented the data collected from the classroom observations and in-depth individual interviews with the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers. This also allowed the researcher to detect patterns and trends in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of teaching reading comprehension and their use of the Choice Theory. These regular focus group discussions gave insight into the challenges of teaching reading comprehension to Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners, particularly regarding the research questions.

4.10.4 Reflective Journals

According to Suphasri and Chinokul (2021), reflective practice is usually considered a form of cyclical and systematic inquiry where teachers carefully collect evidence about their teaching practice to analyze, interpret, and evaluate their experiences to improve their future teaching (Farrell, 2016a; Mathew & Peechattu, 2017).

Maarof (2007) posits that a reflective journal is an individual activity in that teachers commit ideas, thoughts, reflections and feelings to paper in various learning contexts (Gilmore, 1996). He goes further by saying that a common consensus on journal writing is that it offers important insights into the patterns of behaviours of the teacher and others.

According to Mather (2012), educators ought to keep a reflective journal wherein they critically reflect on their lessons and their own learning process so that they will be able to critically reflect on their development or lack thereof and learn from their experiences. Ciampa and Gallagher (2015) posit that reflective practice contributes to the enhancement of teacher quality. When teachers reflect on their teaching practices, their awareness of their teaching increases, and they can then unlearn the ineffective teaching methods, which may have undesirable effects on students' learning experience.

Slade et al. (2019) state that reflective practice becomes crucial when teaching students in poverty because they face additional factors that impact their learning. According to Jensen (2009), these adverse conditions make it essential for teachers

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to actively reflect on their teaching and students to differentiate and meet all student needs effectively.

Most of the learners in this research came from complex and challenging socio-economic backgrounds. Teachers needed to understand where each learner is coming to build a warm, supportive relationship with each learner. The Choice Theory knowledge enabled participants to see if they could satisfy their learners' basic needs in the classroom. They recorded their own learning and learners' behavioural changes in their reflective journals.

For this reason, the three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers have been asked to keep reflective journals (see appendix C) so that they can critically reflect on their own teaching and learning process when they use Choice Theory to build a rapport with their learners and when they explicitly teach the four reciprocal teaching strategies. The reflective journal writing could also assist them with identifying obstacles and mistakes in their teaching.

4.11   Summary

This chapter located the research in the social constructivist paradigm and the research design in the qualitative research approach. For the purpose of this qualitative research, a single-case study research design was chosen. The decision to use purposive sampling and select only three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers from one school was based on the need to obtain in-depth information regarding the teaching of reading comprehension. A wide range of data sources, including classroom observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals, were used to gather relevant data to address the research questions.

Chapter Five will present and interpret the research data collected from all the mentioned sources.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA
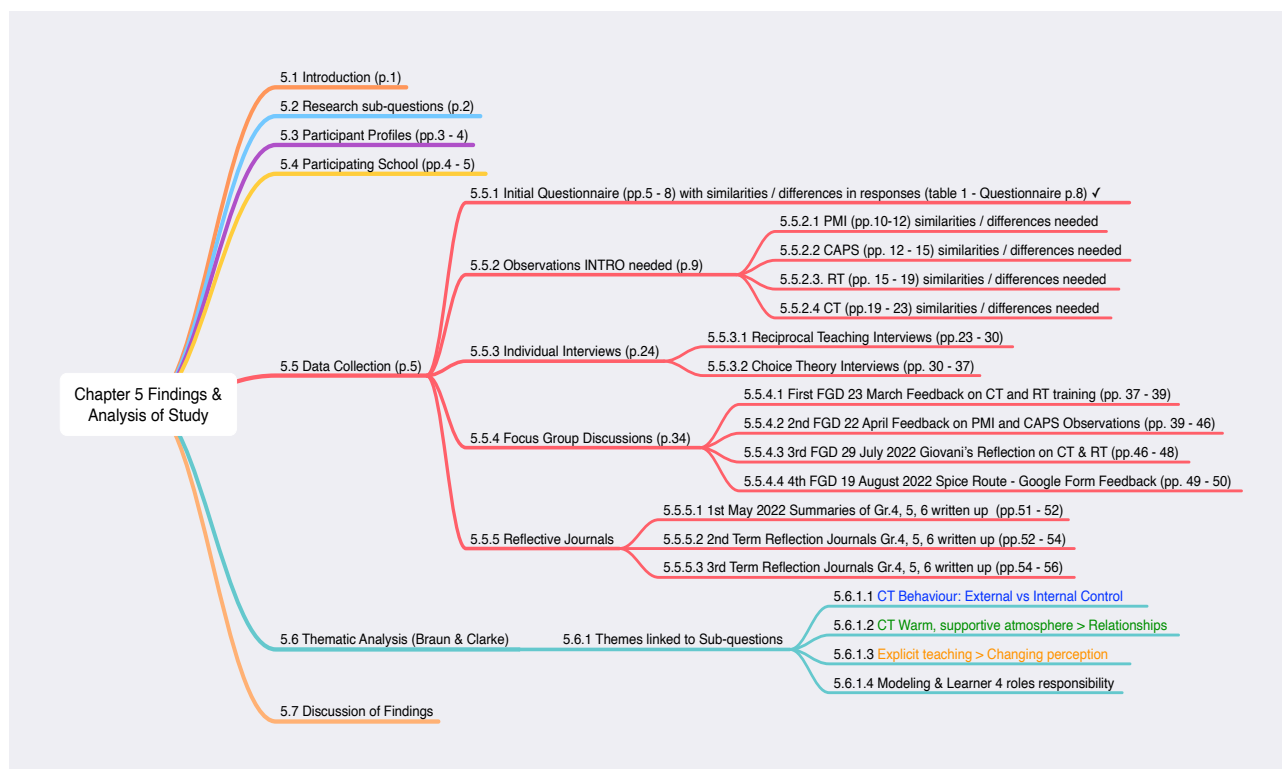
Figure 6: Mindnode layout of chapter 5

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the research methodology and data collection. As pointed out in chapter 2, Social Constructivism created by Vygotsky forms the theoretical framework of this study. According to Tseng and Yeh (2017), Reciprocal Teaching is grounded in social constructivism, which claims that learning takes place through human interactions. From this perspective, reading should be a collaborative activity in which readers construct the meaning of texts through conversations with others. Choice Theory can be integrated with Social Constructivism. According to Louis (2011), a teacher who embraces both Vygotsky's and Glasser's theories would create a classroom focusing on effective social relationships as a key component of cognitive development.

In this chapter, the empirical data from the observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and reflective journals are presented to answer the main

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research question, and the researcher will draw on Social Constructivism to frame the data analysis.

As a research paradigm, the Social Constructivism chosen for this study was based on the premise that social reality is shaped by the social interaction in the classroom between the teacher and learners and learners and learners. Teachers, therefore, need to be aware of the social interaction that takes place in their classrooms. They must pay careful attention to who is listening, who has lost interest, and who is angry with whom, among other things. If teachers want to create a warm, supportive environment conducive to classroom learning, they need to pay careful attention to what is happening in their classrooms. At the same time, they need to focus on their lesson plan, what they want to achieve and how they will do this in the allotted time.

This study suggested that teachers exposed to Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching might be able to enhance social interaction in their classrooms.

5.2 Research Questions

The purpose of this case study was to gain information to answer the main research question:

How can Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching be utilised to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) in one school?

The sub-questions that guided the central question were:

1. To what extent can an understanding of Choice Theory as an internal control psychology of human behaviour assist teachers in enhancing their teaching of reading comprehension?

2. What can teachers who embrace Choice Theory do to create a warm, supportive classroom that will enable them to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6)?

3. How can Reciprocal Teaching, with its explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies, change Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension?

4. How can the modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners promote the teaching of reading comprehension to enable learners to construct meaning from text by taking responsibility for their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser?

For the purpose of this qualitative, single-case study, four different sources of data, such as classroom observations, individual semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and teacher reflective journals, were used concurrently to examine the research questions.

The data analysis was undertaken with computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). For this research, Atlas.ti, a software package, was used to centralize the necessary information from the observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals. Atlas.ti also allowed the researcher the immediate retrieval and coding of the data, and this offered the feature for organising the data and provided mechanisms to enable data analysis to be performed in the software itself. ATLAS.ti not only captured and coded the information but also created networks from all the chains of multiple codes and linking of quotations. These network diagrams allowed the researcher to visually present some of the data. Concepts, themes, and patterns emerged from the network diagrams used in the thematic analysis (5.6).

5.3 Participant Profiles

The researcher used pseudonyms for the participants in place of their names. The three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) Afrikaans (HL) Home Language teachers who participated in the research were referred to as Participant 1 (grade 4), Participant 2 (grade 5) and Participant 3 (grade 6). Since all three teachers were Afrikaans-speaking, the observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and reflective journals were translated into English.

These three female teachers worked under high levels of stress. Most of their learners came from poor socio-economic backgrounds where unemployment was rife. Many of these learners did not experience love at home, and many of them

acted out in school. These three ladies were doing a sterling job by building positive relationships with their learners and making a difference in many of their learners' lives.

Participant 1

Participant 1 was a female with 16 years of teaching experience in the Foundation Phase (Grades 1 to 3). She holds a Bachelor's degree in Education. She had no experience teaching in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) and has only been teaching Grade 4 Afrikaans HL (Home Language) since the second quarter of 2022. The reason for this was that the staff establishment of the school changed, and she had to move from the Foundation Phase (Grades 1 to 3) to the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6). Although she had no experience in the Intermediate Phase, she was eager and excited to learn. One advantage that she had was that she was working with her learners from the Foundation Phase. She knew each one of them and had a strong positive relationship with all of them.

Participant 2

Participant 2 was a female with twenty years of teaching experience. She holds a Higher Diploma in Education. She was a seasoned educator who had taught learners in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) for the past 15 years. She brought a wealth of knowledge and experience in CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) and the teaching of reading in Afrikaans HL (Home Language) to this school's Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6). She also acted as a mentor to her two less experienced colleagues. From all the data, it was clear that despite this teacher's willingness to encourage, support and listen to her learners, she experienced problems building positive relationships with them.

Participant 3

Participant 3, a young female, was still new in the education fraternity with only one year of teaching experience. She has taught learners in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) since 2021. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education. Although inexperienced, she was a committed, hard-working teacher dedicated to her career.

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The learners were enjoying her classes. She had a good sense of humour and used that to connect with her learners.

PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION	GRADE	GENDER	AGE	QUALIFICATIONS	TEACHING EXPERIENCE	INTERMEDIATE PHASE EXPERIENCE
Participant 1	Grade 4	Female	38	B.Ed	16	0
Participant 2	Grade 5	Female	52	HDE	26	20
Participant 3	Grade 6	Female	25	B.Ed	1	1

Table 11: Participant profiles

5.4 Participating School

From the first contact with the school's principal and the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers, it was evident that this was a unique primary school which had now become a combined school with learners from Grade R to Grade 10. This school had learners in all 4 phases, namely:

- **Foundation phase (FP)**: Grade R to 3 with a total number of 179 learners

- **Intermediate phase (IP)**: Grade 4 to 6 with a total number of 94 learners

- **Senior phase (SP)**: Grade 7 to 9 with a total number of 416 learners

- **Further Education and Training phase (FET):** Grade 10 with a total number of 37

There were 453 learners in the Senior Phase (grades 7 to 9) and Further Education and Training Phase (grade 10), more than the 283 in the Foundation Phase (grades 1 to 3) and the Intermediate Phases (grades 4 to 6). The school had no permanent principal, and the person acting as principal has been in this post for the past four

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years. Most other SMT (School Management Team) posts were also filled by teachers acting in those posts.

According to the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers, the school attendance of learners was a factor that affected their teaching negatively. If learners did not attend their classes, they could not be taught. This meant that the teacher had to teach the lesson again. The poor attendance at the research school was driven mainly by factors outside the school environment.

Poverty is unevenly spread across South Africa, and the Government intends to establish targets that equally treat poor learners. Therefore all schools are classified as one of five groups into which all South African public ordinary schools are placed, and the grouping is according to the poverty of the community around the school. Quintile one is the poorest; quintile two is the second-poorest quintile, and so on.

The participating school had been classified as a quintile two school, the second poorest quintile based on the low socio-economic status (SES) community with high levels of unemployment (57% for grade 4, 32% for grade 5 and 29% for grade 6) and poverty, which meant that learners did not pay school fees. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) provided feeding schemes to the poorer schools and supplies food to these schools. Many Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) (68% of grade 4, 72% of grade 5 and 54% of grade 6) learners at this school used the daily feeding scheme.

Learners' poor reading comprehension in this school's Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) must be measured against the challenging socio-economic circumstances at home, lack of parental involvement, and a lack of resources.

5.5 Data Collection

Data were collected through lesson observations, interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals of 3 Afrikaans HL (Home Language) educators in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) at one school. The participants' ages ranged from twenty-five to fifty-two years, while their years of experience ranged from two to 26 years.

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After all the data from the lesson observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and reflective journals were collected and organised, they were analysed using Atlas. ti, a CAQDAS (Computer-assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) programme. From the raw data, the following main themes were identified: (1) Understanding of Choice Theory as an internal control psychology, (2) Building a warm, supportive atmosphere in the classroom, (3) Understanding of Reciprocal Teaching to change the perception of teaching reading comprehension, and (4) Modelling of Reciprocal Teaching to learners.

Data were collected over four months, during which time the three investigator triangulators and the researcher spent an average of twenty-eight hours with each participant. This included a 30-minute for consent form review, eight 55-minute classroom observations, and 30 minutes of individual interviews. Four 35-minute focus group discussions were also conducted. Finally, participants spent an additional 90 to 120 minutes filling out reflective journals and Google forms. This was ample time to collect data and develop a rich, thick description of their experiences.

Initially, each participant was invited to complete an online open-ended questionnaire. This initial Survey Monkey form gained insight into each participant's knowledge and experience and their understanding and familiarity with Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. Based on the questionnaire findings (table 1), a professional development training programme was developed. The aim (goal) was to enrich participants with knowledge and skills of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching that would enable them to improve the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6).

Classroom observations and individual interviews followed up this training after teachers had familiarised themselves with and applied the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching in their classes. The purpose of the classroom observations was to help participants practise and reflect on the teaching skills of reading comprehension. Finally, focus group discussions and reflective journals were used not only to ensure the accuracy of the emergent themes but also to allow participants to add final thoughts on the findings.

5.5.1 Initial Questionnaire

In the third quarter of the 2021, the whole staff of the participating school were invited to complete a Survey Monkey form regarding the status of the teaching of reading in the school and their knowledge of Reciprocal Teaching and Choice Theory. The information collected from the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) participants were extracted and used for this study. The data gave insight into the teaching of reading in Afrikaans HL (Home Language) in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) and informed the researcher of participants' knowledge and understanding of Reciprocal Teaching and Choice Theory.

Initial Questionnaire for Intermediate Phase (Grade 4 to 6) educators

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1. How many years have you been teaching at this school?	
2. How many hours per week do you spend on reading in Afrikaans Home Language?	
3. What do you normally do during that reading period?	
4. What programmes does the school have in place to improve literacy in the whole school?	
5. Have you received any WCED or Cape Winelands Education District professional development training in reading comprehension for the past five years?	
6. How familiar are you with Reciprocal Teaching?	
7. How informed are you about the 4 reading comprehension skills of Reciprocal Teaching?	
8. How familiar are you with the Choice Theory of Dr. William Glasser M.D.?	
9. How often do the teachers of the different phases in your school meet?	
10. How do you feel about your school's possible participation in the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching intervention?	

Here follows a summary of each of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) participant's responses:

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Participant 1

Participant 1 only started teaching in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) at the beginning of the second quarter of 2022. Previously she had sixteen years of teaching experience in the Foundation Phase (grades 1 to 3). Teaching in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) was a new experience to her. She spent more than one to two hours per week reading aloud to the learners; after that, the learners had to complete a reading comprehension test. The only programme the school had in place to promote reading was a 30-minute reading period, but she did not think it was very effective. The school also had a library period for grade 4 learners. The last time she attended a professional development workshop to promote reading was in 2021. The theme of that workshop was "Read with Understanding", and it was organised by WCED (Western Cape Education Department). This teacher has heard about Brown and Palincsar's Reciprocal Teaching but admitted that she knew very little about it. She did not know the 4 reading comprehension strategies of predicting, clarifying, questioning, and summarising. She indicated that she knew nothing of Choice Theory. According to this teacher, in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), teachers only came together once a month to share best practices and discuss challenges. She was interested in getting involved with this research project to promote the teaching of reading comprehension strategies in the Intermediate Phase.

Participant 2

Participant 2 had more than ten years of experience in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) and was a seasoned teacher in that phase. According to her, she spent more than 2 hours per week reading. What she would normally do in that period was to introduce the reading to learners. They would then have to predict the text by studying the title and pictures. Learners also had to share their knowledge regarding the subject. Afterwards, she would read the passage aloud, and learners would listen and follow. Learners were also allowed to underline difficult and new words, which were then recorded in their dictionary. The teacher would then explain words and situations from the passage during the second reading. A discussion

would follow about the passage. Afterwards, learners could answer questions about the passage. She stated that although the school had a library, they did not have any programmes to promote reading. The past year she attended a professional development workshop promoting reading and writing. She is familiar with Brown and Palincsar's Reciprocal Teaching and knew the four reading strategies of predicting, clarifying, questioning and summarising. She has heard of Choice Theory but knows nothing about it. According to her the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), teachers never came together to share best practices or discuss challenges. She was also keen to get involved in a research project to promote the teaching of reading comprehension.

Participant 3

Participant 3, who had only one year of experience in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), was also the youngest of the three teachers. She spent more than two hours per week on reading in her classroom. She and her learners would read aloud, either in groups or individually. After this activity, learners would be asked to complete a comprehension test. She indicated that the school had a library, and they would participate in reading strategies offered by another teacher. The last professional workshop she attended was during 2021, and the theme was "Reading Comprehension". She had never heard of Brown and Palincsar's Reciprocal Teaching before but indicated that she is familiar with the four reading comprehension strategies of predicting, clarifying, questioning, and summarising. According to her, she had also never heard of Choice Theory. She indicated that teachers never came together in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) to discuss best practices or share challenges. She would also like to participate in a research project to promote the teaching of reading comprehension.

Based on the findings of the Survey Monkey questionnaire, the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching professional development training was planned to take place in January of 2022. What came out of the initial questionnaire were the differences in: (1) the teaching experience in the Intermediate Phase of the three participants; (2) time spent on reading; (3) limited knowledge of Reciprocal Teaching; (4) no

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knowledge of Choice Theory. The findings of the initial questionnaire were discussed in the first Focus Group Discussions.

5.5.2 Observations

The objective of the classroom observations was to establish whether what the teachers had learned during the professional development training workshops was applied in their teaching. As stated in chapter 4, the researcher wanted to increase the reliability of the observational evidence by having more than one observer as the investigator triangulator making an observation. Altogether, including the researcher, four observers did classroom observations to collect data. Here follows a timeline for the observations:

TIMELINE FOR DATA COLLECTION												
Participants	Phase 1				Phase 2		Phase 3			Phase 4		
	Classroom Observations				Semi-structured Interviews		Focus Group Discussions			Reflective Journals		
	PMI April	CAPS May	RT Aug	CT Aug	RT Aug	CT Aug	Febr & March	July	Aug	July	Aug	Sept
Participant 1												
Participant 2												
Participant 3												

Table 12: Timeline for data collection

As explained in chapter 4, the first round of classroom observations was done by the researcher using Edward de Bono's (1992) PMI to get a broader understanding of the Afrikaans HL (Home Language) teaching of reading comprehension in the

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Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6). The PMI is a framework for categorising all the plus, minus and interesting points observed during these classroom visits.

5.5.2.1 PMI (Plus, Minus, Interesting) Observations

The PMI observations focused on the following aspects of the teaching:

1. Lesson goal: Explain the content and concepts, and give clear and accurate instructions to learners.

2. Communication: Ask questions to test learners' prior knowledge and help them to make connections.

3. Learner involvement: Having discussions and encouraging all learners to participate in promoting learning.

4. Group structures that facilitate learner engagement to make content meaningful.

5. Use various appropriate teaching strategies and resources, including information technology, to enhance learning.

6. Overall classroom and discipline management.

PMI SUMMARY

PLUS	MINUS	INTERESTING
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•

Table 13: PMI Summary

Here follows a summary of each participant's observation:

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(a) Participant 1: PMI observation: Lesson: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

Participant 1 had a clear lesson plan for her class of 37 learners. The printed Afrikaans reading piece on Weather Forecasts ("Weervoorspellings") was distributed to every learner. Learners were already divided into groups of 6 (some 7). The teacher asked questions to test learners' prior knowledge of the weather. Clear instructions were given regarding the cooperative learning ("jigsaw") activity. The laminated colour cards: orange = predictor, pink = questioner; light blue = clarifier; yellow = summariser added to the effectiveness of the cooperative activity. The teacher moved from group to group to explain what was expected from every learner in the group. Most learners were involved in the lesson. However, since this was a large group of 37 learners already divided into groups of six, some learners did not know what they were supposed to do, and they lost interest and were disengaged.

The teacher could easily restore order by saying: "Everyone listens to me now…."

The PMI positives for this lesson were the teacher's overall effective classroom and discipline management. In this regard, it must be mentioned that she had the advantage of knowing all these learners from working with them in the Foundation Phase (grades 1 to 3). The colour cards for the different roles of the "jigsaw" worked well. The PMI minuses (challenges) were that the groups with more than 5 learners created monitoring problems for the teacher, and those learners who did not have a colour card lost interest. Another challenge was the limited classroom space for 6 groups of 6 learners. The PMI interesting things were the laminated cards for the different roles learners played and the joint choral singing: "I am now the expert" and at the end: "We were good".

(b) Participant 2: PMI Observation: Lesson: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

The goal of the lesson was not very clear. The teacher handed out a reading text, a map of a theatre programme ("Suidoosterfees"), to each of the 20 learners. She explained to the learners that they would study the text in their groups. Each group did not have the same number of learners for the "jigsaw" activity. The teacher started the lesson with a question for her learners: "What are the 4 important things we ask when we read?" Some learners were familiar with the 4 strategies and

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answered correctly: "We predict, we question, we clarify, and we summarise…" ("Ons voorspel, ons vra vrae, ons verduidelik en ons som op."). Some learners were confused and had no idea what the lesson was about. A few isiXhosa-speaking learners had no interest in the lesson and withdrew completely. Maybe this was a result of the language barrier or the fact that these learners were allowed to sit in one group. The classroom and discipline management for this class was not very effective. Nothing was done by the teacher when some learners disrupted the class.

The PMI positives for this lesson were the calmness of the teacher despite some learners disrupting the lesson. The colour cards for the different roles of the "jigsaw" worked well. The PMI minuses (challenges) were the ambiguity of the different roles in each group and that some learners were uninvolved. To get more information, the teacher Googled the theatre programme for the "Suidoosterfees" only at the end of the lesson. The PMI interesting things were that this class had fewer learners than grade 4 or 6 and that this was the only class that had a few isiXhosa speaking learners.

(c) Participant 3: PMI Observation: Lesson: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

The goal of this lesson was very clear: to broaden the imagination of the learners. The resource was the reading book Afrikaans HL (Home Language): pp.41- 42: "An Unbelievable Night". The teacher gave clear instructions to the learners. The teaching aids were decorations about the different roles and laminated cards for each role. The teacher made sure that each group had a dictionary that they could use to explain words that they might not know or understand. She tested learners' prior knowledge by asking about the four reading comprehension strategies. Most of the learners knew the strategies. The teacher explained the different roles again and how they would use them for that lesson. Learner involvement was established by providing each learner with a laminated card with one of the four strategy roles of predictor, explainer, questioner and summariser on it. The leader of each group had to read the story, and each learner played the role assigned to them. The learners were all engaged in the lesson. They enjoyed the social interaction and had fun. The

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teacher moved from group to group to ensure that each learner understood their role and participated in the lesson.

The PMI positives for this lesson were the laminated cards for the different roles of the "jigsaw"-activity, the relevant class decorations, the humour of the teacher, the fact that all learners had textbooks and that they all were fully involved in the lesson. Also, the fact that they read the story paragraph by paragraph allowed learners to predict, question, clarify and summarise. The PMI minuses (challenges) were not giving clear instructions during the "jigsaw" when "experts" returned to their original groups and also the time management for feedback in the groups. The PMI's interesting things were the connection between the story and the personal experiences of a nightmare that some learners shared with the class. Learners enjoyed these stories, and they could relate to them.
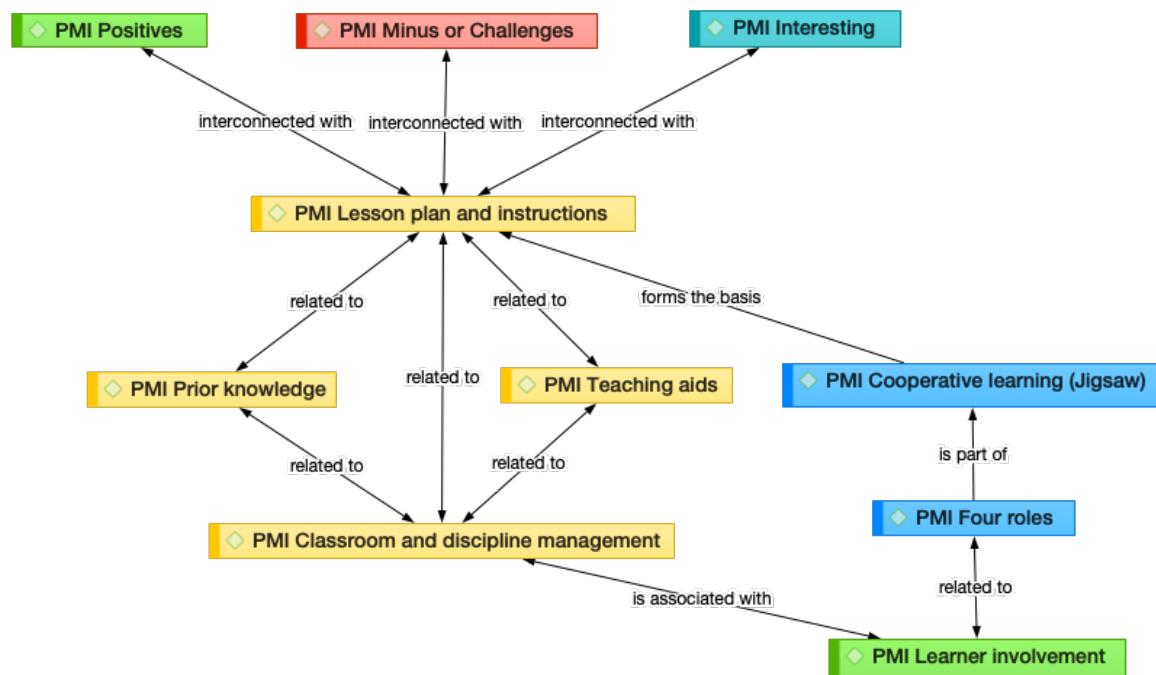
Figure 7: Atlas.ti Network for PMI Observations

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5.5.2.2 CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) Observations

The CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) observations were done by an experienced, retired, Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teacher. This first investigator triangulator visited the school on various occasions to do observations of Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading lessons against the background of the official CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) document. The dates and times were negotiated with the teachers. Analysis of these lessons focused on the following:

1. Presentation of lesson: Explain the content and give clear instructions to learners. The consistency of the focus of the observation by the different observers is commendable.

2. Communication: Test learners' prior knowledge and connect to the lesson.

3. Learner involvement: Ensure all learners understand and participate in the lesson.

4. Classroom and discipline management: Influencing learner behaviour to create an environment conducive to learning.

5. Closure: Activity to wrap up the lesson plan.

These CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) classroom observations were a qualitative way of recording and measuring teacher behaviour (only teacher?) while teaching an Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading lesson. Here follows a summary of each participant's observations:

(a) Participant 1: CAPS Observation: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

This teacher was new to the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) and only started a few months earlier (in April 2022). However, the learners were not new to her. She worked with them the previous year in Foundation Phase (grades 1 to 3). She always welcomed the learners to her class. She started every lesson by recapping or revising the previous lesson by asking questions or reminding them of the four reading strategies they can use to understand a text better.

For these lessons, she used teaching aids such as flashcards, dictionaries, and a magnifying glass in one lesson to demonstrate how we clarify things we do not understand. In all these lessons, she involved her learners in cooperative learning activities such as the "jigsaw" by dividing them into smaller groups of 5. Each learner would then get a specific role in the group, e.g. the predictor, the questioner, the clarifier, the summariser and the leader who facilitates the process. She would explain what is expected of each role in the group. The leader in each group would then start the reading and have to stop reading at regular intervals. Then the predictor had to predict what would happen. The questioner had to ask a question, and each group had to clarify at least two words from the text. Dictionaries were handed out to help them to do this activity. The summariser needed to tell what happened in the beginning, the middle and end of the story in his/her own words. The teacher provided scaffolding to learners who needed help by stopping the reading in some groups and explaining again to learners who did not understand. The classroom and discipline management of this teacher was very effective. At the end of each lesson, she would round off the lesson by giving the learners an activity from the DBE (Department of Basic Education) workbook or the Platinum Learner's Book grade 4 they had to complete. The one challenge that the teacher had was three learners with learning difficulties, and she was trying her best to assist them.

(b) Participant 2: CAPS Observation: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

Of the three participants, this (Grades 4 to 6) grades 4 to 6) teaching experience to this group. As mentioned earlier, she was a seasoned teacher in teaching reading in Afrikaans HL (Home Language). All three of her observed lessons started almost in the same way. She would ask the learners to turn to a certain page in the DBE (Department of Education) workbook, and before she started reading, ask them to go to their specific pre-assigned "Jigsaw" groups. Many learners were confused about their roles in the group, creating disorder and disengagement among some learners. Without restoring the order, the teacher would continue with the lesson.

Before starting to read, she would ask the learners to look at the title and pictures and predict what the text is all about. She would start reading the first paragraph of

the text and stop to clarify certain words learners did not understand. The "Jigsaw" groups with a predictor, clarifier, questioner and summariser in each group had to work through the rest of the text. The teacher would go from group to group to revise the role of each member of the group and to make sure they understood what they were supposed to do. The few learners who lost interest in the activities sometimes disrupted the class. The teacher remained calm and reprimanded those who were responsible for the disorder. These disruptions sometimes made it difficult for the other learners to work and affected the learning in the class. At the end of each lesson, the teacher would give learners an activity to finish. She would either take an activity from the workbook or write questions on the chalkboard for them to complete. This participant's major challenge was getting all learners interested and involved in the lesson.

(c) Participant 3: CAPS Observation: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

Participant 3, who is the youngest teacher in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) only had one year of teaching experience. She planned and prepared all her lessons well and would start her lessons by testing the prior knowledge of the learners before she started with any new work. Her way of doing this was to either revise the previous lesson or remind the learners of the four reading strategies (predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarising) to understand a text. These strategies were displayed on the classroom wall.

The teacher would then divide learners into "jigsaw" groups of five with a predictor, a questioner, a clarifier, a summariser and a leader who would facilitate the process. With each lesson, she reminded them of the duties of each group member. Sometimes she would tell the learners that she would be the leader. The leader's responsibility was to start reading the first paragraph of the selected text and then ask the predictor to "guess" what would happen. The questioner had to ask two questions. The clarifier had to identify a word or phrase that he/she did not understand and sometimes use the dictionary to explain the meaning of the word to the group, and the summariser had to tell what had happened so far in the text in his/her own words. Learners enjoyed the group work, and there was good interaction

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between the teacher and all the groups. The teacher would always end her lesson with an activity that is relevant and linked to the lesson, e.g. answering the questions on page 127 in the DBE (Department of Education) workbook.
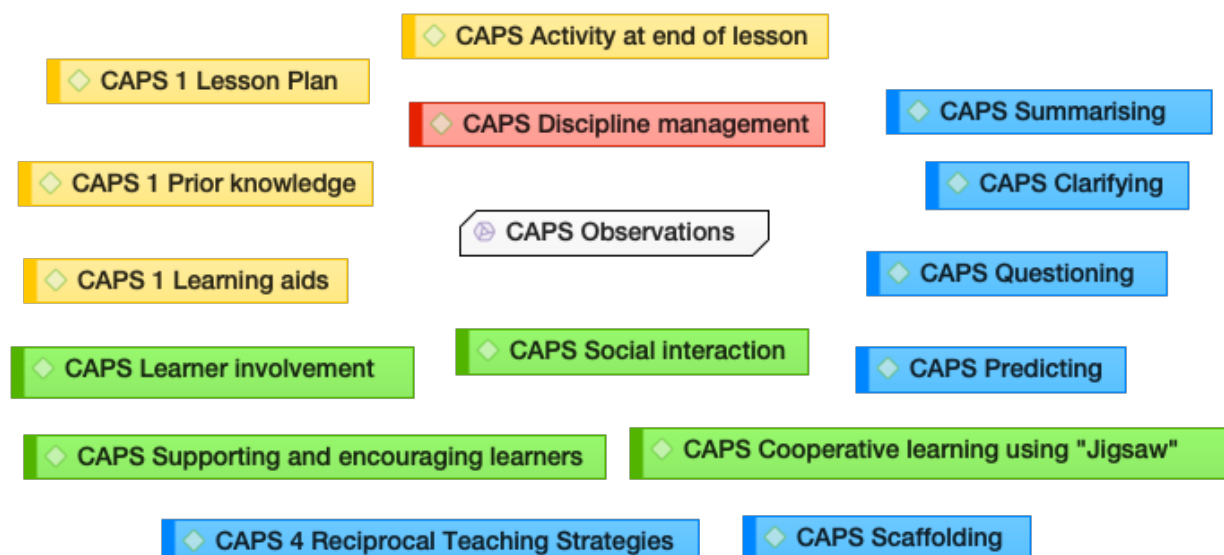
Figure 8: Atlas.ti Network for CAPS Observations

5.5.2.3 Reciprocal Teaching (RT) Observations

The Reciprocal Teaching (RT) observations were done by a Curriculum Manager from a Private School who were familiar with Reciprocal Teaching (RT). This second investigator triangulator visited the school to do classroom observations of the Afrikaans Home Language reading lessons. The dates and times were negotiated with the teachers. Analysis of these lessons focused on the following:

1. Lesson goal: Explain the content and concepts, and give clear and accurate instructions to learners.

2. Classroom atmosphere: Creating a warm, supportive atmosphere conducive to learning

3. Prior knowledge: Activating learners' prior knowledge

4. Learner participation: Facilitate learner engagement.

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5. Explicit teaching: How well did the teacher succeed in teaching reading comprehension strategies?

6. Use of 4 strategies: Predicting, Questioning, Clarifying, Summarising

7. Making use of Scaffolding, Think-aloud, and Cooperative learning?

8. Group structures that facilitate learner engagement to make content meaningful.

9. Classroom and discipline management.

Here follows a summary of the responses of the participants:

(a) Participant 1: RT Observation: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

The teacher had clear lesson plans, and, in both observations, she chose a text from the DBE (Department of Education) Afrikaans HL (Home Language) workbook. She had grade-appropriate resources on the wall, and the desks were arranged around the wall to form a circle, and the learners loved this arrangement. Learners had access to textbooks, workbooks, and some dictionaries.

The teacher used effective learning aids in the form of a cell phone to play an introductory song about insects, a variety of plastic insects on display, a pair of blue-rimmed glasses and a cowboy hat. The learners enjoyed the extra touches the teacher incorporated into the lessons. She introduced one of the lessons with a song about insects. Then she encouraged the learners to participate in this activity and made learning fun by having examples of plastic insects to see and touch. They could guess which of those were deadly insects. This added to the excitement in the class and helped the learners to engage and stay interested in the lesson. The teacher started both her lessons by activating the learners' prior knowledge and allowed them to discuss in their groups what they had learnt from the previous lessons.

The learners were familiar with the reciprocal teaching strategy and could apply it immediately by getting into their "jigsaw" groups and taking up their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser. By letting the learners fulfil their roles, they collaborated, and a deeper understanding of the text was created by learning

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from each other. The teacher shared how she has developed this strategy by learning from Lori Oczkus's book "Reciprocal Teaching at Work" about teaching these strategies.

The "Jigsaw" (cooperative learning) started after the teacher had given clear instructions about the reading activity. The leader in each group had to read paragraph by paragraph. Then the predictors had to predict (guess) what will happen in the next paragraph. The clarifiers had to look for words they did not know or understand and use the dictionary to look up the meaning. They used a magnifying glass to look for unfamiliar and challenging words, and they used their dictionaries to find and share the meaning of the words with the class. The questioners could ask any of the different kinds of questions W? W? W? W? W? H? (Who, What, Where, When, Why and How) questions. For the summaries, the teacher used the analogy of a cowboy gathering his cattle to gather all the important facts from the passage while wearing the cowboy hat. The learners loved making contributions and getting a chance to wear the hat.

The fact that this teacher has taken her grade 3 class of the previous year into Grade 4 this year is a big contributing factor to her teaching success in the class. There were no disruptions in both of her lessons. She is firm but caring, and they react very well to her teaching style. At the end of each lesson, she asked for the learners' attention, and they had to repeat after her: " I did great today" and "My teacher is proud of me".

(b) Participant 2: RT Observation: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

This experienced teacher had clear lesson plans for both lessons, but they were not executed well. The classroom was well prepared, and the support material and learning aids were relevant to the lesson.

For the first observation, the teacher handed out a long-printed text (10 paragraphs) that did not interest the learners. Some learners struggled to read through the long passage. Others were totally disengaged and did not take part in the lesson. For the second observation, the teacher read an interesting article about a sporting event from the local newspaper "Paarl Post". This time the learners were more interested

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in the topic because it was relevant, and they could relate to it. They could talk about their own school's sports derby with neighbouring schools and the sports they participated in.

After reading the text aloud, the teacher explained the duties of the group's different "jigsaw" roles. The learners were divided into five equal groups and allocated the same roles of predictor, questioner, clarifier, summariser and leader as in the previous lesson. Although the teacher revised the roles, not all the learners took the responsibility seriously. At first, they were more interested than before, but halfway through the lesson, they lost interest and did not fulfil their role. The teacher experienced problems managing the class as the learners constantly wanted to change their roles during the lesson, disrupting the class. She is soft-spoken and stays calm despite any disruption by learners.

(c) Participant 3: RT Observation: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

This young teacher had well-planned lessons, and the learning aids and wall displays added to the effectiveness of her lessons. She made her own posters to explain each role (predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser) of reciprocal teaching.

The second observation was a follow-up to the previous lesson, and she used the learners' prior knowledge to get them excited and engaged. The learners were interested to find out what would happen in this story and if "Charl will find what his talent is" in this story. There is great energy present in this class, and all learners are involved and participate in the lessons.

Before any group work starts, the teacher would revise and clarify the "Jigsaw" roles so that each learner knows who the leader, predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser is. Learners were also referred to the wall display in this regard. This ensures that the reading comprehension strategies that have been explicitly taught are known and remembered. This teacher has a good sense of humour, which is evident throughout her teaching. The learners enjoy this, and it helps to bond easier with her. There is a strong connection between her and the learners.

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By letting the learners fulfil their "Jigsaw" roles in the cooperative learning activities, collaboration took place, and a deeper understanding of the text was created. It was interesting to see how they acted out their roles of leader, predictor, questioner, clarifier, and summariser by referring to the visuals against the walls. They took the responsibility of acting their roles seriously. The predictor in every group would give feedback on what they thought the passage was all about. The clarifiers would look for unfamiliar and challenging words and use their dictionaries to find and share the meaning of the words in their group. The questioners would ask a variety of questions, and this would lead to an interesting group discussion. The summariser was tasked to take out the most important information to summarise the story and share that with their group. The group members would then be given an opportunity to give their feedback.

The classroom and discipline management for both observations were very effective. There is a lot of mutual respect. The teacher would address any learner who stepped out of line by referring them to the "Window of Safety", an effective classroom strategy to teach learners to take responsibility for their behaviour. There are boundaries for the teacher and the learners, and when any person steps outside the "Window", agreed-upon consequences apply. All learners in this class are familiar with this strategy, and it is effective. This teacher teaches with care and compassion and acknowledges the strengths of all learners. She makes learning fun and ensures that effective learning takes place.

5.5.2.4 Choice Theory (CT) Observations

The third investigator triangulator did the Choice Theory (CT) observations. This person is a former principal and William Glasser International instructor who is familiar with Choice Theory. He visited the school during the second half of August 2022 to do observations of the Choice Theory application in the Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading lessons. The dates and times were negotiated with the teachers. Analysis of these lessons focused on the following:

1. Teacher's demonstration of Choice Theory: using internal and not external control.

2. Creating a warm and safe environment for all learners.

3. Ensuring learners experience love and belonging in the classroom.

4. Social interaction to satisfy learners' basic needs for fun.

5. Allowing learners to make choices to satisfy their need for freedom.

6. Demonstration of teacher's use of the seven connecting habits of Choice Theory.

7. Cooperation and collaboration to ensure that all learners participate in activities.

8. Classroom and discipline management.

9. Response to classroom disruptions by some learners.

10. Identifying which needs are not satisfied by learners who are disrupting class.

11. Anything outstanding ("gems") used by the teacher.

12. Rating of teacher's application of Choice Theory in the lesson.

Here follows a summary of the responses of the participants:

(a) Participant 1: Choice Theory (CT) Observation: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

This participant presented well-structured lessons with appropriate learning aids. Learners received clear instructions on what to do and were actively engaged in all the activities. Instructions were repeated for those learners who did not understand clearly. Benches were arranged in a group cluster in the centre and a half moon on the outside. This helped learners shift their desks easily into smaller groups for group work. The content of the lessons was interesting, and learners could relate to it. They engaged with the material and discussed issues as instructed. The structure of the lessons ensured that learners were supported in whatever they needed to succeed at the different tasks given. The teacher built relationships with the learners by holding them accountable through effective communication and engagement.

A warm and supportive atmosphere was created for learners by inviting and encouraging them to participate in the group activities. Learners spontaneously took part and had fun in their groups. Learners felt welcome and safe in this classroom. The teacher listened and paid attention to groups that needed assistance. Acknowledged learners by engaging authentically with them, e.g., looking in their eyes when talking to them and giving some of them high fives.

Learners had a lot of fun in this classroom. They were allowed to play bingo while reading a story and worked in their groups. General classroom management involved fun attention grabbers. Learners had a choice of how they wanted to work in their groups and were also allowed to talk to each other as they engaged in the activity. The learners were highly focused on their tasks and could complete them on time. The fact that she knew all the learners from working with them since grade 3 made discipline management easier and more effective.

When some learners were disturbing others, the teacher would stop and remind those learners about the Window of Safety (a classroom management strategy) and possible consequences (negotiated by everyone) if they kept on behaving in this manner. She would then pay particular attention to these learners to determine the problem.

The teacher used creative ways like using learning aids (cowboy hat, magnifying glass, bingo game, germ name cards, and attention grabbers) to engage learners actively in the lessons. This teacher understood Choice Theory well and tried to apply it in all her lessons. What stood out was the creative ways she used to get learners excited and involved in the lessons, thereby creating a warm, supportive atmosphere in the class.

(b) Participant 2: Choice Theory (CT) Observation: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

Participant 2 had structured lessons which allowed learners to know what to expect. Benches were arranged in rows. Learners were shifted into different groups at the start of the lesson and issued worksheets to complete an activity.

All learners seemed engaged and paid no particular attention to the teacher. However, some learners talked to each other by turning around on the bench. Those

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learners displayed challenging behaviour by making noise and talking over each other. Despite these challenges, the teacher stayed calm and caringly held those learners accountable for their behaviour. Creating a warm, supportive atmosphere for everyone in the classroom was difficult. Although many learners were not focused on the task, the teacher kept encouraging them to pay attention.

For the group activity, learners were divided into smaller groups. Learners had a choice as to which group they wanted to join and where to sit. Learners seemed very familiar with their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser. The teacher clearly spelt out the roles of each learner. When learners were asked to read aloud, she structured their feedback and asked them to share the information in their groups.

The classroom and discipline management of this teacher was not very effective. There was continuous noise and talking while the teacher was busy with the lessons. At one stage, the teacher had to take one learner out of the class to have a one-to-one chat.

What was missing in these lessons was something of interest that learners could relate to, grab their attention, and get them involved. The only interesting thing was the fact that the learners knew their roles in the reciprocal teaching group activity.

Although this teacher understood Choice Theory, there was almost a Laissez-faire (the permissive style in which teachers avoid providing guidance and discipline, make no demands, and impose few controls on their learner's behaviour) classroom and discipline management style. The teacher refrained from responding to the challenging behaviour of the learners and still tried to be supportive.

(c) Participant 3: Choice Theory (CT) Observation: Afrikaans HL (Home Language)

Participant 3 thoroughly planned and executed her lessons. The class was well organised, and benches were grouped to accommodate all the learners. The teacher checked in with learners when they arrived in the morning and used learner names intermittently while talking to them. When she wrote a summary on the board, she allowed learners to respond as they felt comfortable. She also used a flipchart stand

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to scribe notes and moved it up and down to ensure that learners could see and that they understand.

This participant was very structured in her approach and gave clear instructions to the learners. She showed compassion for her learners and ensured they were all comfortable. All learners were always engaged and clearly seemed internally motivated to participate in the lessons. Learners were at ease laughing in the classroom when funny moments arose. The teacher demonstrated ongoing support to the learners and took the time to explain to them what they should do. She listened attentively to learners and gave them time to give feedback.

She had informal and light-hearted conversations throughout the lesson as she addressed behaviour or issues cropping up. She gave learners choices of the different roles they wanted to play and in which group they wanted to work for the activities. This was well structured and done orderly. Her structured lessons and monitoring helped to make her classroom and discipline management effective. She held learners accountable, firmly and compassionately, to respect each other and would ask learners not to hurt each other's feelings by laughing at each other.

Learners felt very comfortable and safe in this class and engaged easily with each other and the teacher. They all seemed invested in their learning process and eager to participate in the lessons. What was outstanding about this teacher was her sense of humour and the way she got learners involved and eager to do the group activities. She is still young and "speaks" the learners' language, and they could relate to her.

Her application of Choice Theory is underpinned by her supportive role in building her relationship with her learners. She clearly showed respect for learners as she held them accountable.
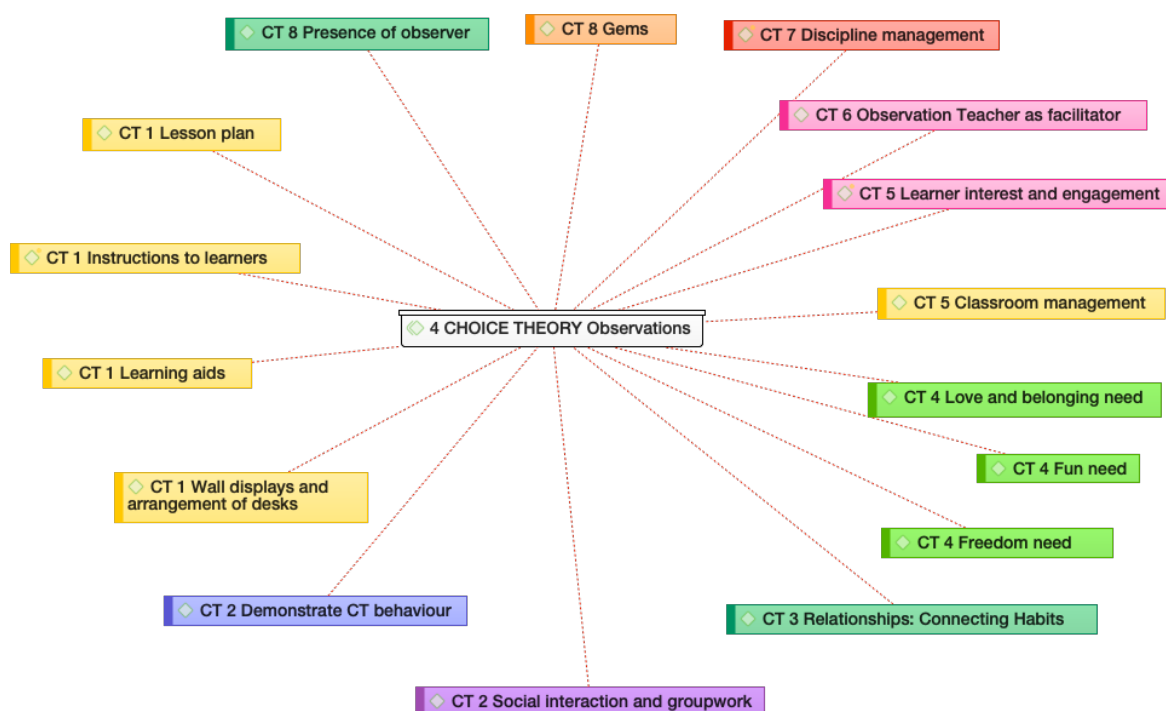
Figure 9: Atlas.ti Network for Choice Theory (CT) observations

5.5.3 Individual Interviews

Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with the three participants of the research study after the Reciprocal Teaching and Choice Theory observations. Each interview followed a guided conversational format, as recommended by Yin (2014). All interviews were held after school and took no more than 30 minutes per participant. The purpose of the individual interviews was to collect rich and descriptive data from each participant on their lived experience with the Reciprocal Teaching and Choice Theory observations. The interviews were semi-structured with a flexible script followed by investigator triangulators, and participants were encouraged to openly discuss their experiences. Each interview included ten to twelve key open-ended questions with multiple researchers prompts to ensure the guided conversation maintained the necessary direction for data collection. The key questions sought to identify the participant's experience level in Reciprocal Teaching and Choice Theory.

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5.5.4 Reciprocal Teaching (RT) Interviews

During the interviews, participants expressed their experiences implementing Reciprocal Teaching in their Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading lessons. Here follows the questions and the responses of the participants:

Key Question 1: What was the goal of your lesson? What did you want your learners to learn?

This first key question initiated each of the individual interviews. The purpose of this question was to gather data on the aim of each lesson and what the teacher wanted to achieve.

Participant 1 responded:

"We had to split classes during COVID-19, and the rotation did not work well. We had large backlogs of learners not understanding what they were reading. My lessons aimed to improve my learners' reading comprehension."

Participant 2 responded:

"Learners are not all at the same level. I wanted to get all on the same page. The goal was to get learners to scan for information in an article. They must also read photographs."

Participant 3 responded:

"For learners to work well in their groups and to communicate with each other. Even though they are not all on the same level you can learn from your classmates, and it is fine to ask questions. They must be comfortable and confident in their work."

It was clear from the participants' responses that the goal of their reading lessons was to help their learners better understand what they were reading, which was made possible through scanning for information or communicating in their groups by asking questions. Although not all learners are reading on the same level, the idea was to get all of them to understand what they are reading.

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Key Question 2: How did you create a warm, supportive environment for learning to take place?

Participant 1 responded:

> "I let my learners work in groups. They get the opportunity to touch the learning aids ("props") when they answer questions. I greet them by name at the door whenever they enter my classroom."

Participant 2 responded:

> "I make children feel at ease by listening and guiding them."

Participant 3 responded*:*

> "I always try to make some jokes and put learners at ease. When they are comfortable they don't mind making mistakes, helping each other or asking questions."

All three participants agreed that you must create a warm, positive atmosphere in your classroom before you can start teaching reading. Learners must feel comfortable and at ease before they can start working collaboratively, and you can create that by making the lesson interesting or using humour and learning aids.

Key Question 3: How well did you succeed in explicitly teaching the learners reading comprehension skills?

Participant 1 responded*:*

> "Learners are getting prediction right. 90% still struggling with understanding the written word. Summarising is still a struggle. Cannot distinguish between important facts. Visuals helping with Fab Four (4 reciprocal teaching strategies). Example of cowboy – key points for summarising. Concrete and visual."

Participant 2 responded:

> "Most of them do understand the Fab Four (4 reciprocal teaching strategies). Maybe I have not drilled it in enough? More explicit teaching is needed with this the grade 5's."

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Participant 3 responded*:*

> "Learners know and understand all the different Fab Four (4 reciprocal teaching strategies) roles but their absenteeism has an impact on the understanding. Those learners are then behind. I ask learners to take the same role so that they can become familiar with the role."

All the participants reported that the explicit teaching of the four reading comprehension strategies is starting to bear fruit. Learners begin to understand and know the four strategies. Although some of them are struggling with understanding the written word, at least they get the prediction right, and that is something they can work with. However, absenteeism was still a problem for some learners falling behind, and more repetition was needed.

Key Question 4: Which of the four reading comprehension skills did you want your learners to use in these lessons?

Participant 1 responded*:*

> "Learners understand the four strategies. Learn every day more. I see the difference, change and improvement."

Participant 2 responded:

> "Fab Four: predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising."

Participant 3 responded*:*

> "All four strategies. I also use scaffolding and thinking aloud but as a result of the limited time it is difficult to teach other strategies as well."

All three participants agreed they wanted their learners to use all four reading comprehension strategies.

Key Question 5: Reflecting on your learners' use of the reading strategies, what can you say about their understanding of the four strategies?

Participant 1 responded*:*

> "They understand it and the visuals are helping – walking the extra mile."

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Participant 2 responded:

> "Not all learners understand their role. Will need more teaching."

Participant 3 responded*:*

> "They understand it and know all 4 strategies."

It was clear from all three participants that not all the learners were at the same level when it came to using and understanding the four reading comprehension strategies. One commented that more teaching is needed.

Key Question 6: What did you do to ensure that there is social interaction among learners and that all of them participate in the lesson?

Participant 1 responded*:*

> "They work in pairs and circles. Hear the same facts over and over. Use of resources microphone, cowboy hat, etc. Work for the 4th year with same learners."

Participant 2 responded:

> "Social interaction is taking place but not all learners participate in lesson. Not enough learning taking place."

Participant 3 responded*:*

> "I gave them a piece of paper. They must write all their notes on it. They must rotate the paper and also ask if they can add on the other learners' notes. They then have to explain why they add on or motivate their part. They as a group must check their work and put notes on or take off."

Participants 1 and 3 used creative ways and aids to ensure social interaction and that all learners were participating. Participant 2 indicated that social interaction is taking place but mentioned that not all learners participate in the lesson.

Key Question 7: How would you rate your classroom and discipline management for these lessons? How did you respond to disruptions of your lesson?

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Participant 1 responded:

> "I have built good relationships with all learners over 4 years. After the Choice Theory course, I let learners sit in circles and not rows. Very helpful. I have applied the Window of Safety with the agreed-upon consequences. Learners understand the boundaries."

Participant 2 responded:

> "I know it is not very effective. I have to set clear boundaries for the learners."

Participant 3 responded:

> "I have been listening to my learners and they know they can come to me when they have problems. We have a Window of Safety in the class with clear negotiated boundaries and I am consistent. We focus on mutual respect."

Both participants 1 and 3 have used the Window of Safety (a classroom and discipline strategy) effectively, while participant 2 admitted that her classroom and discipline management is not very effective because she is not able to set clear boundaries.

Key Question 8: What did you experience as positive during this lesson?

Participant 1 responded:

> "The most important lesson is that any learner can succeed despite their socio-economic life. Want to prove that any learner can learn and help them change their Quality World pictures (the things that are important to them). Cooperation of learners working together. Learners using a dictionary!"

Participant 2 responded:

> "I have learnt that learners can do a lot on their own. Building the self-image of learners. This was helpful - professionally and personally."

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Participant 3 responded*:*

> "I have been bonding with my learners by listening to them and I also have open communication channels. There is good interaction between me and the learners."

The three participants agreed that the interaction with their learners in the classroom had a positive effect on the learners. It not only empowered them but helped to change their self-image. Key Question 9: What did you experience as a challenge during this lesson?

Participant 1 responded*:*

> "I have a hearing disability and the buzzing ("gegons") of the learners was a challenge for me. What I changed was my perception about learners. Know now that the buzzing ("gegons") is learning taking place in the groups. There is hope for our children."

Participant 2 responded*:*

> "As a result of the challenge I experience with the behaviour of some learners in this class I am under pressure and not consistent with this programme."

Participant 3 responded*:*

> "I have a time management challenge. Sometimes I spent too much time on the important things."

The observations made participants aware of the different challenges they experience in their classroom and what they need to do about it.

Key Question 10: What would you do differently next time?

Participant 1 responded*:*

> "Not anything. I am enjoying the learning process. The advantage I have is that I am doing exciting things and I am open to learning."

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Participant 2 responded:

> "To be more consistent with the same procedures for all classes. I will have to work on my classroom discipline. The programme is working for me but I have to practise a lot."

Participant 3 responded:

> "To get a bell or stopwatch so that the learners and I can time ourselves."

Except for participant 1, who already changed her perception of her challenge, namely the buzzing in her classroom, the other two participants (2 and 3) set up action plans to work on their challenges, to be more consistent with the classroom discipline and to buy a bell.

Summary

It was clear from the participants' responses that the goal of their reading lessons was to enable learners to understand what they were reading.

They agreed that you must create a warm, positive atmosphere in your classroom before you can start teaching reading. You can achieve this by being creative, making the lesson enjoyable with learning aids, and using humour. Learners should feel comfortable and relaxed.

All the participants reported that the explicit teaching of the four reading comprehension strategies is starting to bear fruit. Most learners are beginning to understand and know the four strategies. However, there are some of them still struggling with understanding. This could result from absenteeism, causing some learners to fall behind. Participants agreed that more teaching is needed.

Both participants 1 and 3 have strategies for ensuring the effectiveness of their classroom and discipline management. Participant 2 admitted that she is not able to set clear boundaries. They all agreed that social interaction with their learners in the classroom had a positive effect on the learners. The observations and the interview made participants aware of the challenges they experience in their classroom and what they need to do about it.

Below is a visual representation of these Reciprocal Teaching interviews.
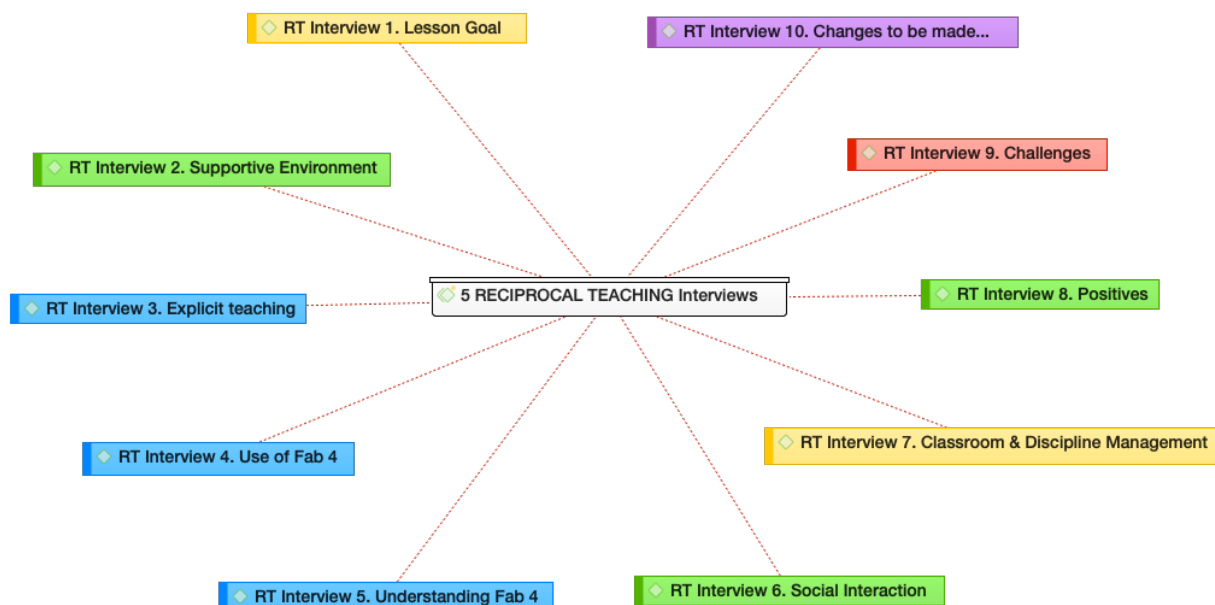
Figure 10: Atlas.ti Network for Reciprocal Teaching (RT) Interviews

5.5.4 Choice Theory (CT) Interviews

During the interviews, participants expressed their experiences implementing Choice Theory in their Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading lessons. Here follows the questions and the responses of the participants:

Key Question 1: How would you describe your application of Choice Theory (or external control) to enhance teaching and learning?

This question aimed to gather data on the participant's demonstration of Choice Theory in the classroom.

Participant 1 responded:

> "I allow learners to feel loved by greeting them by name at the door. Ask questions about why they are looking sad or happy. Build relationships with learners and support them."

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Participant 2 responded:

> "I ask learners to do activities and explain beforehand what we will do. I try to engage with learners throughout the lessons. Cannot force learners to do things against their will."

Participant 3 responded:

> "Feels my demonstration of Choice Theory (CT) is above average. However, learners' absence impacts it. CT is not at the level I want it to be. I create an environment for learners by using humour."

The three participants had different viewpoints on how they apply Choice Theory (CT) to enhance teaching and learning: participant 1 used CT by building relationships with learners and supporting them. Participant 2 asked learners to do certain things after explaining it to them, and participant 3 created an environment for teaching and learning by using humour.

Key Question 2: How did you create a warm, supportive atmosphere where all learners could feel welcome and safe in the classroom?

Participant 1 responded:

> "Learners respect each other in conversations. Take turns. They are not laughing at each other. Learners pay attention to the lesson. The teacher moves around in class to attend to all groups and involve them."

Participant 2 responded:

> "I try to encourage learners to speak but do not push them. Try hard to get them involved but struggle with the learners from the isiXhosa-culture."

Participant 3 responded:

> "Make them laugh and be silly with them while working. I use humour to get learners involved. Connect with learners. Clear instructions."

All three participants did different things to create a warm, supportive atmosphere: participant 1 built mutual respect among the learners, participant 2 encouraged learners to get involved, and participant 3 used humour and laughter to get

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connected with learners.

Key Question 3: What did you do to ensure learners experience a sense of love and belonging in the classroom?

Participant 1 responded:

> "The games we play. Everyone feels they are a part because today, one can do something and tomorrow, everyone else does it. Greetings at the door. I am remembering birthdays and a whole ritual that we follow. Trusting relationships. Ask learners if they need food or something and if I can help, I do."

Participant 2 responded:

> "I tried to group them to include learners of different abilities. Convey the message with care. Always give an ear to them. Encourage learners."

Participant 3 responded:

> "I always want to know what they are up to. Try to help them in any situation. Try to talk to them one on one. Building trusting relationships with learners. Ask learners to come and talk to me if they experience problems."

All three participants agreed they do certain things to make learners feel love and belonging. It could be anything from playing games, remembering birthdays, encouraging learners or having one-on-one discussions with learners who experience challenges.

Key Question 4: How did you ensure that social interaction between learners takes place and that learners have fun in the classroom?

Participant 1 responded:

> "Games (Bingo). Group work, especially in pairs. Help each other. Enter new work together. I use a lot of animation to grab their attraction."

Participant 2 responded:

> "Groups are differently set up. Want learners to help each other by placing

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a strong learner in each group. Sometimes we watch videos together."

Participant 3 responded:

> "They must help each other and learn from each other. Allow them to sit with their friends only if they promise to do their work. The structure of groups is effective, and learners have fun in their group. Learners enjoy shared reading."

The three participants agreed that doing things together in groups and having fun with games, watching videos or enjoying shared reading enhanced the social interaction between learners.

Key Question 5: How did you allow learners to have freedom and make choices in your lesson?

Participant 1 responded:

> "Learners may eat in class within limits. Learners give ideas, and we consider them and make plans together. Learners could choose how they want to work in their groups. I apply freedom of choice within limits."

Participant 2 responded:

> "They give their opinions or likings, e.g. advertisements. They shared their likings. They have choices and freedom for their group work."

Participant 3 responded:

> "I give them options to choose role responsibility in the Fab Four jigsaw. Learners who finished earlier could start reading."

All three participants agreed that learners have the freedom to choose certain things. Learners are allowed to give their ideas, share their opinions, or have options.

Key Question 6: Which connecting habits did you use to demonstrate good interpersonal relationships between teacher and learners?

Participant 1 responded:

"Listening to and supporting all learners. Acknowledge and encourage my learners."

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Participant 2 responded:

> "Encouraging learners. Asking stronger learners to be leaders and mentors. Supporting and listening."

Participant 3 responded:

> "Learners in my class need more support. Many of them lack self-confidence. I take time to explain to learners. I also listen to my learners."

All participants were familiar with the seven connecting habits of Choice Theory, and they mainly used listening, encouraging, and supporting in their teaching.

Key Question 7: How did you make sure that collaboration takes place and that all learners participate in the lesson?

Participant 1 responded:

> "By dividing the tasks between them and having them work in groups. I do group work to make sure that all understand the instructions."

Participant 2 responded:

> "I give each learner a role. Try to include the others by giving them the task of finding dictionaries and words."

Participant 3 responded:

> "They do group work, and roles are clearly explained. Make sure they all participate in their groups."

All three participants agreed that the division of tasks or roles for group work enhanced collaboration and ensured that learners participated in the lessons.

Key Question 8: How would you describe your classroom and discipline management? (Very effective - okay – not effective at all)

Participant 1 responded:

> "I would describe my classroom management as effective (okay). Learners begin to understand the Window of Safety and that there are consequences. I have to be consistent with applying the boundaries."

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Participant 2 responded:

> "Not effective at all. I tried very hard, but we are not there yet. The attention grabber didn't work. I am soft-spoken but need to be more firm."

Participant 3 responded:

> "I am okay, but there is always room for improvement. However, the observer rated my classroom management as very effective."

Participants 1 and 3 described their classroom and discipline management as effective ("okay"), but participant 2 realised that her management was ineffective.

Key Question 9: How did you respond to learners who were disturbing others, disrupting the class, and not getting the work done?

Participant 1 responded:

> "I address them individually. I remind them of the Window of Safety and ask them to reconsider their behaviour."

Participant 2 responded:

> "I spoke to them directly and asked them to stop. I also spoke privately if they did not respond. I just went on teaching."

Participant 3 responded:

> "Remind them of the Window of Safety and that there will be consequences if they keep behaving this way."

The participants' responses to learners disrupting the class were different. Participant 1 addressed those learners individually, and participant 2 spoke to them directly and asked them to stop. Participant 3 reminded them of the Window of Safety (a classroom strategy) and the consequences.

Key Question 10: Which need(s) of learners who disrupted the class were not satisfied?

Participant 1 responded:

> "Mostly love and belonging."

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Participant 2 responded:

"I think it is the fun need. They do not enjoy the lesson."

Participant 3 responded:

"I know this learner, and it is the love and belonging need that is not experiencing at home."

All three participants were knowledgeable about Choice Theory and could identify the unsatisfied need of the learners who disrupted the class.

Key Question 11: What did you experience as a highlight(s) of your lesson?

Participant 1 responded:

"The joke with the word "lump" was described as leafy outgrowths, and the children spontaneously started laughing because the lump in the story is in their throat."

Participant 2 responded:

"When some learners could answer questions from the text. Learners' familiarity with Fab Four. Video grabbed their attention."

Participant 3 responded:

"How well learners worked together in groups and how supportive they are. Learners are highly invested in lessons and very focused."

The different highlights of these lessons were the laughter of the grade 4 learners, the familiarity with the Fab Four of the grade 5 learners and the collaborative group work of the grade 6 learners.

Key Question 12: How would you describe your modelling of Choice Theory during the lesson?

Participant 1 responded:

"I recognise the needs, and I can identify the unmet need. I also understand the Basic Needs chair better. I am more aware if I make mistakes and if my scale tips and that it's ok, but I know how to "fix" it. I

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have learnt to separate the person from the issue/problem and focus on the issue, not the person."

Participant 2 responded:

"I know that I'm not firm enough in my actions. However, I am not reacting to "triggers" but rather focus on the space between Stimulus and Response."

Participant 3 responded:

"Fair. I try to be supportive of all my learners. I realise that applying CT is a process, and I need to practise it daily."

All three participants realised that in terms of Choice Theory, the only person's behaviour you can control is your own, which needs constant practice.

Summary

Choice Theory was applied differently to enhance the teaching of reading comprehension, ranging from building relationships with learners, explaining instructions and using humour.

The participants created a warm, supportive atmosphere by building mutual respect among the learners, encouraging them to get involved and having fun connecting with them. They were making learners feel loved and belong by playing games, remembering birthdays, encouraging learners or having one-on-one discussions with learners who experienced challenges. Satisfying learners' need for fun by doing things together in groups and enjoying games, watching videos or enjoying shared reading enhanced the social interaction between learners.

All three agreed that they allowed learners to have the freedom to choose certain things, like allowing them to give their ideas, share their opinions, or have options.

They were familiar with and used the seven connecting habits of Choice Theory by listening, encouraging, and supporting their learners. Giving learners specific roles for group work enhanced collaboration and ensured that learners participated in the lessons.

Participants responded differently to learners disrupting the class by addressing learners individually or speaking to the group directly and asking them to stop or reminding them of the Window of Safety (a classroom strategy) and the consequences.

Their knowledge of Choice Theory enabled them to identify the unsatisfied needs of the learners who disrupted the class. All three participants realised that in terms of Choice Theory, the only person's behaviour you can control is your own, which needs constant practice.

Below is a visual representation of the Choice Theory interviews.
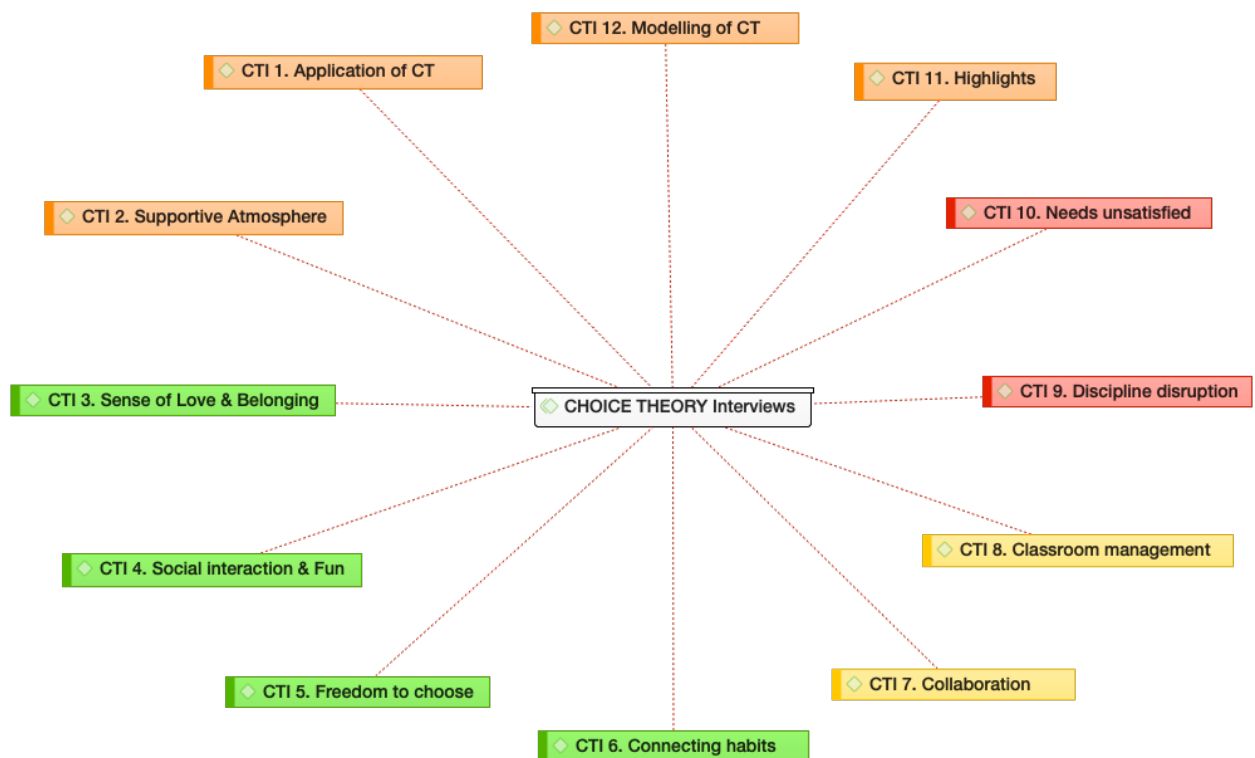
Figure 11: Atlas.ti Network for Choice Theory (CT) Interviews

5.5.5 Focus Group Discussions

As stated in chapter 4, focus groups are an extended way of the interview method to obtain data from a purposefully selected group of individuals in a structured and

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organised way facilitated by the researcher or moderator. The focus group discussions in this study aimed to generate data that may not have surfaced in the observations and individual interviews. The researcher gained a great deal of information that enriched the results from the observations and interviews by asking the same questions within an informal, more relaxed focus group setting.

TIMELINE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS				
Participants	Focus Group Discussions			
	February 2022	March 2022	July 2022	August 2022
Participant 1	✓	✓	✓	✓
Participant 2	✓	✓	✓	✓
Participant 3	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 14: Timeline for group discussions

5.5.5.1 First Focus Group Discussion: February 2022

The first Focus Group Discussion session was planned to take place after participants had been invited to complete the initial Monkey Survey questionnaire. Information regarding the findings of that questionnaire and the planning of observations were shared and negotiated with the participants.

The group agreed on the date and the venue for the first focus group discussion session, which took place at the school on a Friday in February 2022 after school.

Points for discussion for the first Focus Group Discussion were:

1. Word of welcome to the participants

2. Feedback and discussion on the findings of the initial questionnaire (Survey Monkey form)

3. Planning for observations by the researcher and CAPS observer

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4. Introduction of Reflective Journals

5. Continuation of regular Focus Group Discussions

The researcher shared a Keynote summary of the initial questionnaire (5.5.1) with the group and then followed an informal discussion around the findings.

The findings of the initial questionnaire showed that although the three participants worked in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), there were four similarities and six differences.

The similarities were:

1. They were all teaching Afrikaans HL (Home Language).

2. Although the school had a library, it did not have any reading programmes to promote reading.

3. They all attended a professional development workshop on reading or writing the previous year (2021).

4. They were eager to get involved in this project.

The differences were:

1. Their years of experience differed (Participant 1 – 1st year, participant 2 – more than ten years and participant 3 - 2nd year).

2. The time they spent on reading differed (grade 4 - 1 to 2 hours per week, grade 5 and 6 teachers – more than 2 hours per week).

3. The activities for the reading period also differed (participant 1 – reading aloud and comprehension test, participant 2 – teacher reading aloud, learners predict, clarify, question and at the end comprehension test, participant 3 – reading aloud and comprehension test).

4. Their familiarity with Reciprocal Teaching and four reading strategies differed (participant 1 had heard of Reciprocal Teaching but did not know the four reading strategies; participant 2 was familiar with Reciprocal Teaching and the four strategies; participant 3had not heard of Reciprocal Teaching but knew the four reading strategies)

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5. There were also differences regarding the occurrences of Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) meetings they had (according to participant 1, once a month; both participants 2 and 3 indicated they do not get together at all).

6. Only participant 2 had heard about Choice Theory.

The researcher also shared and negotiated the timeline for the different observations that would take place with the group, and all agreed to accept it. The introduction of the reflective journal was something new to them, but after lengthy deliberations, they undertook to start writing up their learning. They agreed that the group needed to regularly continue the focus group discussions. Their motivation for this was that they enjoyed the informal discussions in a relaxed atmosphere, away from school and asked that the group should meet only on Fridays. The reason was that they had to attend to many other duties and responsibilities during the week.

5.5.5.2 Second Focus Group Discussion: March 2022

The second Focus Group Discussion took place away from school on a Friday in March. The reason for having this discussion away from the school was that participants felt they wanted a neutral ground which did not remind them of school and where they could relax. Participants were asked to fill out a Google form with open-ended questions based on how they experienced the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching training. The Google form was emailed to participants so they could respond individually and on their own time. All participants completed the following fifteen open-ended questions before the second Focus Group Discussion took place:

1. How did you experience the Choice Theory training?

2. What did you learn from it?

3. How has it helped you in the classroom with your learners?

4. Which Choice Theory lesson have you taught your learners?

5. What are you still struggling with in terms of Choice Theory?

6. How did you experience the Reciprocal Teaching training?

7. What regarding Reciprocal Teaching have you started doing in your classroom?

8. With what do you achieve success in Reciprocal Teaching?

9. What are you still struggling with regarding Reciprocal Teaching?

10. How often have you met as an Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) group this year?

11. What do you share when you do get together?

12. Do you keep a reflective journal, and what do you record in it?

13. What do you need help and support with?

14. Are you willing to allow independent observers into your classroom?

15. What will you expect from the observers when they visit your classroom?

It must be noted that as a result of changes in the staff establishment of the school, participant 1, who was in the Foundation Phase for the first quarter, moved up to the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) at the start of the second quarter. The Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) now had a new teacher with no prior experience in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) in the group. She had attended the Reciprocal Teaching workshop, which took place at the beginning of the year but had no training in Choice Theory at that stage. Participant 1 only completed the Choice Theory training during the midyear school holidays in June.

Here is a summary of all the responses to the 15 key questions:

Question 1: How did you experience the Choice Theory training?

Participant 1:

"I did not attend the Choice Theory training yet."

Participant 2:

"It was good to be able to learn new things the first time. It made me reflect on things quite a lot. It was presented in such a practical way that I could easily understand it."

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Participant 3:

"I could learn a lot, and it was always exciting."

The Choice Theory training for the grade 4 participant took place after this questionnaire during the June school holidays of 2022. The grade 5 and 6 participants agreed that they experienced the Choice Theory training as a learning experience. As mentioned earlier, the grade 4 participant only completed the Choice Theory training later in the year after completing this questionnaire.

Question 2: What did you learn from it?

Participant 1:

"I did not attend the Choice Theory training yet."

Participant 2:

"I am thinking more before important decisions and was able to help my children at home to think differently."

Participant 3:

"My perception of the way people think and I think before I react has changed."

Participants 2 and 3 agreed that they became aware of their own and other people's thinking before they reacted.

Question 3: How has it helped you in the classroom with your learners?

Participant 1:

"I did not attend the Choice Theory training yet."

Participant 2:

"So far, minimal. It is hard to get the group under control if one is rioting. They are then all involved. I did have some successes. Some take part in chats and 1-on-1 sessions."

Participant 3:

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"The learners' discipline has changed a lot."

Participant 2 indicated that although she had some success, it did not help much, while participant 3 indicated that the discipline of the learners has changed.

Question 4: Which Choice Theory lesson have you taught your learners?

Participant 1:

"I did not attend the Choice Theory training yet."

Participant 2:

"I did the Basic Needs chair. The red and yellow car was also touched."

Participant 3:

"The red and yellow car."

Participant 2 used the analogy of the Basic Needs chair to teach learners about the five basic needs (survival, love and belonging, power, freedom and fun) every human being has. The seat represents the survival (food, shelter) need and each leg represents the other four needs: love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun). When one of the legs is gone, the chair becomes unstable. The same happens to our lives when one or more of our needs are not satisfied.

Participant 3 used the red and yellow car analogy to explain human behaviour to learners. All of us are the drivers of our own cars, and sometimes we choose the red car (anger, frustration, etc.) when we are not in effective control, and we choose the yellow car (happy, satisfied, etc.) when we are more in effective control of our lives.

Question 5: What are you still struggling with regarding Choice Theory?

Participant 1:

"I did not attend the Choice Theory training yet."

Participant 2:

"Time. There is little time to reach every child. The admin is a lot."

Participant 3:

"It is not always easy to stay calm, and then I get into the red car."

Participant 2 indicated that there is not enough time to reach every child, and participant 3 stated that it is not always easy to control your emotions to stay calm.

Question 6: How did you experience the Reciprocal Teaching training?

Participant 1:

> "Very interesting. I immediately ordered my book 'Reciprocal Teaching at Work – by Lori Oczkus. I can't wait for my cousin to come so I can start studying in depth."

Participant 2:

> "It was good, and actually I found myself applying some of the stuff already."

Participant 3:

> "Full of learning."

All three participants experienced the Reciprocal Training differently. Participant 1's interest in learning more about reciprocal teaching was triggered; participant 2 realised that she was already using some of the strategies, and for participant 3, it was a learning experience.

Question 7: What regarding Reciprocal Teaching have you started doing in your classroom?

Participant 1:

> "Everyone's role and we then tackle a new piece of work with it, but only in Afrikaans at grade 4. I have not yet done it at NW in the other grades, and I believe it will help a lot."

Participant 2:

> "I already do the four reading strategies. Also, the 4Ws and H are part of

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their teaching plan."

Participant 3:

"Divided the learners into groups. The roles are changed each time."

All the participants started concentrating on cooperative learning by dividing their learners into groups and giving learners specific roles.

Question 8: With what do you achieve success in Reciprocal Teaching?

Participant 1*:*

"It is not yet clear, but it is against progress. Children look forward to when we tackle a new text. They know all the prediction, explanation, questioning, and summary will follow 🙄 "

Participant 2:

"To realise that not everyone learns in the same way is acceptable. As an educator I should give learners more opportunity to learn together even if it feels chaotic to me."

Participant 3:

"Cooperation of the learners."

All three participants agreed that they could improve their learning by allowing their learners to work in groups.

Question 9: What are you still struggling with regarding Reciprocal Teaching?

Participant 1*:*

"Planning"

Participant 2:

"Not the whole group can chat together, due to the arrangement of benches in the class. Would like them to chat more."

Participant 3:

"Cooperation of all the learners."

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Participants responded differently to this question. For participant 1, it was planning, participant 2 had a challenge with the arrangement of the desks in the class, and participant 3 had a problem with the cooperation of all learners.

Question 10: How often have you met as an Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) group this year?

Participant 1:

"I haven't been part of the entire term yet, but I know of one time we were together since I have been part of the team."

Participant 2:

"Very little"

Participant 3:

"Very little"

All participants agreed that they do not meet regularly.

Question 11: What do you share with each other when you get together?

Participant 1:

"It was an Afrikaans subject meeting. We talk about moderation. We are putting practices such as library roster into effect and reading period. How to prepare an Afrikaans paper. How we are doing with group work in our classes and whether we have started yet."

Participant 2:

"We do talk about things that are a challenge in the class and the children."

Participant 3:

"How we experience group work, what works for us and what doesn't."

Participants did not clearly focus on what to discuss since they did not meet regularly.

Question 12: Do you keep a reflective journal, and what do you record in it?

Participant 1*:*

> "Not yet, still trying to find my feet. But will note in it what lesson strategies I tried. What worked and what didn't? What was the children's reaction?"

Participant 2:

> "Not often, but yes. I write what is done and how it was reacted to. Also, how I felt at that moment."

Participant 3:

> "Yes"

Except for participant 1, who did not keep a reflective journal, both participants 2 and 3 indicated that they held a reflective journal.

Question 13: What do you need help and support with?

Participant 1*:*

> "Planning to do an orientation with children and how to deal with a poorly disciplined child in such a situation who talks non-stop."

Participant 2:

> "To get through to the children. It feels like they don't hear me."

Participant 3:

> "Suitable reading material."

Participants responded differently to this question. Participants 1 and 2 needed help with misbehaving learners, and participant 3 needed appropriate resources for the learners.

Question 14: Are you willing to allow independent observers into your classroom?

Participant 1*:*

> "Yes."

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Participant 2:

"Yes."

Participant 3:

"Yes."

All three participants agreed they would allow observers into their classrooms.

Question 15: What will you expect from the observers when they visit your classroom?

Participant 1:

"Just that they are discreet and make me feel at ease."

Participant 2:

"Not to interrupt when I am teaching. Everyone has their own way of teaching, and the educator can sometimes feel that they are not good enough. Feedback is welcome at the end of the session."

Participant 3:

"Guidance if I do something wrong and help me right. Give example lessons."

Participants responded differently to this question. Participant 1 wanted to feel comfortable, participant 2 wanted to continue undisturbed but would welcome feedback, and participant 3 would appreciate some guidance.

5.5.5.3 Third Focus Group Discussion: July 2022

The theme and venue for the third session were negotiated with the three participants and took place away from school on a Friday in July after school. Participants were invited to complete a Google form before the Focus Group Discussion.

The following questions guided the third focus group discussion:

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1. Which grade are you teaching, and how many learners do you have in your class?

2. Describe how the Choice Theory has helped you change your behaviour in the classroom from external control to internal control over the last year.

3. Which connecting habits have enabled you to connect with your learners and create a warm, supportive environment for them?

4. Which of the deadly habits are you still challenged with within your classroom?

5. How has the knowledge of Reciprocal Teaching changed your perception of teaching reading comprehension?

6. How would you rate your success (on a scale of 1 – 10) in explicitly teaching reading comprehension at this stage?

7. What are your biggest successes with Reciprocal Teaching?

8. What is still a challenge for you?

9. How do your learners experience cooperative learning (jigsaw) and their roles as predictor, clarifier, questioner and summariser?

10. How often do you come together as Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers to share best practices and challenges?

The answers to these questions would also indicate what has changed since the first focus group discussions. A summary of each participant's responses is given below:

Participant 1 – 40 learners

"Choice Theory has helped me so that I started working more on relationship building. Some days learners are calm, and all five needs are satisfied. Other days they are not. One of my most difficult challenges is when the children have discussions. It seems to me that it never stops. I set up a short reflective journal that I have learners fill in at the beginning of each period. I believe this will help with revision and capture. I connect with my learners by greeting them by name when they walk in. During lunch, I walk and sit down at one or two and chat. In the afternoon, we

high-five when we greet each other. I am still challenged by learners who refuse to cooperate and continue in class even though you speak nicely. Reciprocal Teaching changed my perception of teaching, and for the first time, my learners were using a dictionary. My success rate for Reciprocal Teaching is a 3 (scale of 1 to 10) – room for improvement. My challenge is still how to manage "challenging" learners. My learners enjoy the "jigsaw", especially playing the roles. I experience at this stage that self-confidence has increased a lot in learners who cannot read and write at all because they work in a group. We now come together weekly during the term as an Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) group. Regular conversations also take place daily as things happen around us. My colleague, R…. has a winning recipe because learners don't take chances with her, but even if I ask, she can't articulate it."

Participant 2 – 22 learners

"Choice Theory has helped me to understand that I don't need to scold or stress. I address learners, and they respond (not all, gr 7). Or I refer to the Window of Safety, and they say themselves if they are outside the window. I use the connecting habits to gain the learners' trust, and that opened a door for me. I also like to listen to them, and some are much bolder. The deadly habit I still use is punishment. I have benefited from Reciprocal Teaching when I saw that learners learn and read in different ways. We read using all our senses. Prior knowledge and quality world play a very important role in reading comprehension. My rating for explicitly teaching Reciprocal Teaching is 4 out of 10. My biggest success with Reciprocal Teaching is V… (a learner in my class), who uses the four reading strategies. My challenge is still how to make the right choice to respond to "triggers". Most of my learners enjoy the "jigsaw"; they like to play every role. Some just don't want to try it yet. The language difference remains an obstacle even if they can read it. We talk as often as possible (sometimes daily) as an Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) group if something happens."

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Participant 3 – 28 learners

"Choice Theory has helped me to stop and think about what my next action/reaction was going to be. We are currently learning to think before reacting, which positively impacts the learners and me. The connecting habit I use is playing with them during breaks in any sport. We make it fun and, in that way, we always talk after the time. We formed a bond, and learners trusted me and now shared more. The deadly habit I'm still challenged with is my tone of voice! I generally speak loudly; sometimes, it sounds like I'm scolding, but I really speak loudly. The knowledge of Reciprocal Teaching has changed my perception of teaching reading comprehension because I can identify learners' reading challenges more easily. I rate my success rate with explicitly teaching 5 out of 10. My biggest success with Reciprocal Teaching is that we (my learners and I) communicate much better. It feels like we understand each other more. It makes teaching so much easier. My challenge is still the Window of Safety. Some learners want to be outside the window on purpose because they enjoy performing any consequence. My learners are always excited about the "jigsaw" activity, and they want to play all the roles. Sometimes this causes discipline problems. We try to get together weekly as the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) group."

5.5.5.4 Fourth Focus Group Discussion: August 2022

The fourth and last focus group discussion session took place away from school on a Friday in August, after school. The principal of the school was also invited to this informal discussion. Before the session, the participants were invited to complete a Google form to evaluate their experiences of all the observations and the interviews.

The following questions guided the Google form evaluation:

1. Which Intermediate Phase grade are you teaching Afrikaans HL (Home Language)?

2. How many learners do you have in your class for Afrikaans HL (Home Language)?

3. How would you rate the planning and execution of all the classroom observations and interviews for the Intermediate Phase?

4. What is your overall assessment of these observations and interviews?

5. Name one outstanding, positive thing you learned from these observations and interviews.

6. What were your major concerns for you about these classroom observations and interviews?

7. What was interesting about the observations and interviews?

8. What teaching practices did you start to change as a result of the feedback from the observations and interviews?

9. What challenges do you still experience in getting all your learners involved in the lesson so that effective learning can occur?

10. How could these classroom observations and interviews be improved?

The answers to these questions would give insight into how the participants experienced 68 all the observations and the interviews. A summary of all the participants' answers to questions 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 is given below:

All participants agreed that the observations and interviews were well planned and executed (questions 3 and 4).

However, all three learned different things (question 5) from the observations and interviews.

> "That we all can have the same framework, but we all do it differently, and it is amazing to learn from one another." (Participant 1)

> "The feedback was spot-on. I learned what I lack during the interviews. This helped me to know what to focus on." (Participant 2)

> "That they are there to help me and not to judge me." (Participant 3)

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On the question of what teaching practices changed because of the feedback from the observations and interviews (question 8), the participants also responded differently:

> "Group work - more specific teaching on it. The practical advice on Choice Theory in class helps with discipline." (Participant 1)

> "I started to use different approaches in my presentations. I not only use the books but moreover use the laptop and even music to stimulate them. Playing interesting games also." (Participant 2)

> "Reading aloud. I try to do this more every day on any other subject I teach." (Participant 3)

After all the observations and interviews, there were still some challenges that all participants experienced in getting all their learners involved so that effective learning could occur (question 9).

For participant 1, it was:

> "Learners' emotional scales when they get in class and it tip before they enter and don't want to talk."

For participant 2, it was:

> "Having 2nd language Afrikaans speaking learners in class tend to be
>
> problematic. They are slowly taking part but are still hesitant. They still tend to group together, but I've managed to split most of them."

For participant 3, it was:

> "The absent learners."

The data collected from the informal social interaction of all these focus group discussions with the participants helped the researcher to discover new and valuable information on the diverse perceptions of the research questions.

5.5.6 Reflective Journals

Data for this study were collected through observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals. In this way, the data were triangulated. The reflective journal in this case study is a written record by the participants and is written throughout the research process. The participants were asked to keep a record in a reflective journal of the Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching experiences in class, including their difficulties and successes and any insights they had. At the end of the term, all the reflective journals were collected and carefully read by the researcher. Common themes were also discovered related to the experiences of the three participants.

5.5.6.1 Reflective Journal for the month of May 2022

Participants were prompted to reflect on and unpack their experiences through a series of open-ended questions. This was to guide their thinking about their experiences. Here follows an outline of the reflective journals that were collected:

- What I enjoyed most at school this week/month…

- Self-evaluation: How effective was my preparation, planning and teaching?

- Reciprocal Teaching Reading strategies I concentrated on the most this week/month…

- What I did to "connect" with my learners and make them feel welcome and safe...

- What I learned this week/month…

- What remains a challenge for me is…

- What can be done to address this problem…

- What help do I still need…

Participant 1: Summary of Reflective Journal for May

"It was very nice to see how the learners became more familiar with their

roles, and they no longer talked about other things but remained focused on their conversation. Cards that are physically on the table really help my Gr.4 learners. My preparation improved each week, as I kept a reflective journal for myself and could work on my mistakes. Lesson plan writing was unknown to me. I also enjoyed doing a bit of research on each subject and with the learners to broaden their general knowledge about what we are doing. I particularly concentrated on explaining how to use a dictionary to clarify. As well as predicting (forecasting things) and the last week on summarising. This term, they got the same role every time; I didn't change the roles. I have a bell that I ring when we're done to get everyone's attention. I ask my learners always to give themselves a pat on the back and say: "I'm good/ I did well today." Since we have been together for a few years, the learners are comfortable talking to each other and me. The background information suggested what I should do to keep learners interested.

I also learned that I need to manage my time better. What remains a challenge to me is the "noise level" when they work in groups. I also feel that the integration is too little in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) and that only reading takes place here, and other facets of the Afrikaans Home Language are neglected. I think I need more training because I am new to this Phase and was not trained in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6)."

Participant 2: Summary of the Reflective Journal for May

"We (my learners and I) had a good time talking and laughing with each other. I also spent some time in the other classes, especially grade 4, with games they enjoyed. I did my planning well regarding the lesson. However, I was not prepared for the wide range of responses. I also could not provide pictures of objects. I concentrated a lot on the learners' prior knowledge and prediction. I had them talk about what they know about UFOs. They quite surprised me. I chatted and joked a lot with them

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informally. They always laugh and say I'm serious. I just want to work. I learned that our children are not yet effectively using their imaginations. I struggled to get them to imagine and place them in a situation. Some could do it quickly, but not all. I still have trouble getting everyone to work together at the same time. There are a few who just don't want to work together. I think the work should be made more interesting for the learners. Otherwise also easier for their level."

Participant 3: Summary of the Reflective Journal for May

"I enjoyed working in groups for the bullying program. The learners worked well together; it was fantastic to see how everyone did their part. My planning was well done. Teaching did not go according to plan, but everything I wanted to do was done. I concentrated a lot on summarising the text. We have a summary of the upcoming test, which helped the learners prepare. I make the time to chat with them about how their day went. We take out something to eat and share it with those who don't have it. My learners learn much better when we work with pictures or draw what we have read. They are very good at writing and telling stories. My challenge is my time management. I thought of hanging a clock in the classroom. This way, the learners can also keep time while we are busy."

5.5.6.2 Reflective Journal for the Second Quarter: 2022

Participant 1: Summary of the Reflective Journal for the 2nd Quarter 2022:

Positive experiences I had this term…

"My learners started to work together in groups from the third week because they understood their roles better. I did not change roles in the group. It also created safety. Some learners managed to look up a dictionary, and they were very excited."

I enjoyed… Did I learn?

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"I realised that the learners can learn but that it will take longer. The learners try. Stimulation at home is minimal. Class time is very little, but I will have to find ways to bind learners more to eagerness for knowledge and expand their general knowledge."

I had the following negative experience(s)…

"The learners' learning ability is prolonged and CAPS requires a certain amount of work in a specific time. Learners' rudeness in a class that doesn't give each other an opportunity or something. The noise levels.

Learners cannot work purposefully. Sometimes you feel incapable as an educator because you are not reaching the child. Also, I believe my classes are sometimes monotonous, and there is no fun because I am curriculum driven and treat the reading strategy and curriculum as two separate things instead of being integrated."

In terms of human behaviour, I learned…

"Learners act because there is a need that is not addressed. That they also cannot always articulate themselves their needs."

Next term, I will focus on…

"To be able to plan more integrated. Support to know if I am teaching the learners correctly or if I am actually only harming them."

Participant 2: Summary of the Reflective Journal for the 2nd Quarter

Positive experiences I had this term…

"I start every day with a game for 5 minutes. I did the games in the beginning, and everyone had to participate. I then started around the quietest group, with books on the table, ready when I came in, giving the opportunity to do the game for the day. Groups had to bring their own games, and they enjoyed it more. They all participated. Lately, the class has been quiet when I come in, connect on the sofa, and they have been waiting to be chosen for the game."

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"I enjoyed it… I learnt?"

"I enjoy watching the quiet children come to life and participate. I learned that you can do everything actively, even if it is in different ways. Learners are versatile and I just have to apply greater love and tolerance to accommodate everyone."

I had the following negative experience(s)…

"I was part of the panel for the hearings on discipline problems. It was more in the senior phase, but once, we had to call in 3 grade 4 learners. It really hit me. So small and they must appear before the disciplinary committee. I felt sorry for them. I believe we have big challenges."

In terms of human behaviour I learned…

"I will give someone a second or third chance because there is a reason why they act in a certain way. I can't give up so soon."

Next term, I will focus on…

"Definitely my bonding with the children. I feel far removed from them but must move closer if I want to help them."

Participant 3: Summary of Reflective Journal for the 2nd Quarter:

Positive experiences I had this term…

"I changed my way of teaching for each class. We learn in a fun way, and there is always a reward at the end. (Learners do not realise that the reward is more learning material than that learning actually takes place)."

I enjoyed… I learnt?

"I stopped at various groups for breaks and listened to their conversations with each other. The learners share a lot with each other, so you can also obtain information from them as an educator. To work with the few learners who want to work and to see how eager these learners are to work with me."

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I had the following negative experience(s)…

> "Learners' discipline. Some of the learners show no respect towards any educator or even their classmates. They are not interested in schoolwork at all."

In terms of human behaviour I learned…

> "I have learned to ignore learners with this extremely poor behaviour. Sometimes people act, not because they have to, but out of habit."

Next term, I will focus on…

> "Building a better relationship with the learners may help cultivate systematic respect and care."

5.5.6.3 Reflective Journal for the Third Quarter: 2022

Participant 2: Reflective Journal for August after completing all the observations and *interviews*

Positive experiences I had this term…

> "Learners' cooperation in their groups. The use of a dictionary by my learners and for me as an educator who never knew how to teach it. My props make the lesson fun, and learners ask me when we will read like this again."

I enjoyed… I learnt?

> "I enjoy reading and then applying what I have learned and getting so frustrated that I can't read faster and more. I love the observation visits to see my class from other people's eyes. Most of all, the knowledge that the visitors share. It gives me hope for our circumstances. Through the observers' eyes, I realised our children could learn. I also gained respect for the process because I wanted everything to fall into place quickly, and if it didn't work, I believed I was failing the children."

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I had the following negative experience(s)…

> "My learners who chat non-stop and try to make jokes to divert attention from the fact that they cannot do their work. Another big challenge is the children who make noise outside while I teach."

In terms of human behaviour, I learned…

> "I have learned that everything is not always about me and that I do not have to take everything so personally."

Next term, I will focus on…

> "I want to help the learners to do better academically. Support is needed in how to test learners to determine if the teaching strategies are effective and make a difference."

Participant 2: Reflective Journal for August after completing all the observations and *interviews*

Positive experiences I had this term…

> "I start the lesson by talking about something that interests the learners. Learners participate enthusiastically in the discussions. We also talk about the sport of the previous day. We also watch videos, and the learners enjoy it."

> "I enjoyed… I learnt?"

> "I enjoy hearing what the children experience at home and what they actually know or see in life outside. I learned that their quality world is very limited. They only learn things from others, and what they see happening, they take as if it should be so. Learners who are actually trying to learn something. I appreciate that they ask so many questions; it shows they want to broaden their knowledge."

I had the following negative experience(s)…

> "For me, it is still challenging to control some learners' negative behaviour. They have no interest in their work, and it remains a headache for me.

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When learners come to class, they should take out their books and start working. Some of the boys stay outside and don't want to come to class. I have to call them before they listen. Then when we work, they prefer to chat among themselves. I will stop and shut them up. If they don't listen, I continue with the lesson. I've talked nicely, shared individually, and tried to find out what's wrong, but to no avail. It is also disturbing for the other working learners, and I apply discipline, but not firmly enough. They are quiet for a short while; then, they start again."

In terms of human behaviour I learned…

"I'd rather stop altogether and immediately address the offenders sternly and point out their mistakes. I need to be more strict. A gentle answer calms them down."

Next term, I will focus on…

"I want to focus on and stick with clear boundaries and enforce it. My colleagues can help, they are already doing it by encouraging the guilty parties to change their behaviour. I think if everyone does the same thing, the impact will be clear."

Participant 3: Reflective Journal for August after all the observations and *interviews were completed*

Positive experiences I had this term…

"My positive experience was the practical group work. I never thought it would work. The learners learn very well and communicate more lively than before."

I enjoyed… I learnt?

"I enjoyed the group discussions. As an educator, you learn how learners interpret and understand things in different ways. GROUP WORK! READ! LEARN TO READ!"

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I had the following negative experience(s)…

> "My biggest challenge has always been time management. I spend too much time on a certain part and do not get to all my work that I did plan for."

In terms of human behaviour I learned…

> "Be the learners' inspiration and constructive criticism work tops! Try to understand learners, help them and "connect" with them. The educator's action and response build on the learners' feedback."

Next term I will focus on…

> "To maintain discipline throughout tshe phase and cultivate that respect in our learners for educators."

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5.5.7 Thematic Analysis

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data that entails searching across a data set to identify, analyze, and report repeated patterns. It is a method for describing data, but it also involves interpretation in the processes of selecting codes and constructing themes. Barkley (2021) states that researchers use this method to better understand the data. It is used to understand people's experiences, perspectives and behaviours.
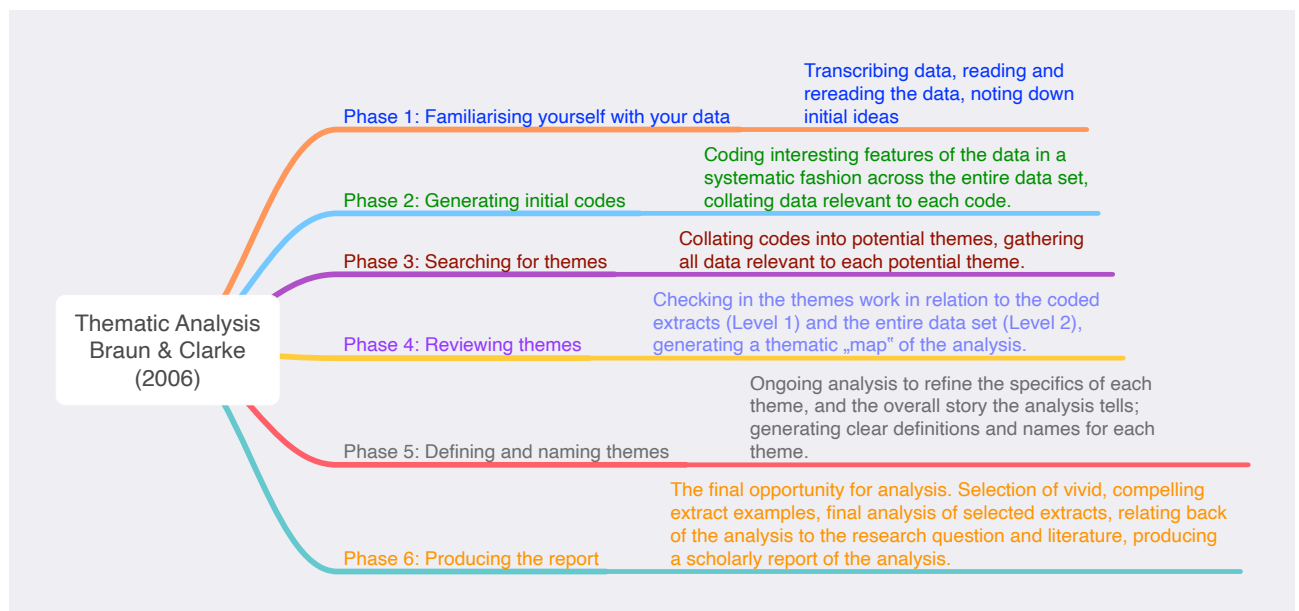
Figure 12: Mindnode layout of Thematic Analysis

Before delving into the specifics of thematic analysis, it is important to define what a theme means in this analysis method.

Braun and Clarke (2006:82) describe a theme in the following way:

> "A theme is a 'patterned response or meaning' derived from the data that informs the research question."

Patton (2002) posited that themes or patterns within data could be identified in one of two primary ways in thematic analysis: in an **inductive** or „**bottom-up**" way or in a

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theoretical or **deductive** or „**top-down**" way. An inductive approach means the themes identified are strongly linked to the data themselves.

Furthermore, the researcher has great flexibility in identifying themes, but they should strive to identify themes that provide important insights that address the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Advantages of thematic analysis

According to Kiger and Varpio (2020), compared to many other qualitative methods, thematic analysis is relatively simple to learn and apply. It is a powerful method for analyzing data that allows researchers to summarize, highlight key features of, and interpret a wide range of data sets.

Disadvantages of thematic analysis

The flexibility that thematic analysis offers can also be seen as a drawback in that it contributes to a perception among some that it is not a rigorous method (Braun & Clark, 2006). Additionally, given the flexible nature of this analysis method, it can be challenging for some researchers to determine which aspects of data to focus on and/or which theoretical or epistemological frameworks to use for their analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic data presentation of all the classroom observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals.

Data were analyzed using the six-step protocol for thematic analysis proposed by Braun, Clarke, and Terry (2014). The following 6 phases were used to analyse the data:

Phase one (familiarising self with data)

As part of the triangulation, data from all the classroom observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals of the participants were read and re-read to record initial ideas. Through this process of in-depth reading, ideas for patterns and meanings progressively emerged for the researcher.

Phase two (generating initial codes)

After obtaining an overall understanding of the data, the researcher created the findings of the study. All the relevant documents for participants 1, 2 and 3 were uploaded. ATLAS.ti automatically assigned a number to each document based on the order in which they were added to the project. Then the data were coded, and 17 different codes were identified based on possible repeating patterns.

Phase three (searching for themes)

In the third phase, these different codes were revisited, and from them, 5 different code groups were formed, and like code, groups were grouped into themes and linked to the 4 research sub-questions. Atlas.ti provided the ability to make chains of multiple codes and link quotations to create networks, which was vital to third-stage coding. These network diagrams, known as Code-Document Tables, were used to visually represent the data.

Phase four (reviewing themes)

The fourth phase involved reviewing themes to identify relationships and organize the analysis into sub-themes. The researcher began to describe each individual theme and related themes to each other. Code co-occurrences were possible with Atlas.ti. This allowed the researcher to generate a table that showed the number of hits of selected co-occurring codes, read the data of all co-occurring segments, and visualise the co-occurring codes.

Phase five (defining and naming themes)

The fifth phase involved detailed analysis of each theme's data to refine categories and their organisation.

Phase six (producing the report)

Lastly, a final refinement of the analysis was completed. The last step was to weave the analytic narrative together, adding extracts from the data in order to be able to tell the reader a coherent and persuasive story.

After reading and rereading all the data, the researcher could put together 4 themes and 10 sub-themes that emerged from the data.

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Emerging Themes and sub-themes

Research sub-questions	Themes	Sub-themes
To what extent can an understanding of Choice Theory as an internal control psychology of human behaviour assist teachers to enhance their teaching of reading comprehension?	Theme 1: Understanding Choice Theory as an internal control psychology.	1. Understanding Choice Theory as an internal control behaviour 2. Using Choice Theory to build relationships 3. Managing Choice Theory and challenging behaviour (No theme on CT enhancing the teaching of reading comprehension? Or the building of relationships using CT will be expected to enhance the teaching of reading comprehension?
What can teachers who embrace Choice Theory do to create a warm, supportive classroom that focuses on effective social interactions and help learners to satisfy their basic needs as a key component of cognitive development and reading comprehension?	Theme 2: Building a warm, supportive atmosphere	1. Creating a warm, supportive classroom 2. Social interaction and engagement in the learning 3. Satisfying the basic needs of children

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How can Reciprocal Teaching with its explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies change Intermediate Phase teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension?	Theme 3: The explicit teaching of strategies changing participants' perception of teaching reading comprehension	The explicit teaching of strategies focusing on: • Perceptual change • Clear Lesson plans • Activating Prior knowledge
How can the modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners promote the teaching of reading comprehension to enable learners to construct meaning from text by taking responsibility for their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser?	Theme 4: How can the modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners promote the teaching of reading comprehension to enable learners to construct meaning from text by taking responsibility for their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser?	1. Modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners... 4. 2. Gradual shifting of responsibility… 3. Cooperative learning (Jigsaw) – social interaction

Table 15: Themes and sub-themes

The analysis included observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and reflective journals. The revelations from all the data assisted in presenting portraits of the three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) participants. Within each section, participant data were discussed in order of the participant. Each teacher was referred to as participant 1, participant 2 and participant 3. Each research question was addressed by considering participant responses to the observations, interviews,

focus group discussions and reflective journals. In coding the data, some research questions were informed by a larger quantity of data than others.

All three participants completed the **Basic Intensive Training in Choice Theory** at various stages. Participant 2 and participant 3 did the training in January, and participant 1, due to changes in the staff establishment of the school, completed her training in July.

5.5.8 Themes

In this study, four sub-questions were to be answered, so each theme's content attempts to answer these sub-questions through the coding of all the observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals of the three participants.

5.5.8.1 Theme 1

To what extent can an understanding of Choice Theory as an internal control psychology of human behaviour assist teachers in enhancing their teaching of reading comprehension?

According to Glasser (1998), Choice Theory explains human behaviour based on internal motivation. Glasser states that all behaviour is driven from the inside, regardless of external influences. Those who practice it have learned that they choose everything they do. They learn they can control their own choices but cannot control what anyone else chooses to do. The only person's behaviour you can control is your own.

The participants' responses regarding this research sub-question emerged as three sub-themes.

5.5.8.1.1 Theme 1: Sub-theme 1

Understanding Choice Theory as an internal control psychology of human behaviour...

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This sub-theme indicates the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) participants' understanding of Choice Theory as an internal control psychology of human behaviour and how this knowledge could enable them to enhance their teaching of reading comprehension.

When asked to describe their understanding of and experience with Choice Theory as an internal control psychology, the participants responded:

> "Choice Theory has changed my WHOLE life – at school and home." (Participant 1)

> "I am more aware if I make mistakes and if my scale tips and that it's ok, but I know how to "fix" it. I have learnt to separate the person from the issue/problem and focus on the issue and not the person." (Participant 1)

> "Choice Theory has helped me to understand that I don't need to scold or stress." (Participant 2)

> "I am not reacting to 'triggers' but rather focus on the space between the stimulus and response." (Participant 2)

> "I could learn a lot, and it was always exciting." (Participant 3)

> "I feel my demonstration of Choice Theory is above average. However, Choice Theory is not at the level I want it to be. I create an environment conducive to learning by using humour. I joke a lot with them." (Participant 3)

From their responses, it is clear that becoming familiar with Choice Theory and understanding human behaviour from Glasser's perspective has helped the three participants realise that they choose everything that they do and that the only person's behaviour they can control is their own. Moreover, by integrating it into their own lives, they have learned that they cannot control other people's behaviour, including their learners.

According to Glasser (1998:3):

> "Choice Theory explains that for all practical purposes, we choose

everything we do, including the misery we feel. Other people can neither make us miserable nor make us happy."

This has also allowed them to change their perception of their and other peoples' behaviour.

"What I changed was my perception of the learners. Know now that the buzzing ("gegons") is learning taking place in the groups. There is hope for our children." (Participant 1)

"I ask learners to do activities and explain beforehand what we will do. I try to engage with learners throughout the lessons. I cannot force learners to do things against their will." (Participant 2)

"My perception of the way people think and I think before I react has changed." (Participant 3)

The above responses shared by the three participants are presented according to how Choice Theory has helped them to change their perception of their learners' behaviour. Understanding Glasser's Choice Theory also gave these participants the tools necessary to build positive relationships with their learners. The following sub-theme will explore their relationship-building in the classroom.

5.5.8.1.2 Theme 1: Sub-theme 2

Using Choice Theory to build relationships…

This sub-theme wanted to explore how teachers who embrace Choice Theory could build positive relationships essential for promoting reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6).

Choice Theory asserts that humans need positive relationships and Glasser (1998a) offers teachers certain habits for building strong, caring, supportive teacher-learner relationships. He refers to these habits as connecting, notes several habits that he believes harm the much-needed positive teacher/learner relationship, and refers to these as deadly habits. They are complaining, blaming, criticising, nagging, threatening, punishing, and rewarding to control or bribing.

According to Hale (2011), part of developing a positive classroom climate is the creation of trusting relationships with teachers and peers that can help at-risk students eliminate barriers to learning.

For Noddings (2005), effective teaching is based on caring, trusting, and respectful relationships between students and teachers. Effective teachers interact with students in such a way that their students are aware that they care about their learning and them as people.

In this study, the knowledge and modelling of Choice Theory allowed the three participants to engage with their learners, get to know them better, and build relationships that ensured a classroom environment conducive to promoting the teaching of reading comprehension.

When the three participants were asked how they felt about having good, positive relationships with their learners, they responded:

"Choice Theory has helped me in a way that I started focusing more on relationship building." (Participant 1)

"I have built good relationships with all learners over four years. After the Choice Theory course, I let learners sit in circles and not rows. Very helpful." (Participant 1)

"I try to encourage learners. I support and listen to them." (Participant 2)

"I will give learners a second or third chance because there is a reason why they act in a certain way. I can't give up so soon." (Participant 2)

"I have been building trusting relationships with learners. Ask learners to come and talk to me if they experience problems." (Participant 3)

"I have been bonding with my learners by listening to them and having open communication channels. There is good interaction between the learners and me." (Participant 3)

The observations showed that all three participants were starting to use the connecting or caring habits of Choice Theory, such as listening, encouraging, and

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supporting to build positive relationships with their learners. Participant 1 shared how she connects with her learners by greeting them by name when they walk into her classroom and how she sits down during lunch, at one or two and chats. Participant 2 had a different perception of building relationships with learners. During the interviews, she shared that she would instead stop the lesson altogether and immediately address the offenders sternly and point out their mistakes. She believed that she needed to be more strict. Participant 3's application of Choice Theory was underpinned by her supportive role in building her relationship with her learners. She clearly showed respect for learners, and she held them accountable.

5.5.8.1.3 Theme 1: Sub-theme 3

Managing Choice Theory and behavioural challenges…

Accepting that you can only control your own behaviour is also the most challenging lesson that Choice Theory has taught these three participants. This is how the three participants verbalised the challenges that they still experience with applying Choice Theory:

> "I am still challenged by learners who refuse to cooperate and continue to talk even when you speak nicely." (Participant 1)

> "My challenge is still how to manage "challenging" learners." (Participant 1)

> "For me, it is still challenging to control some learners' negative behaviour. They have no interest in their work, and it remains a headache for me." (Participant 2)

> "As a result of the challenge I experience with the behaviour of some learners in this class, I am under pressure and not consistent with this programme." (Participant 2)

> "It is not always easy to stay calm, and then I get into the red car." (Participant 3)

> "I try to be supportive of all my learners. I realise that the application of Choice Theory is a process, and I need to practise it daily." (Participant 3)

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What became clear from the data is that even though the three participants are familiar with and clearly understand Choice Theory and human behaviour, it is not easy to let go of the stimulus-response behaviour they are used to. According to Glasser (2007), the need for power has led all human societies to try to control others with whom they disagree to get them to accept their point of view.

In conclusion, the final quotation from Glasser (2007:5):

> "Since we teach children a great deal by example, if parents and teachers can learn to replace the deadly habits with the caring habits, all their relationships will improve, and they will serve as the models children need."

Interpretation of the data:

1. The averages for sub-theme 1, the understanding of Choice Theory and human behaviour is different for the three participants and range from (29% to 37%)

2. For sub-theme 2, building relationships, the level for participant 2 is lower (21,62%) than for participant 1 (41,67%) and 3 (36,11%).

3. The averages for sub-theme 3, experiencing behavioural challenges, are different for all three grades. The highest level is for participant 2 (50%), participant 1 (36,36%) and participant 3 (13,64%).

Conclusions:

- Participant 1: It is clear from all the data that this participant had the best

relationship with her learners. Although she is new to the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), she has taught these learners for the past three years. She knows every learner and their background.

- Participant 2: Although she is a seasoned educator in the Intermediate Phase, she has the lowest level for building relationships and the highest level for experiencing behavioural challenges.

- Participant 3: The youngest of the three participants is in her second year of teaching. She goes out of her way to connect with her learners and build relationships with them. She also uses her good sense of humour and makes jokes in the classroom.

The following is an Atlas.ti Code-Document Table for theme 1:

Code-Document Table
Chapter 5 Thematic Analysis

	2 Participant 1.pdf 130		3 Participant 2.pdf 101		4 Participant 3.pdf 104		Totals	
RQ1 1 Understanding CT & Human Behaviour 24	8	33,33%	9	37,50%	7	29,17%	24	100 %
RQ1 2 Building relationships with learners 36	15	41,67%	8	22,22%	13	36,11%	36	100 %
RQ1 3 Experiencing behavioural challenges 22	8	36,36%	11	50,00%	3	13,64%	22	100 %
Totals	31	37,80%	28	34,15%	23	28,05%	82	100 %

Visualization | Sankey | Charts

Figure 13: Atlas.ti Code-Document Table for Theme 1

The Code-Document Table gave interesting information about theme one and the three sub-themes.

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5.5.8.2 Theme 2

What can teachers who embrace Choice Theory do to create a warm, supportive classroom that will enable them to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6)?

This sub-theme indicates how Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers who embrace Choice Theory can create a warm, supportive classroom to help learners satisfy their basic needs.

The participants' responses regarding this research sub-question 2 emerged as three sub-themes.

When asked to describe their understanding of and experience with Choice Theory as an internal control psychology, the participants responded:

5.5.8.2.1 Theme 2: Sub-theme 1

"Creating a warm, supportive atmosphere..."

According to Glasser (1997), quality schoolwork can only be achieved in a warm, supportive classroom environment, and he points out that continuing to teach within a stimulus/response mindset destroys the warm and supportive relationships that are an innate need of all students.

Walter (2008) posits that by providing a safe environment where students could satisfy their need for belonging, fun, and power within a group and by giving the students choices regarding tasks, students made behavioural choices that effectively and appropriately satisfied their developmental needs, leading to positive educational outcomes.

All participants in this study believed that maintaining a warm, supportive atmosphere was needed to promote the teaching of reading comprehension. This is how participants responded to the question of how they create a warm, supportive environment for their learners.

"I let my learners work in groups. They get the opportunity to touch the learning aids ("props") when they answer questions." (Participant 1)

"I make children feel at ease by listening and guiding them." (Participant 2)

"I always try to make some jokes and put learners at ease. When they are comfortable, they don't mind making mistakes, helping each other or asking questions." (Participant 3)

Schools have learned to connect by moving from an external control environment that destroys student-teacher-classroom relationships to a choice theory environment that connects teachers, students, and parents (Glasser, 2008).

From the observations, it was evident that participant 1 always tried to create a warm and supportive atmosphere for the learners in the classroom by inviting and encouraging them to participate in group activities. Learners felt welcome and safe in this classroom. What stood out was the creative ways she used to get learners excited and involved in the lessons, thereby creating a warm, supportive atmosphere in the class. Although it was sometimes difficult for participant 2 to create a warm, supportive atmosphere for everyone in the classroom, the teacher kept encouraging them to pay attention. Participant 3 taught with care and compassion and acknowledged the strengths of all learners. She made learning fun and ensured that effective learning took place.

5.5.8.2.2 Theme 2: Sub-theme 2

"Social interaction and engagement in the learning…."

According to Louis (2009), social interaction is paramount to meet Glasser's five basic needs.

Choice Theory gives teachers the skills to provide opportunities for social interactions in which they can teach reading comprehension to their learners. Teaching methods and activities that address learner needs, as articulated in Choice Theory, will increase student engagement.

On the question of how they provided social interaction to get learners engaged, this is how participants responded:

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"They work in pairs and circles. They hear the same facts over and over. I use a lot of animation to grab their attraction. Work for the 4th year with the same learners." (Participant 1)

"I start my lessons by talking about something that interests the learners. Learners participate enthusiastically in the discussions. We also talk about the sport of the previous day. We also watch videos, and the learners really enjoy it." (Participant 2)

"They must help each other and learn from each other. I allow them to sit with their friends only if they promise to do their work. I make sure that the structure of groups is effective, and that learners have fun in their groups. The learners enjoy the shared reading." (Participant 3)

From the observations, it was evident that Participant 1 made sure that the content of the lessons was interesting and that learners could relate to it. Learners engaged with the material and discussed issues as instructed. This teacher also used creative ways like specific learning aids (cowboy hat, magnifying glass, bingo game, germ name cards, and attention grabbers) to engage learners actively in the lessons. Participant 2 sometimes had a challenge: not all learners engaged in the activities. As mentioned earlier, it could be attributed to the fact that for some learners, Afrikaans HL (Home Language) was not their mother-tongue language and that they had their own conversations. In the classroom of participant 3, there was always great energy present, and all learners were involved and participated in the lessons. The learners did group work, and their roles were clearly explained.

5.5.8.2.3 Theme 2: Sub-theme 3

"Satisfying the basic needs of learners..."

Choice Theory asserts that human beings have five basic needs: (1) Survival, (2) Love and Belonging, (3) Power, (4) Freedom, and (5) Fun.

According to Glasser (1999), understanding Choice Theory's five Basic Human Needs enables educators to create a positive classroom environment where

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learners' basic needs can be met and learning can thrive. Nourishing these five basic needs motivates learners to act appropriately and positively in the classroom. Understanding and addressing the **five basic needs** of the learners will facilitate **classroom management** and create a positive classroom culture where learners desire to learn and behave responsibly.

This was the participants' responses to satisfying the different basic needs of their learners:

> "The games we play ensure a feeling of **love and belonging**. Everyone feels they are a part because today one can do something and tomorrow everyone else does it. Greetings at the door. Remembering birthdays and a whole ritual that we follow. Trusting relationships." (Participant 1)

> "Learners give their opinions or likings e.g. advertisements. They share their likings. They have choices and **freedom** for their group work." (Participant 2)

> "I give my learners options to **choose** role responsibility in the Fab Four jigsaw. Learners who finished earlier could start reading." (Participant 3)

> "Learners may eat in class within limits. Learners are allowed to give ideas and we consider them and make plans together. Learners could **choose** how they want to work in their groups. I apply freedom of choice within limits." (Participant 1)

> "I chat and joke a lot with them informally. They always **laugh** and say I'm serious. I just want to work." (Participant 2)

> "My learners are always excited about the "jigsaw" activity and they want to **play** all the roles." (Participant 3)

> "My props make the lesson **fun**, and learners ask me when we will read like this again." (Participant 1)

From the observations, it was clear that the learners enjoyed the extra touches participant 1 incorporated into the lessons. She introduced one of the lessons with a song about insects. This added to the class's excitement and helped engage the

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learners, who stayed interested in the lesson. Learners also had a lot of fun in this classroom. On one occasion, they were allowed to play bingo while reading a story and worked in their groups. General classroom management involved fun attention "grabbers". For all the observations, participant 2 had clear, structured lesson plans. The classroom was well-prepared, and the learning aids were relevant to the lessons.

What was missing in the observed lessons was something of interest that learners could relate to, grab their attention, and get them involved. From the observations, it seemed that these learners did not experience a lot of fun in the classroom. According to Glasser (1999), if the learner's basic needs are not met, this can lead to disinterest, disinvolvement, and inappropriate behaviour.

From all the observations for participant 3, it was evident that she had well-planned lessons and the learning aids and wall displays added to the effectiveness of her lessons. She has a good sense of humour, and her learners experienced this throughout her teaching. The learners enjoyed this, and it helped to bond easier with her. There is a strong connection between her and the learners. The teacher checked in with learners when they arrived in the morning and used learner names intermittently while talking to them.

Structuring a classroom in a way that helps learners meet their basic needs will enable teachers to promote the teaching of reading comprehension.

Code-Document Table
Chapter 5 Thematic Analysis

	2 Participant 1.pdf 130		3 Participant 2.pdf 101		4 Participant 3.pdf 104		Totals	
● ◇ RQ2 1 Warm, supportive atmosphere 16	7	43,75%	2	12,50%	7	43,75%	16	100 %
● ◇ RQ2 2 Social interaction and engagement 14	4	28,57%	6	42,86%	4	28,57%	14	100 %
● ◇ RQ2 3 Satisfying basic needs 28	16	57,14%	5	17,86%	7	25,00%	28	100 %
Totals	27	46,55%	13	22,41%	18	31,03%	58	100 %

Visualization   Sankey | Charts

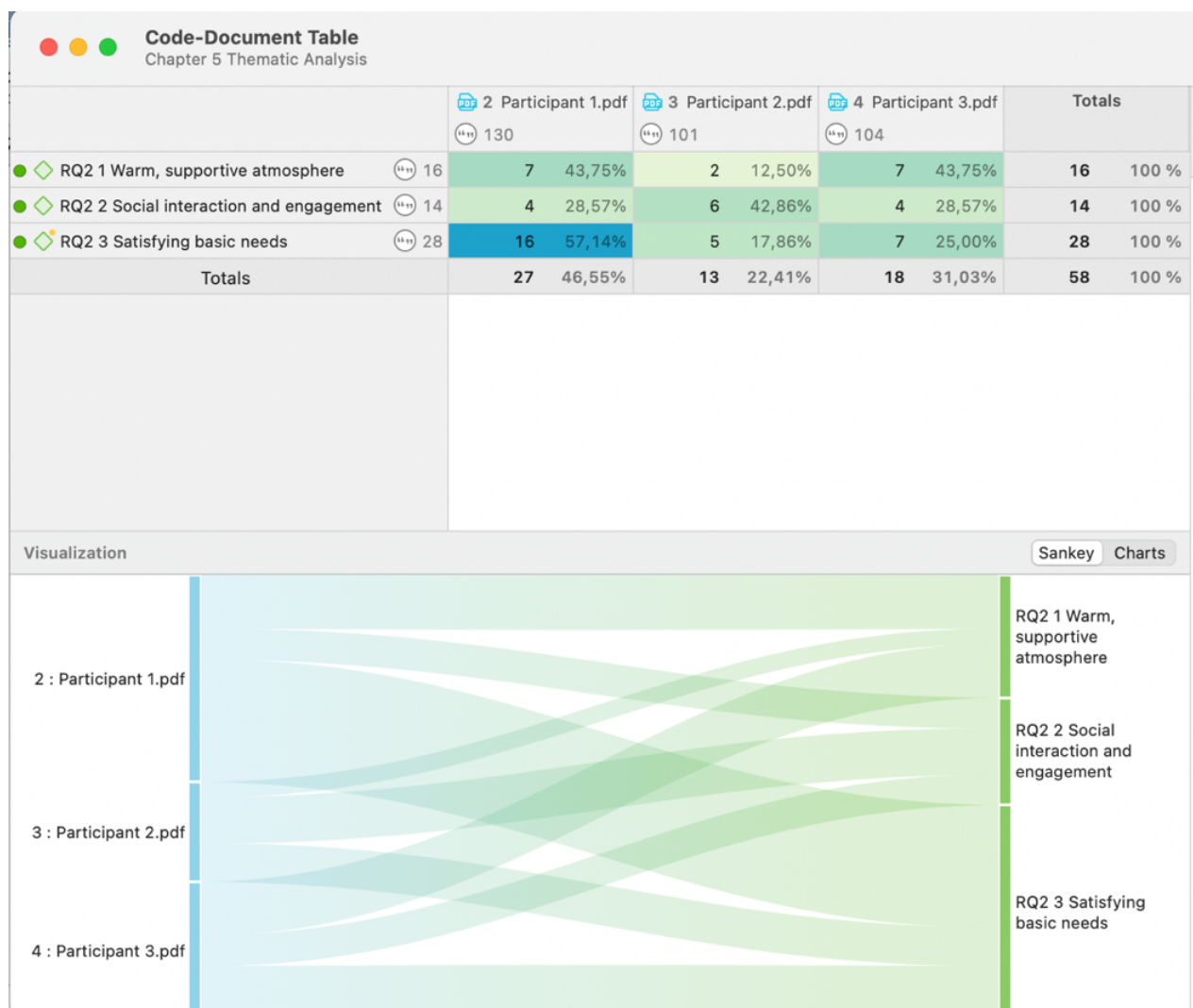Figure 14: Atlas.ti Code-Document Table for Theme 2

5.5.8.3 Theme 3

How can Reciprocal Teaching, with its explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies, change Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) *teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension?*

5.5.8.3.1 Theme 3: Sub-theme 1

The explicit teaching of strategies changing participants' perception of teaching reading comprehension…

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According to De Lange et al. (2020), international studies have shown that the explicit teaching of comprehension strategies is key to improving reading levels among Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners (National Reading Panel 2000). In the South African education system, the guiding CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) document, in itself, has given minimal attention to teaching comprehension.

As mentioned in chapter 3, the CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) document proposes only two reading strategies, rereading and restating, neither of which is mentioned in the text itself. These strategies only appear in the glossary. The advice offered to teachers in the CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) is not helpful at all, and no proper professional development training is taking place to promote the teaching of reading comprehension skills. CAPS does not guide teachers on how to help learners acquire the reading comprehension skills that would enable them to Read to Learn.

Reciprocal teaching aims to improve reading comprehension by equipping learners with reading strategies needed to monitor comprehension and construct meaning. The main focus of this qualitative case study was to explore how the explicit teaching of reciprocal teaching strategies can change Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension as observed in their lesson plans and the use of learning material.

The Reciprocal Teaching training for the Foundation Phase (grades 1 to 3) and the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of the participating school took place in January. Teachers then had a five-week intervention programme of at least twenty-five class sessions (spread over 5 weeks) to teach learners the 4 reading strategies (predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising).

WEEK	STRATEGY	ACTIVITIES - what good readers do…
Week 1	Orientation	Direct explanation of the strategy: telling and showing learners when and how to use the strategy. Explaining they will be introduced to 4 strategies that good readers use to comprehend text.
Week 2	Explicit teaching of Prediction	Good readers predict before reading the text and while reading the text. When you make a prediction, you make a guess as to the content based on clues. As you read, you will either confirm or revise your prediction.
Week 3	Explicit teaching of Clarification	When good readers read a word that doesn't make sense or read a confusing part, they stop and clarify. Explain to learners what clarifying entails.
Week 4	Explicit teaching of Questioning	Good readers ask questions before reading, during reading, and after reading. It helps the reader monitor and understands their reading.
Week 5	Explicit teaching of Summarising	After reading a text, good readers can remember important points and details from what they have read. Knowledge of text and story structure will help learners to develop good summaries. Model for learners how to identify key ideas and how to put the key ideas together to make a summary.

Table 16: Implementation Programme for Reciprocal Teaching

All the classroom observations, interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals started in the second quarter of 2022 after the Reciprocal Teaching training and the above-mentioned implementation programme. On the question of how the explicit teaching of strategies has changed their perception of teaching reading comprehension, it is important to go back to the initial questionnaire to find out how all three participants taught reading comprehension against the CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements) background:

Participant 1 indicated that she was reading aloud to the learners, and after that, the learners had to complete a reading comprehension test. Participant 2 responded that she would normally introduce the reading to the learners, and they would then have to predict what the text is about by studying the title and pictures. According to participant 3, she and her learners would read aloud in groups or individually, and then learners would be asked to complete a comprehension test.

After the professional development training and the implementation period of five

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weeks, this is how the three participants responded to the question of their perceptual change in terms of explicitly teaching reading comprehension:

"Reciprocal Teaching changed my perception of teaching and for the first time, my learners are using a dictionary." (Participant 1)

"I benefited from Reciprocal Teaching when I realised that learners learn and read in different ways. We read using all our senses. Prior knowledge plays a very important role in reading comprehension." (Participant 2)

"The knowledge of Reciprocal Teaching has changed my perception of teaching reading comprehension because I can identify with learners' reading challenges more easily." (Participant 3)

During the observations of the three participants, the explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies was evident in their Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading lessons.

Participant 1 had clear lesson plans for each lesson and grade-appropriate resources on the wall. The desks were arranged to form a circle where the teacher could see all the learners, and they could sit next to each other and see each other. The learners loved this arrangement. Her creativity in terms of teaching aids, like the use of plastic insects on display, a pair of blue-rimmed glasses, a magnifying glass to demonstrate clarifying and a cowboy hat, added to the effectiveness, fun and enjoyment of these lessons. Learners were familiar with their roles in the "jigsaw" activity. Participant 2 had structured lessons which allowed learners to know what to expect. Learners were shifted into different groups at the start of the lesson and issued worksheets to complete an activity. She would usually start her lesson by reading the text aloud and explaining the duties of the different roles (predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser). Clearly, learners knew the different roles, but some were disengaged and did not participate in the "jigsaw" activity. A possible reason could be that this was the only Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) class with learners from a different culture group whose mother tongue was isi-Xhosa. All these learners were in the same group and had difficulty communicating in Afrikaans. Participant 3 had well-planned lessons and appropriate learning aids. She made her

own posters to explain each role (predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser) of reciprocal teaching. Learners were familiar with the four roles, and the wall displays added to the effectiveness of her lessons. She continuously reminded learners of the different roles.

To conclude this sub-theme, it was interesting to note that when participants were asked how well they succeeded in explicitly teaching the learners the reading comprehension strategies, they responded:

> "Learners are getting prediction right. 90% still struggling with understanding of the written word. Summarising is still a struggle. Cannot distinguish between important facts. Visuals helping with Fab Four (4 reciprocal teaching strategies). Example of cowboy – key points for summarising. Concrete and visual." (Participant 1)

> "Most of them do understand the 4 reciprocal teaching strategies. Maybe I have not drilled it in enough? More explicit teaching is needed with this grade 5's." (Participant 2)

> "Learners know and understand all the different Fab Four (4 reciprocal teaching strategies) roles but their absenteeism has an impact on their understanding. Those learners are then behind. I ask learners to take the same role so that they can become familiar with the role." (Participant 3)

Summary

It was clear from the observations and interviews that all three participants could change their perception of teaching reading comprehension. Their initial questionnaire responses about what they did in their Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading lessons bear testimony to their perceptual change.

Their clear lesson plans, the interesting and creative learning aids and the cooperative learning activities using the "jigsaw" activities showed that they were teaching differently. All of them provided scaffolding and ongoing support to the learners still experiencing challenges with understanding the four strategies.

However, not all of them had the same success with Reciprocal Teaching. The different cultural groups in one of the classes made it difficult for one participant to involve and engage all the learners in the lesson. The different levels of their learners' reading, the absenteeism of certain learners and the lack of resources had an impact on the teaching of reading comprehension strategies in the Afrikaans HL (Home Language) Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of the participating school.

5.5.8.4 Theme 4

How can the modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners promote the teaching of reading comprehension and enable learners to construct meaning from text by taking responsibility for their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser?

5.5.8.4.1 Theme 4: Sub-theme 1

"Modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners..."

In this theme, the researcher wanted to explore how the modelling took place in the Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading lessons of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of the participating school.

The researcher started this theme with reference to a definition of Reciprocal Teaching:

Reciprocal teaching (Palincsar and Brown, 1984) is a reading comprehension methodology in which a group of learners is collaboratively applying four reading comprehension strategies (predicting, questioning, clarifying, summarising) to co-construct the meaning of a written text.

In the Reciprocal Teaching process, the teacher started by modelling these four reading comprehension strategies through guided group discussions. Once the learners were comfortable with the process and the strategies, they took turns leading similar discussions in small groups.

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According to Klapwijk (2011), reciprocal teaching is based on the premise that the teacher initially will demonstrate and model the use of the four strategies, but to relinquish control to the learners as soon as possible through the appointment of learners as 'teachers' during the process.

From the observations, it was evident that the three participants had started a process of modelling the four reading strategies for their learners. At the beginning of each reading lesson, participant 1 would explain to learners what is expected of each role in the group for the reading activity. It was clear that most of the learners of participant 2 seemed familiar with their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser. The teacher repeatedly spelt out the roles of each learner at the beginning of each lesson. When learners were asked to read aloud, she structured their feedback and asked them to share the information in their groups. Participant 3 would test learners' prior knowledge by asking about the four reading comprehension strategies. Most of the learners knew the strategies. The teacher would refer learners to the wall display of the different roles and how they would use it for that lesson.

5.5.8.4.2 Theme 4: Sub-theme 2:

"Gradual shift of responsibility…"

Reciprocal teaching is based on a gradual shift of responsibility from the teacher to the learners, which should take place over several sessions (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). In other terms, the teacher scaffolds learners' meaning-construction process and can only gradually reduce the level of scaffolding.

Reciprocal Teaching assumes a gradual shift of responsibility for the learning process from teacher to student, which includes the teacher explicitly modelling the use of reading strategies (Rosenhine & Meister, 1994). As the learners became more confident with Reciprocal Teaching, the support of the teacher was gradually withdrawn until the leadership of the group had been taken over completely by the learners.

By the time the classroom observations took place, it was clear that the gradual shift of the responsibility from the teacher to the learners had taken place. In each of the observed lessons, most learners could take up their different roles in the group activity. Those who could not remember their roles were reminded by all three participants.

In her reading lessons, participant 1 shifted the responsibility for the learning to the learners. The leader in each group would start the reading and have to stop reading at regular intervals. Then the predictor had to predict what would happen next. The questioner had to ask a question, and each group had to clarify at least two words from the text. Each clarifier received a dictionary to help with the clarification. The summariser needed to tell what happened in the beginning, the middle and end of the story in his/her own words. Learners enjoyed group work, and all of them were engaged. The teacher became the facilitator and moved around in the classroom to attend to all groups and offer assistance where it was needed. Participant 2 would start by reading the text aloud and then stop to explain the duties of the four different roles in the group. The learners were then divided into five equal groups and allocated the roles of predictor, questioner, clarifier, summariser and leader. From the observations, it was evident that before any group work started, participant 3 would revise and clarify the roles of predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser so that each learner knew what to do. By letting the learners fulfil their "Jigsaw" roles in the cooperative learning activities, collaboration took place, and a deeper understanding of the text was created. It was interesting to see how the learners acted out their roles.

5.5.8.4.3 Theme 4: Sub-theme 3

"Cooperative learning and social interaction…"

Thornhill (2014) states that in a social constructivist paradigm, the learners must take on the responsibility for his or her own learning with the guidance of the teacher or other more knowledgeable peers. Deborah (2020) posits that constructivist

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classrooms are generally more informal to promote a close working relationship between teachers and students.

An understanding of Choice Theory allowed educators to create a warm, supportive environment where cooperative learning can occur through social interaction.

According to Tseng and Yeh (2017), Reciprocal Teaching is grounded in social constructivism, which claims that learning takes place through human interactions. From this perspective, reading should be a collaborative activity in which readers construct the meaning of texts through conversations with others.

During the observations, participant 1 would give clear instructions to the learners regarding the cooperative learning activity. Each learner would get a specific role in the group, e.g. the predictor, the questioner, the clarifier, the summariser and the leader who facilitated the process. She would explain what is expected of each role in the group.

One of the questions from the Reciprocal Teaching interview asked participants what they did to ensure social interaction among their learners. They responded as follows:

> "By dividing the tasks between them and having them work in groups. I do group work and make sure that all learners understand the instructions." (Participant 1)

> "Social interaction is taking place but not all learners participate in lessons. Not enough learning is taking place." (Participant 2)

> "They must help each other, and learn from each other. I allow them to sit with their friends only if they promise to do their work. The structure of groups is effective and learners have fun in their group." (Participant 3)

From the observations, it was clear that participant 1 allowed learners to fulfil their roles, they collaborated, and a deeper understanding of the text was created by learning from each other. In all these lessons, she involved the learners in cooperative learning activities, and they learned from each other through the social interaction that took place. Participant 2 would do it differently. She would start her

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Afrikaans HL (Home Language) lessons by reading the first paragraph of the text and then stop to clarify certain words learners did not understand. The "Jigsaw" groups with a predictor, clarifier, questioner and summariser in each group had to work through the rest of the text. During the observations, it was evident that cooperative learning through social interaction was a regular phenomenon in the classroom of participant 3. Learner involvement was established during the Afrikaans HL (Home Language) lessons by providing each learner with a laminated card with one of the four strategy roles of predictor, clarifier, questioner and summariser on it. The leader of each group had to read the story, and each learner played the role assigned to them. The learners were familiar with their roles and fully engaged in the lessons. They enjoyed the social interaction and had fun, creating a deeper understanding of the text.

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of three individual Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) participants and how the utilisation of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching can promote the teaching of reading comprehension in Afrikaans HL (Home Language). The data gained from observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and reflective journals provided insight into their lived experiences and perceptions.

The main themes and sub-themes that emerged from the collected data in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) were described. A cross-case analysis was performed by examining the data from each participant and comparing it to the data of the other participants to determine common themes that could be linked to the sub-themes.

All the results suggested that the three participants had good knowledge and understanding of Choice Theory, and for one of them, it was a life-changing experience. They all agreed that the Choice Theory's caring habits enabled them to build good relationships with their learners. They developed an understanding to listen, support, encourage, trust and respect their learners more. Despite some learners who challenged their authority, they were all able to build a warm,

supportive environment for teaching and learning to take place. All three participants also agreed that they still have challenges with learners who misbehave, and then they step into the typical external control behaviour.

In terms of Reciprocal Teaching, it was evident from two of the participants that it helped them to change their perception of teaching reading comprehension. The third participant stated that she benefited from Reciprocal Teaching when she saw that learners learn and read in different ways. All the classroom observations suggested that the three participants have succeeded in explicitly teaching the reading comprehension strategies to their learners. It was clear from the data gathered from the observations that the learners knew the four reciprocal teaching strategies and could easily step into their roles as predictor, clarifier, questioner and summariser. From the observations, it was clear that the teachers became facilitators by moving around in the classroom, attending to all groups and offering assistance where it was needed.

In Chapter 6, the researcher discussed the findings, implications, limitations, recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

6.1 Introduction

This qualitative, explanatory single-case study investigated how Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching can be utilised to promote the teaching of Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6). The researcher's interest in this study was sparked by the fact that the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners in South Africa struggle with reading comprehension (cf. chapter 3.1).

Maharajh, Nkosi and Mkhize (2016:380) suggest in their findings that, in theory, CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) is a viable policy, but the implementation is erroneous. The CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) is fallible because of a lack of favourable conditions, including resources, suitably qualified and experienced teachers, and support from the DoE (Department of Education).

This chapter will conclude the study by summarising the key research findings related to the research questions and discussing their value and contribution thereof. It will also address the study's limitations and propose recommendations for future research.

6.2 Summary of the chapters

Chapter 1 provided the introduction to the study and the motivation for the study. The researcher was interested in exploring how the utilisation of Choice Theory integrated with the use of specific Reciprocal Teaching strategies could promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6). This was followed by the aim of the research, the research question, and sub-questions. Also provided was an outline of the research methodology, paradigm, design, data collection techniques, data analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter 2 provided and discussed a theoretical framework for situating this research study's results in the education field. Choice Theory (CT) and Reciprocal Teaching (RT) underpinned the theoretical framework of this study, and both related to Vygotsky's Social Constructivism which viewed learning as a social process where learners engage in cooperative learning activities for meaningful learning. Choice Theory could provide teachers with knowledge and understanding of how to create a warm, supportive atmosphere in the classroom and improve their social interaction with the learners. On the other hand, Reciprocal Teaching is a process in which learners interact with others to construct meaning from text.

Chapter 3 presented a literature review on reading comprehension, Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. The first section focused on reading comprehension, researchers' definitions, and the state of reading comprehension in South Africa. The second section focused on Choice Theory, an internal control psychology that explains human behaviour. The third section examined Reciprocal Teaching (RT), defining it and explained the foundations, purpose, process, four strategies, and the use of Reciprocal Teaching in Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading lessons.

Chapter 4 restated the purpose of the research and the research questions and explained the research paradigm and the research design, as well as all the instruments and techniques that were used for data collection: observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals.

Chapter 5 presented the empirical data from the observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals offered to answer the main research question and sub-questions. The researcher drew on concepts of Social Constructivism to frame the data analysis.

6.3 Findings measured against the research questions

Data from the initial questionnaire, observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and participants' reflective journals were analysed and used to discuss the findings.

This study focused on the following main research question:

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"How can Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching be utilised to promote the teaching of Afrikaans HL (Home Language) reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6)?"

The study included three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) Afrikaans HL (Home Language) teachers from one rural primary school. All the data collected from the lesson observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals were organised and analysed using Atlas.ti, a CAQDAS (Computer-assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) programme. Chapter 5 reported the data coded based on themes and sub-themes and during the data analysis, four themes and ten sub-themes related to the research questions emerged.

The findings of this study were discussed based on the research sub-questions:

6.3.1 Findings with regard to sub-question 1 of the study

To what extent can an understanding of Choice Theory as an internal control psychology of human behaviour assist teachers to enhance their teaching of reading comprehension?

Based on the research results of the initial questionnaire, it was evident that only one of the three participants had previously heard about Choice Theory. After the professional development training in Choice Theory, it may be inferred that all the participants gained in-depth knowledge and understanding of the components of Choice Theory. During the interviews and focus group discussions, they shared how they realised that they choose everything they do and that the only person's behaviour they can control is their own (cf. Chapter 5.6.1.1.1). This finding supported what was already shown in the literature review regarding Choice Theory as an internal control psychology. Lečei and Vodopivec (2014) posit that as educators get to know Glasser's Choice Theory, there is a shift from an external control mentality to an internal control mentality (cf. chapter 3.2).

Based on the observations and individual interviews, it may be inferred that the caring habits of Choice Theory introduced to the participants during their training enabled the three participants to build good relationships with their learners. It also helped them develop an understanding of listening to, supporting, and encouraging their learners. Ellis (2018) states that teachers who have replaced external control strategies with the seven caring habits: *Supporting, Encouraging, Listening, Accepting, Trusting, Respecting,* and *Negotiating Differ*ences have experienced more significant connections with students and found them to be more productive students (cf. Chapter 3.2.1).

The data showed that teachers who embrace both Vygotsky's Social Constructivism and Glasser's Choice Theory could build positive relationships with learners and create classrooms conducive to effective learning. This offered a theoretical foundation for effectively teaching reading comprehension strategies in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6).

Based on the individual interviews and focus group discussions, it might be inferred that all three participants accepted that the most challenging lesson they learned from Choice Theory is that the only person's behaviour they can control is their own. The participants agreed that they still have challenges with some learners who misbehave. When this happened, the participants' "scales are tipping" (Choice Theory term), and they reverted to their old state of being and choose external control behaviour, even when they knew it was not very effective. Training in Choice Theory could help teachers to change their stimulus-response behaviour, but in this regard, the researcher agrees with Hardigree (2011), who posits that to get a realistic measure of the Choice Theory's effectiveness, it needs to be a part of the learning environment at least for an entire school year (cf. Chapter 3.2.2).

6.3.2 Findings with regard to sub-question 2

What can teachers who embrace Choice Theory do to create a warm, supportive classroom that will enable them to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6)*?*

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From the literature review, according to Glasser (1997), continuing to teach within a stimulus/response mindset destroys the warm and supportive relationships that are an innate need of all students (cf. Chapter 3.2.2). Since relationships are essential for learning, Choice Theory offers a framework for building caring, supportive teacher-learner relationships.

Based on the observations, it might be inferred that the three participants created a warm and supportive atmosphere for the learners in the classroom by inviting and encouraging them to participate in group activities and making learning fun (cf. Chapter 5.6.1.2.1).

Louis (2009) states that understanding Glasser's Choice Theory provides teachers with the tools necessary to introduce and improve social interactions (cf. Chapter 2.3). According to Choice Theory, people engage in social relationships to meet their five basic needs: 1. Love and belonging, 2. Power, 3. Fun, 4. Freedom, and 5. Survival. According to Glasser (1999), understanding Choice Theory's five Basic Human Needs enables educators to create a positive classroom environment where learners' basic needs can be met and learning can thrive (cf. 5.6.1.2.3).

Based on the observations, it might be inferred that the three participants' understanding of Choice Theory enabled them to become aware of the basic needs of their learners. They realised that structuring a classroom to meet their learners' basic needs enabled them to promote the teaching of reading comprehension.

6.3.3 Findings with regard to sub-question 3

How can Reciprocal Teaching, with its explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies, change Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) *teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension?*

Based on the data gathered from the initial questionnaire, the responses to the question about the participants' familiarity with Reciprocal Teaching were different for the three participants. Participant 1 had heard about Brown and Palincsar's Reciprocal Teaching (1984) but admitted that she knew very little about it. She did

not know the four reading comprehension strategies of predicting, clarifying, questioning, and summarising. Participant 2 was familiar with it and knew the four strategies. Participant 3 had never heard about Brown and Palincsar's Reciprocal Teaching before but indicated that she is familiar with the four reading comprehension strategies because of her CAPS background.

According to Brown and Palincsar (1984), Reciprocal Teaching can be defined as an evidence-based instructional strategy for explicitly teaching metacognitive skills to help struggling readers improve their reading comprehension (cf. Chapter 3.3.1).

Reciprocal Teaching is best known for explicitly teaching four reading comprehension strategies (predicting, questioning, clarifying, summarising) that will empower and enable learners to Read to Learn. None of these four strategies is novel to Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers in South Africa because the CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) refers to them. However, what is unknown to teachers is how to explicitly teach these reading comprehension strategies to learners. Olifant et al. (2020) concluded in their study that teachers' approach to reading comprehension instruction reveals their lack of knowledge of how to incorporate reading strategies in teaching reading (cf. chapter 3.1.3).

Based on the research results of the initial questionnaire, the teachers adopted different teaching approaches, based on their understanding of the CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) document. According to De Lange, Winberg, and Dippenaar (2020), the CAPS document, 'Introducing Home Language in the Intermediate Phase', mentions teaching comprehension only twice, once related to requirements and once as a guideline. For two participants, the teaching of reading consisted of reading aloud of the text, and then learners would do a comprehension test. Another introduced the text to learners, and then learners had to do predictions by studying the title and pictures.

The CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) explains that the teacher may use various reading comprehension strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising to develop learners' understanding of the text. However, there is a lack of explanation to teachers on how these reading comprehension

strategies work or that they should explicitly teach and model it to their learners (cf. chapter 3.1.6).

After the professional development training and implementation of Reciprocal Teaching in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), all three participants changed their perception of explicitly teaching reading comprehension (cf. chapter 5.6.1.3.1). Their responses in the initial questionnaire bear testimony to the perceptual change in terms of explicitly teaching reading comprehension strategies to their learners. One of them used her creativity to make her reading lessons more interesting and fun for the learners by using a cowboy hat, magnifying glass, bingo game, germ name cards, and other attention grabbers. Another participant used humour and posters to engage the learners.

However, the different cultural groups in one of the classes made it difficult for one participant to involve and engage all the learners in the reading lessons. A small group of learners in one class whose mother tongue was isiXhosa had problems understanding the Afrikaans HL (Home Language) text. This will later be discussed later under Additional Findings.

6.3.4 Findings with regard to sub-question 4

How can the modelling of Reciprocal Teaching strategies by teachers to learners promote the teaching of reading comprehension to enable learners to construct meaning from text by taking responsibility for their roles as predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser?

Since Reciprocal Teaching is underpinned by collaboration and cooperative learning, the teacher must model the necessary reading comprehension skills for successful collaboration to take place.

According to Oczkus (2010), Reciprocal Teaching is a cooperative learning strategy that requires collaboration and group thinking while emphasis is placed on students providing instructional support for each other. An outcome of reciprocal teaching is a sense of community where students feel cared about and valued.

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Social Constructivism provided the framework for the collaboration and cooperative learning needed for Reciprocal Teaching. According to Bruner (1996), social interaction is of great importance in Social Constructivism, and interaction between individuals creates a culture that is conducive to learning (cf. chapter 2.2).

Yoosabai (2009) states that the second concept that forms the theoretical ground of Reciprocal Teaching is called proleptic teaching. The important feature of proleptic teaching is the transfer of responsibility from teacher to student. The teacher explains and models the problem-solving process and, while decreasing their role, transfers the responsibility of solving problems to the students (Rogoff & Garner, 1984).

The observations showed that proleptic teaching was successfully implemented in all the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) classes. Once the cooperative learning groups were put together and started working on their own, the learners interacted to complete the task of comprehending by using the four Reciprocal Teaching strategies. The role of the teachers became that of facilitators, and the responsibility of learning was passed from the teacher to the group members. All three participants demonstrated this role eloquently when they moved from group to group to ensure every learner was involved, and they clarified words or concepts that learners did not know or understand (cf. chapter 5.6.1.4.2).

Based on the observations, it may be inferred that the three participants had started a process of modelling and demonstrating the four reading strategies for their learners. It was clear that a gradual shift of responsibility from the teacher to the learners had occurred. Learners were familiar with their roles for the cooperative learning activities where each group had a leader, predictor, questioner, clarifier and summariser. The three participants became facilitators in the cooperative learning process.

In the literature review of this study, there was a reference to the "foundations" or principles of Reciprocal Teaching, namely scaffolding, thinking alouds, metacognition and cooperative learning (cf. chapter 3.3.3). Although the scaffolding and cooperative learning were evident in the observations, with the teachers moving from

group to group to assist, very few think-alouds and metacognition were noted during the observations. This could be due to the over-emphasis on cooperative learning activities.

6.4 Additional Findings

Although not part of the initial research questions, the researcher, through his investigation, derived the following additional findings from the literature reviews, observations, interviews and focus group discussions. In their quest to teach reading comprehension strategies explicitly, teachers should take cognisance of the following specific findings:

1. According to Choice Theory, all humans have five basic genetic needs: one physiological need: survival, and four psychological needs: (love and) belonging, power, freedom, and fun (cf. chapter 2.3.1.1). Naughton (2019) states that in Choice Theory, the survival need is the most essential need of the five basic needs. If a learner's need for shelter, food, protection and nurturing is not being met, the learner will not function well in a learning environment. Given the socio-economic environment where most of these learners are coming (cf. Chapter 5.4) from, teachers need to take cognisance of this fact. The participating school made provisions for feeding their needy learners. The school has a feeding scheme which is catering for a considerable number of learners (68% of Grade 4, 72% of Grade 5 and 54% of Grade 6). This is how the Department of Education and schools are helping to satisfy the most essential basic need of many learners.

2. From the observations and interviews, it was evident that in one of the classes, a small group of isiXhosa-speaking learners had problems understanding the Afrikaans HL (Home Language) lessons. When the teacher put the learners in groups for the cooperative activity, they were unfortunately put in the same group. The whole group withdrew from the activity and had their own conversations.

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3. The years of teaching experience of the three participants in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) differed. One participant had 20 years of experience, another 1 year, and another had no experience. Due to changes in the staff establishment, this participant joined the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) group in the second quarter of 2022. Previously this participant had been teaching in the Foundation Phase (grades 1 to 3) for 16 years, and she had no knowledge of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6). However, what counted in her favour was that she has worked with those learners since grade 1. She had a positive relationship with each one of them. Her willingness to learn everything about the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) made a huge impact.

4. When the research in this school started, one participant indicated that the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) met once a month, but according to the other two participants, they never met (cf. Chapter 5.5.4.1). This was not very helpful for collaboration and teamwork in the phase, especially when the new teacher joined the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6).

5. The results of the classroom observations indicated that the majority of the participants implemented the Reciprocal Teaching strategies gained during the professional development sessions. Although direct instruction, scaffolding, and cooperative learning activities were the most prevalent, two other aspects that formed part of the foundation or principles for Reciprocal Teaching (cf. Chapter 3.3.3), namely think-aloud (cf. Chapter 3.3.6) and metacognition (cf. Chapter 3.3.7), were not observed in any of the lessons.

6.5 Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this study will have educational implications not only for how teachers perceive reading comprehension but also how they teach it.

It is clear that education in South Africa is still basically authoritarian, where many teachers coerce learners to get what they, as teachers, want (cf. chapter 3.2). This external control stifles the love for learning and, if it is continued, destroys the warm

and supportive relationships needed in the classroom (cf. chapter 3.2). Coercive practices at the school could lead to resistance, frustration, and disconnected relationships. An awareness and understanding of Choice Theory as an internal psychology of human behaviour could offer teachers a framework for understanding their own and their learners' behaviour. The participants in this study have learned that the only person's behaviour they can control is their own. They cannot control other people's behaviour.

During the interviews and focus group discussions, participants shared how they realised that they choose everything they do and that the only person's behaviour they can control is their own (cf. chapter 5.6.1.1.1). Knowing and understanding Choice Theory could enable teachers to shift their behaviour from an external control mentality to an internal control mentality. This means they start focusing on the freedom of choice between the stimulus and response to make more effective behavioural choices.

Helping educators focus on Choice Theory's connecting habits (accepting, encouraging, listening, supporting, trusting, respecting and negotiating differences) could create a warm, supportive classroom atmosphere. Teachers who apply the connecting habits would make learners feel welcome by greeting them by name when they enter the classroom, asking about their interests and concerns, and involving learners in cooperative learning activities. The implications of this research have shown that positive, supportive relationships between teachers and learners are crucial for learners to feel safe, respected, enjoy school and produce quality work.

Knowing and understanding Choice Theory could enable teachers to shift their behaviour from an external control mentality to an internal control mentality. This means they start focusing on the freedom of choice between the stimulus and response to make more effective behavioural choices. What became clear from the data is that even though the three participants are familiar with and clearly understood Choice Theory and human behaviour, it was not easy to let go of the

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stimulus-response behaviour they were used to. A realistic measure of Choice Theory's effectiveness

takes time, effort and patience.

According to Glasser (1998), a core theoretical tenet of Choice Theory is the concept of five basic needs (cf. Chapter 2.3.1.1). The classroom should have a warm, supportive atmosphere where the basic needs of learners can be satisfied. The participating school satisfied the neediest learners' physiological survival need with the feeding scheme. Participants have learned that they could help satisfy their learners' psychological need for power, freedom, love and belonging and fun by introducing cooperative learning activities with interesting, exciting, creative learning aids and humour and giving learners choices in terms of roles in their groups. By embracing and adopting Choice Theory, schools can create environments where teachers and learners work together to learn and develop.

The different cultural groups with a few isiXhosa-speaking learners in one of the Afrikaans Home Language classes made it difficult for one participant to involve and engage all the learners in the reading lessons. This affected classroom management because those learners who did not participate in the lessons, were disengaged, and eventually disrupted the class. The teacher did little to restore order and just continued with the lesson. According to Hooijer and Fourie (2009), Afrikaans-medium school educators have not been adequately trained to teach Xhosa mother-tongue speakers. Basson (2013) states that educators in Afrikaans-medium schools who teach Xhosa mother-tongue speakers have expressed a need for training and resources to enable them to provide more effective teaching.

The fact that the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers initially did not meet regularly impacted on what they do and were taught in the whole phase. Since the start of the research, this group had regular focus group discussion meetings every fortnight with the researcher. These discussions affected the group positively, and the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) participants decided to meet as an Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) group every alternative fortnight to share best

practices and challenges. This was the start of forming a Professional Learning Community for their Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) group.

Although the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) participants started to meet regularly, what is recommended is to consider peer group classroom visits. The purpose of the peer classroom visits could be to provide a mutually-supportive opportunity for self-reflection and sharing of good practices. Observing each other and discussing teaching informally will allow participants to reflect upon, enhance, and celebrate their teaching.

Mather (2012:99) states that it would not be possible for an educator to develop their learners' reading comprehension skills if they were not adequately trained (cf. chapter 3.1.7). According to Klapwijk (2012), research indicates that while ample attention is devoted to the professional development of teachers for teaching reading, little if any, attention is devoted to the professional development of comprehension instruction and teachers, as well as coaching literature, continues to focus on general reading instruction. More focused professional development and training are needed in South Africa to address the misconception of reading comprehension as just reading aloud and reading comprehension testing.

6.6 Contributions of this study

This study started with the problem statement that we have a reading comprehension crisis in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of South African primary schools. The poor performance of South African learners in the last PIRLS (2016) studies bears testimony to this and can be attributed to the fact that our focus has been mainly on the learners, while not research has been done on improving teachers' skill sets to improve their teaching of reading comprehension. This study is a real attempt to shift the focus from the learners to the teachers who have not been trained to teach Reciprocal Teaching reading comprehension strategies explicitly.

This study highlighted that Choice Theory in education provides an intrinsic model of teaching that could be utilised to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6). The Choice Theory training offered

participants an explanation and insight into their own and the learners' behaviour and what motivates behaviour. Knowing the components of Choice Theory helped them change their previous beliefs based on stimulus-response behaviour, and they realised they could only control their own behaviour. By helping the participants improve their knowledge and understanding of Choice Theory, this study could positively empower all Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners who encounter these teachers.

This study tried to make participants aware of the importance of having positive, supportive relationships with their learners and that Choice Theory offered them the knowledge of how to build these relationships. One way to create an environment of mutual support and trust in the classroom is to have opportunities for social interaction and conversations among learners and teachers (cf. Chapter 2.3)

This study proposes Choice Theory as a theoretical foundation on which Reciprocal Teaching can be built to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) in schools.

The study aimed to empower teachers to change their perception of teaching reading comprehension and provided them with the necessary knowledge and skills. It was an attempt to bridge the gap between policy and practice in the CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement) document and to promote a shift from the WHAT teachers must do regarding reading comprehension to the HOW they should do it. From all the data, it was clear that participants managed to change their teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6).

This study highlighted how explicit teaching of the four Reciprocal Teaching strategies could strengthen the reading comprehension of Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners. This research could be linked to one of the recommendations in the report on the South African PIRLS Literacy (2016) study by Howie et al. (2018:174):

> "Emphasise the importance of higher-level order reading comprehension skills and train teachers to implement these effectively. "

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The education department should consider offering specific in-service professional development training in developing reading comprehension skills.

This study has highlighted the value of forming a PLC (Professional Learning Community) within the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), where teachers started to meet regularly and shared best practices and challenges. A key aspect of making the above-mentioned reading comprehension training sustainable is to develop Professional Learning Communities within circuits, districts and provinces. According to Feldman (2020), learning in PLCs is collaborative and social and invites participants to engage with one another concerning how the social, cultural, and physical structures in schools work towards stability and change in teachers' educational practices.

6.7 Limitations

This was a qualitative single-case study that involved three participants utilising Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in Afrikaans HL (Home Language) of the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6).

Although the study supplied rich data and provided valuable insight into teaching reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), it was confined to one rural school involving only three participants. The school had its own unique context, which made it different from any other school in the district or province, and therefore the findings of this study might not be generalisable (cf. Chapter 5.4). Since the aim of this qualitative research was the depth and richness of the single-case study, there is no claim to generalizability. Research over a wider demographic area may enhance the findings of this study and enable greater generalizability.

Another limitation of this study was the changes in the staffing of the participating school's Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6). Due to the new staff establishment at the end of March 2022, changes were made, and the Grade 3 teacher from the Foundation Phase (Grades 1 to 3) moved to Grade 4 (Intermediate Phase). At that

stage, she had no training in Choice Theory and had to wait until June 2022 to do the training.

Researcher bias could be seen as a limitation in this study. As a registered faculty instructor of William Glasser International (WGI), the researcher provided the Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and Lead Management training and the Reciprocal Teaching training to the participants. This could be interpreted as manifesting the researcher's bias. Therefore, triangulation (cf. chapter 4.9) was considered a qualitative research strategy to test validity through converging information from three investigator triangulators. Different sources of data collection, such as observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions and reflective journals of participants, were also used for this study. This type of triangulation helped confirm findings, and the different perspectives helped to control or correct the subjective bias of the individual.

A limitation of this study was the non-involvement of departmental officials from the Western Cape Education Department. The researcher has made several attempts to involve the Learner Support Advisor or Curriculum Advisor for Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) as investigator triangulators to do the observations and interviews but was not successful. As a replacement, the researcher used a Curriculum Manager from a private school group who provided an unbiased view.

A limitation regarding Choice Theory was the scarcity of research providing evidence of the efficacy of Choice Theory implementation in classrooms (cf. Chapter 3.2.2). The researcher's own literature search of Choice Theory in South African education revealed only one doctoral study (Bechuke, 2015) on applying Choice Theory in managing and influencing challenging learner behaviour.

A limitation regarding Reciprocal Teaching in the context of the South African educational sphere is the lack of proper professional development training. A study done by Basson (2016) found that 92% of participants started teaching comprehension strategies explicitly after the conclusion of a professional development programme. Currently, CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy

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Standards) is informing Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers what they should do but not always showing them how to do it.

Another limitation regarding Reciprocal Teaching was the small group of learners in one of the Afrikaans HL (Home Language) classes whose mother tongue was isiXhosa. According to Basson and Le Cordeur (2014), the results of the Annual National Assessments (ANAs) (DoBE 2011a) indicate that an increasing number of Xhosa learners in Afrikaans-medium classes are not able to reach their full potential because they have little or no knowledge of Afrikaans.

6.8 Recommendations for future research

As South African Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers struggle to raise their pupils' literacy levels, it is envisaged that this study may make a modest contribution in this regard.

Compared to other countries, only a limited number of South African teachers have been trained in Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and Lead Management. Choice Theory could be included in the professional development training of South African educators and other officials from the education department. If the basic intensive training in Choice Theory is not affordable for South African teachers, maybe a "Take Charge of Your Life" one-day workshop might help to introduce teachers to the components of the theory. A book study of Glasser's work or self-guided learning about Choice Theory is all methods that could be considered and that school leaders and teachers could employ to gain knowledge of Choice Theory.

Specific professional development training should be designed to focus exclusively on the explicit teaching of Reciprocal Teaching reading comprehension strategies. The learning outcomes for such training should be:

- Changing teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension;

- Training teachers to explicitly teach the Reciprocal Teaching reading comprehension strategies;

- Showing teachers how to focus on social interaction in the classroom by being creative, using humour and making lessons fun and exciting so that learners will want to get involved;

- Applying proleptic teaching so that there is a gradual shift of responsibility from teachers to learners;

- Finding ways to get all learners involved, especially those from different language groups.

As this study investigated the experiences of only three Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) teachers from one primary school, future research is needed that will examine increased sample sizes, a range of demographics, and other locations. Research over a wider demographic area may enhance the findings of this study and enable greater generalizability.

The findings from this research could provide future researchers with a foundation for continuing research focusing on the impact of explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies on these Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) learners after 2 or 3 years of exposure. This research would provide data on the effectiveness of the explicit teaching of the four reading comprehension strategies. Evidence of this study could play an important role in strategies teachers use to teach comprehension.

6.9 Conclusions

The motivation for this study stems from the PIRLS (2016) findings identifying a dire need to restructure the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) of South Africa. This study aimed to investigate how the utilisation of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching could promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6). Therefore, shifting the focus to explicitly teaching reading comprehension strategies became paramount for this research. The findings of the study first propose that Choice Theory as an internal psychology becomes the foundation for restructuring the teaching of reading comprehension. Secondly, Reciprocal Teaching, an evidence-

based reading comprehension strategy, is the building block for a fundamental change in reading comprehension.
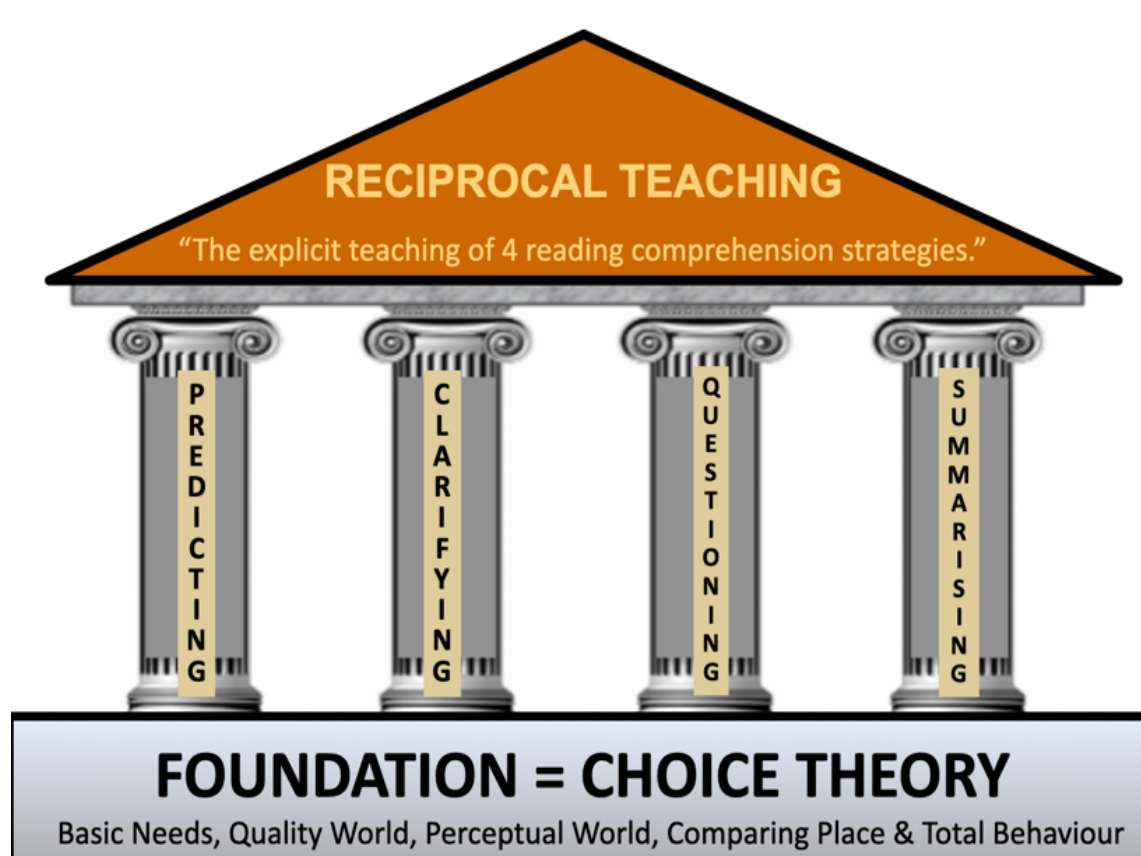
Figure 15: Visual presentation of this study

The findings of this study confirmed that explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies would enable South African learners to move from Learn to Read (Foundation Phase) to Read to Learn (Intermediate Phase).

Finally, the data that emerged from this study confirmed that when teachers provide a warm, supportive environment to learners, the learners not only enjoy the social interaction with the teacher and other learners but gradually take responsibility for their own learning. The implications of this research have proven that positive relationships within the school system are crucial for learners to feel safe, truly enjoy school and produce quality work.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Reciprocal Teaching: Teacher Interview Questions

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR READING COMPREHENSION INTERVIEW

Teacher: _____   Date: _____2022

Class / Grade	
Time of interview	
Interviewer	

Interview question and response	Response	Coding
1. What was the goal of your lesson? What did you want your learners to learn today?		
2. How did you create a warm, supportive environment for learning to take place?		
3. How well did you succeed in explicitly teaching the learners reading comprehension skills?		
4. Which of the four reading comprehension skills did you want your learners to use in this lesson?		
5. Reflecting on your learners' use of the reading strategies what can you say about their understanding of the four strategies?		
6. What did you do to ensure that there is social interaction among learners and that all of them participate in the lesson?		
7. How would you rate your classroom and discipline management for this lesson? How did you respond to disruptions of your lesson?		
8. What did you experience as positive during the lesson?		
9. What did you experience as a challenge during this lesson?		
10. What would you do differently next time?		

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Appendix B: Choice Theory: Teacher Interview Questions

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR CHOICE THEORY INTERVIEW

Teacher: _____   Date: _____2022

Class / Grade	
Time of interview	
Interviewer	

Interview question and response	Response	Coding
1. What was the goal of your lesson? What did you want your learners to learn today?		
2. How did you create a warm, supportive environment for learning to take place?		
3. What did you do to ensure that there is social interaction among learners and that all of them participate in the lesson?		
4. How did you ensure that learners feel connected and experience a sense of love and belonging?		
5. How did you allow learners to have freedom and make choices in your lesson?		
6. How would you rate your classroom and discipline management and what did you do to prevent disruptions?		
7. Were you challenged by some of your learners during the lesson? How did you manage the situation?		
8. How did you support and encourage struggling learners during the lesson?		
9. How did you negotiate any differences you had with your learners?		
10. How would you rate your modelling of Choice Theory during this lesson?		

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Appendix C: Reflective Journal of Teachers

WEEKLY REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

Name:	Grade:	WEEK: _____ until _____ _____2022
1. What I enjoyed most at school this week…		
2. Self-evaluation: How effective was my preparation, planning and teaching?		
3. Reciprocal Teaching Reading strategies I concentrated on the most this week…		
4. What I did to "connect" with my learners and make them feel welcome and safe…		
5. What I learned this week…		
6. What remains a challenge for me, is…		
7. What can be done to address this problem…		
8. What help do I still need…		
• Researcher / Observer _____ • WCED / School _____ • Colleagues _____		

Appendix D: Application Letter to WCED

M3
QUALITY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT CONSULTANCY (CC)

Mitchell Messina
P.O. Box 2968
PAARL
7620

Reference number: 2001/038310/23

The Head of Education
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN 8000

Dear Sir / Madam

PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH IN A W.C.E.D. SCHOOL

My email of 26 October 2020 refers. I would like to inform you about a few changes.

I have now registered as a Ph.D. degree in Education: Curriculum Studies. Professor Michael le Cordeur will be my promoter. I will start my doctoral studies in March 2021 at the University of Stellenbosch.

The approved title of my dissertation is: *Utilizing Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote Reading Comprehension in the Intermediate Phase.*

What is Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching? **Choice Theory** developed by Dr. William Glasser, posits that all humans have 5 basic needs (survival, freedom, fun, power, and love/belonging) that we attempt to satisfy through our behavioral **choices**. On the other hand Reciprocal Teaching, developed by Brown and Palincsar, is an instructional technique that boosts reading comprehension by putting learners in the role of teacher.

I would like to do the study in one of the primary schools of Paarl and hereby apply for the study with the Intermediate Phase teachers of ▉▉▉▉ Primary School, Paarl. No other research is currently taking place in the said school.

The intervention will take the form of professional staff development from March to September 2021, by the researcher himself. The three IP teachers will do the Choice Theory introductory course from February to March 2021. The Reciprocal Teaching training of the IP teachers will take place during March 2021. From April to June 2021 the trained teachers will start implementing Reciprocal Teaching strategies in their classrooms. I already had exploratory conversations with the principal, ▉▉▉▉ ▉▉▉▉, and she supports the research, as it will have far-reaching consequences for the development of learners' reading comprehension.

It is envisaged that the new reading instruction program I will design could eventually be put to good use in all schools in order to effectively address the urgent need for reading comprehension problems in our schools.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours in Education,

M.M. Messina (Researcher & Trainer)   Date: 9th February 2021

M3 QUALITY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT CONSULTANCY CC   1

Appendix E: EC Approval & Expiry Date 2 Sept 2022

**UNIVERSITEIT
STELLENBOSCH
UNIVERSITY**

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form

6 December 2021

Project number: 21740

Project Title: Title for study: Utilising Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote the Teaching of Reading Comprehension in the Intermediate Phase.

Dear Mr MM Messina

Co-investigators:

Your response to stipulations submitted on 29/11/2021 17:03 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (REC: SBE).

Please note below expiration date of this approved submission:

Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
3 September 2021	2 September 2022

GENERAL REC COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THIS PROJECT:

INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: SBE, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (21740) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

You are required to submit a progress report to the REC: SBE before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

Once you have completed your research, you are required to submit a final report to the REC: SBE for review.

Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Investigator CV (PI)	ACADEMIC CV MITCHELL MELVYN MESSINA	24/02/2021	PDF
Data collection tool	Daily Reflection Sheet for IP teachers	24/02/2021	PDF
Data collection tool	Observation checklist	13/05/2021	pdf
Data collection tool	Guidelines for interview after classroom observations	13/05/2021	pdf
Proof of permission	Final WCED approval letter	13/05/2021	pdf
Proof of permission	Ethical Clearance WGI	13/05/2021	pdf
Data collection tool	Pre-Questionnaire with all IP teachers	14/05/2021	pdf

Data collection tool	Daaglikse Refleksieblad	14/05/2021	pdf
Data collection tool	Biographical Data of Participants English & Afrikaans	14/05/2021	pdf
Data collection tool	Teacher Interview Questions Afrikaans & English	14/05/2021	pdf
Data collection tool	Pre-Questionnaire aan IF Opvoeders	14/05/2021	pdf
Data collection tool	Riglyne vir onderhoud na waarneming	14/05/2021	Word
Default	Response letter on Reviewer Panel Comments 15 May 2021	14/05/2021	Word
Default	RESPONSE FORM	28/06/2021	pdf
Default	COVID-19 mitigation strategy	28/06/2021	pdf
Data collection tool	Observasieblad vir Resiprokale Onderrig	10/08/2021	pdf
Parental consent form	Toestemmingsbrief van Ouers	10/08/2021	pdf
Parental consent form	Consent form of Parents	10/08/2021	pdf
Assent form	Toestemmingsbrief aan leerders	10/08/2021	pdf
Research Protocol/Proposal	11 August 2021 Revised Proposal M.Messina	11/08/2021	pdf
Default	#1 Response letter on Reviewer Panel Comments 30th July 2021	11/08/2021	pdf
Informed Consent Form	Toestemmingsbrief van Opvoeders	28/11/2021	Pdf
Informed Consent Form	Consent form of teachers	28/11/2021	Pdf
Non-disclosure agreement	Signed NDA Mr. Denzyl Witbooi	28/11/2021	pdf
Non-disclosure agreement	Signed NDA Ms. Stephanie De Canha	28/11/2021	pdf
Proof of permission	Prinsipaal Toestemmingsbrief vir navorsing	28/11/2021	Pdf
Default	Response letter on Reviewer Panel Comments 28 November 2021	29/11/2021	Pdf

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at cgraham@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Social, Behavioral and Education Research

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Appendix F: EC Extension Expiry Date

**UNIVERSITEIT
STELLENBOSCH
UNIVERSITY**

CONFIRMATION OF RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL

REC: SBER - Annual Progress Report

7 September 2022

Project number: 21740

Project Title: Title for study: Utilising Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote the Teaching of Reading Comprehension in the Intermediate Phase.

Dear Mr MM Messina

Identified supervisor(s) and/or co-investigator(s):

Your REC: SBER - Annual Progress Report submitted on 23/08/2022 09:33 was reviewed and approved by the Social, Behavioural and Education Research Ethics Committee (REC: SBE).

Your research ethics approval is valid for the following period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
2 September 2022	1 September 2023

GENERAL COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THIS PROJECT:

INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

2. Your approval is based on the information you provided in your online research ethics application form. If you are required to make amendments to or deviate from the proposal approved by the REC, please contact the REC: SBE office for advice: applyethics@sun.ac.za

3. Always use this project ID number (21740) in all communications with the REC: SBE concerning your project.

4. Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, and monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process, where required.

RENEWAL OF RESEARCH BEYOND THE EXPIRATION DATE

You are required to submit a progress report to the REC: SBE before the project approval period expires if renewal of ethics approval is required.

If you have completed your research, you are required to submit a final report to the REC: SBE to close the active REC record for this project.

Project documents approved by the REC:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Informed Consent Form	1 Prinsipaal Afrikaans Getekende Toestemmingsbrief vir navorsing	22/08/2022	pdf
Informed Consent Form	1 Teachers Afrikaans Signed Consent Letters	22/08/2022	Pdf
Informed Consent Form	2 New Teacher Afrikaans Consent Letter	22/08/2022	Pdf
Informed Consent Form	Notification to Parents	22/08/2022	Pdf
Informed Consent Form	1 NDA RC Signed	22/08/2022	Pdf
Informed Consent Form	2 NDA SB Signed	22/08/2022	Pdf
Informed Consent Form	3 NDA DW Signed	22/08/2022	Pdf
Informed Consent Form	Final WCED approval letter Feb 2021	22/08/2022	Pdf

| Research Protocol/Proposal   1 Revised Proposal for EC September 2021   22/08/2022   Pdf |

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at applyethics@sun.ac.za

Sincerely,

Mrs Clarissa Robertson (cgraham@sun.ac.za)

Secretariat: Social, Behavioral and Education Research Ethics Committee (REC: SBE)

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number: REC-050411-032.
The Social, Behavioural and Education Research Ethics Committee complies with the SA National Health Act No.61 2003 as it pertains to health research. In addition, this committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research established by the Declaration of Helsinki (2013) and the Department of Health Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes (2nd Ed.) 2015. Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

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Principal Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

As soon as Research Ethics Committee approval is confirmed by the REC, the principal investigator (PI) is responsible for the following:

Conducting the Research: The PI is responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC-approved research plan. The PI is jointly responsible for the conduct of co-investigators and any research staff involved with this research. The PI must ensure that the research is conducted according to the recognised standards of their research field/discipline and according to the principles and standards of ethical research and responsible research conduct.

Participant Enrolment: The PI may not recruit or enrol participants unless the strategy for recruitment is approved by the REC. Recruitment and data collection activities must cease after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials must be approved by the REC prior to their use.

Informed Consent: The PI is responsible for obtaining and documenting affirmative informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents/process, and for ensuring that no participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their affirmative informed consent. The PI must give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents, where required. The PI must keep the originals in a secured, REC-approved location for at least five (5) years after the research is complete.

Continuing Review: The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period**. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, it is **the PI's responsibility to submit the progress report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur**. Once REC approval of your research lapses, all research activities must cease, and contact must be made with the REC immediately.

Amendments and Changes: Any planned changes to any aspect of the research (such as research design, procedures, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material, etc.), must be submitted to the REC for review and approval before implementation. Amendments may not be initiated without first obtaining written REC approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.

Adverse or Unanticipated Events: Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research-related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to the REC within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. The PI must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the RECs requirements for protecting human research participants.

Research Record Keeping: The PI must keep the following research-related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence and approvals from the REC.

Provision of Counselling or emergency support: When a dedicated counsellor or a psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.

Final reports: When the research is completed (no further participant enrolment, interactions or interventions), the PI must submit a Final Report to the REC to close the study.

On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits: If the researcher is notified that the research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, the PI must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.

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Appendix G: Final WCED Approval Letter Feb 2021

Western Cape Government
Education

Directorate: Research

Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za
tel: +27 021 467 9272
Fax: 0865902282
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20210210-928
ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mr Mitchell Messina
PO Box 2968
Paarl
7620

Dear Mr Mitchell Messina

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: UTILIZING CHOICE THEORY AND RECIPROCAL TEACHING TO PROMOTE READING COMPREHENSION IN THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:
1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **16 February 2021 till 30 June 2022.**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
    The Director: Research Services
    Western Cape Education Department
    Private Bag X9114
    CAPE TOWN
    8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.
Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard
Directorate: Research
DATE: 11 February 2021

Lower Parliament Street, Cape Town, 8001
tel: +27 21 467 9272   fax: 0865902282
Safe Schools: 0800 45 46 47

Private Bag X9114, Cape Town, 8000
Employment and salary enquiries: 0861 92 33 22
www.westerncape.gov.za

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Appendix H: Extension WCED Period for Research Approval

Western Cape Government
Education

Directorate: Research

meshack.kanzi@westerncape.gov.za
Tel: +27 021 467 2350
Fax: 086 590 2282
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20210210-928
ENQUIRIES: Mr M Kanzi

Mr Mitchell Messina
PO Box 2968
Paarl
7620

Dear Mitchell Messina,

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: UTILIZING CHOICE THEORY AND RECIPROCAL TEACHING TO PROMOTE READING COMPREHENSION IN THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **23 August 2022 till 31 March 2023.**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Mr M Kanzi at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

    The Director: Research Services
    Western Cape Education Department
    Private Bag X9114
    CAPE TOWN
    8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards,
Meshack Kanzi
Directorate: Research
DATE: 20 September 2022

1 North Wharf Square, 2 Lower Loop Street,
Foreshore, Cape Town 8001
tel: +27 21 467 2531

Private Bag X 9114, Cape Town, 8000
Safe Schools: 0800 45 46 47
wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za

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STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title: Utilizing Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote the Teaching of Reading Comprehension in the Intermediate Phase

To the principal:

L.K. Zeeman Primary School
22nd February 2021

Your school is invited to take part in a study that will be conducted by Mitchell Messina, a PhD student at the Department of Curriculum Studies at Stellenbosch University. The results of this study will be part of a dissertation. Your school was approached as a research school due to the diverse, multi-cultural and difficult socio-economic conditions of the school community.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to investigate how Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching can be used to promote the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase of your school.

2. WHAT WILL BE REQUIRED OF YOU?

If you agree that your school participates in this study, we will ask that Mitchell Messina, visits your school for a period of 9 months (January to September 2022) and being allowed to do Professional Development Training, observe Grade 4, 5 and 6 Afrikaans Home Language lessons, and have group discussions with all IP teachers.

3. WHAT WILL BE REQUIRED OF YOUR TEACHERS?

- You will be invited to SACE-endorsed professional development training in Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. The dates for these workshops will be negotiated with you.
- Implementation of what you have learned from the training.
- Classroom observations by the researcher. These observations (1 hour a day / 1 day a week) will be spread over the second and third quarters of 2022. The purpose of these observations is to find out what really happens with regards to the application of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching in the classroom.
- Keeping a reflective journal to record all your learning-related experiences.
- Interviewing by two impartial experts (a Learning Support Teacher and a William Glasser International Instructor) about your understanding and implementation of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. These interviews will be recorded to ensure

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accurate transcripts.

- You will be invited to fill out a questionnaire about your perception and beliefs about teaching reading comprehension (this will take approximately 30 minutes after school hours).
- You will also take part in 1-hour group discussions at your school after school hours to share your best practices and your reflective journal with your colleagues.

Please note: all information will be treated ethically and all information will remain confidential. The name of the school and the names of the educators will also remain anonymous.

4. POSSIBLE RISKS AND INCONVENIENCES

The only possible inconvenience may be the time that will be used for the mentioned interviews and focus groups that the researcher will take into account and negotiate with you and the parties involved.

45 POSSIBLE BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPANTS AND SCHOOL

Your school will not benefit financially from your involvement in this research. However, participants will be invited to do the 4-day basic training in Choice Theory as well as the training in Reciprocal Teaching free of charge. Both courses are SACE endorsed which means participants will earn a total of 25 SACE points. Your school's involvement in the research could help to shed light on the current teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase and its effectiveness. Furthermore, I am convinced that this study could provide your school with the opportunity to make a valuable contribution to the possible solution of the reading comprehension problem in the Intermediate Phase.

6. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

No payment will be expected from any of the participants at all.

7. PROTECTING YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY AND IDENTITY

All information that you share with the researcher during the study and that can possibly identify you as a participant will be protected. This will be done by keeping the information and research information completely confidential and anonymous. Information will only be disclosed with the consent of the participants or as required by law. The data will be stored with a password on the researcher's computer. Only the researcher and his supervisor will have access to the data. All participants and the organization will remain anonymous during the final research report.

8. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

The educators who will be interviewed can choose whether they want to participate in this study or not. If they agree to participate in this study, they may withdraw at any time without any consequences. The educators may also refuse to answer questions they do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw from this study if circumstances deem it necessary.

9. RESEARCHERS CONTACT DATA

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study, feel free to contact the following persons:

Mitchell Messina (researcher) and / or Prof. MLA Le Cordeur (promoter)
Cellphone: 082 375 1488 Telephone: 021 808 2300
Address: Joubert Street 2, Paarl Address: Faculty of Education
Department of Curriculum Studies GG Cillié Building, Stellenbosch

10. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You waive any legal claims, rights or remedies due to your participation in this research study. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché (mfouche@sun.ac.za); 021 808 4622] at the Division of Research Development.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT BY PARTICIPANT

As a participant I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and that it is written in a language I am comfortable with and understand.
- I had the chance to ask questions and all my questions were answered.
- All issues regarding privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide have been set out.

By signing below, I agree that my school will participate in this research study, conducted by Mitchell Messina.

_____   _____
          Signature of Principal   Date

STATEMENT OF CHIEF RESEARCHER

As chief researcher, I hereby declare that the information in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant was encouraged (and given enough time) to ask any questions. Furthermore, I want to choose the following option:

	The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.
	The conversation with the participant was conducted and this 'Consent Form' is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is proficient.

_____   _____
Signature of Principal Researcher   Date

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Appendix J: Blank Consent Form of Teachers

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CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Reasearch Title: Utilizing Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching to promote the Teaching of Reading Comprehension in the Intermediate Phase

Purpose of research

The main purpose of this study is to investigate how Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching can promote the teaching of Reading Comprehension in the Intermediate Phase of one school.

Who is doing the research?

Mitchell Messina (B.A., B.Ed., M.Ed.)
Tel: 082 375 1488
Email: mitchm@iafrica.com

Research Supervisor who may be contacted for further information

Prof. Michael le Cordeur
Tel: 082 857 8067
Email: mlecorde@sun.ac.za

How you were identified to take part in this research

All the Intermediate Phase teachers at your school will be invited to take part in this research. The research is being done at your school because of the following:
- your school is a previously rural, disadvantaged school;
- there is one teacher per grade in the Intermediate Phase;
- your learners are coming from challenging socio-economic circumstances, and
- the literacy results of your school's Intermediate Phase are poor.

What does this research require of you?

- You will be invited to SACE-endorsed professional development training in Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. The dates for these workshops will be negotiated with you.
- Implementation of what you have learned from the training.
- Classroom observations by the researcher. These observations (1 hour a day / 1 day a week) will be spread over the second and third quarters of 2022. The purpose of these observations is to find out what really happens with regards to the application of Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching in the classroom.
- Keeping a reflective journal to record all your learning-related experiences.
- Interviewing by two impartial experts (a Learning Support Teacher and a William Glasser International Instructor) about your understanding and implementation of Choice

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Theory and Reciprocal Teaching. These interviews will be recorded to ensure accurate transcripts.

- You will be invited to fill out a questionnaire about your perception and beliefs about teaching reading comprehension (this will take approximately 30 minutes after school hours).
- You will also take part in 1-hour group discussions at your school after school hours to share your best practices and your reflective journal with your colleagues.

When will the research happen?

The research will take place at times which will be negotiated with you and agreed on by your school principal. Your daily school programme will not be interrupted by these visits.

How will you benefit from being involved in this research?

You will not benefit financially from your involvement in this research. However, you will be invited to do the 4-day basic training in Choice Theory as well as the training in Reciprocal Teaching free of charge. Both courses are SACE endorsed which means you will earn a total of 25 SACE points (15 for Choice Theory and 10 for Reciprocal Teaching training). Your involvement in the research could help to shed light on the current teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase and its effectiveness. Furthermore, I am convinced that this study will provide you with the opportunity to make a valuable contribution to promoting the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase.

What risks are involved?

None of these activities should cause you any discomfort or anxiety or danger. The teaching observations are not inspections and will not be shared with the principal or SMT at your school. You are not expected to do anything you do not normally do in your teaching. The information you provide will not be used against you in any way.

How will the information you give be used?

The information and data you give will be analysed and used in the researcher's Ph.D thesis. This thesis will eventually be placed in the University library. It is possible also that other articles or presentations will be written about this research. You and your school will not be identified at all in anything which is written.

Will you remain anonymous?

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times by means of anonymous identities in any form of reference made to your information, and the actual records will be accessible only to the researcher or his promoter. Your identity will not be revealed in this research. You and your school will be referred to by a pseudonym (false name).

What will happen if you withdraw from the research?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You can decide not to participate at any stage and for any reason, and this will have no negative results for you. All the information on audio-tape(s) and transcripts will be destroyed at the end of this study.

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RESEARCH ON PROMOTING THE TEACHING OF READING COMPREHENSION

I, _____ (full names and surname) an

Intermediate Phase educator at _____ (full
name of school) was fully informed about the research project of Mitchell Messina in
Afrikaans. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered
to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent volantarily to participate in this research project. I understand that the
research findings and recommendations do not affect me personally in any negative way
and that all information will remain confidential, and will only be discussed with the
supervisor, and my name will be withheld due to anonymity.

I am aware of the fact that I may withdraw from the study at any time and if I do, I give
permission for the information provided by me to be used for the study. I understand that I
can withdraw from the project at any time, if I want to. I have been given a copy of this
form.

_____   _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   **DATE**

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to

_____

[He/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation
was conducted in Afrikaans.

_____   _____

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR   **DATE**

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Appendix K: Blank NDA

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NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

between

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

(hereinafter "**the University**")

And

MITCHELL MELVYN MESSINA ("the Student")

And

(ASSISTANT)

(hereinafter "**the Parties**")

It is recorded that **Mitchell Melvyn Messina** is a **Ph.D Student** with the **Curriculum Studies Department** registered at the University. As per the requirements for **PhD programme/research** a **dissertation** is required where the student, **Mitchell Messina, will investigate how Choice Theory and Reciprocal Teaching can be utilized to promote the teaching of Reading Comprehension in the Intermediate Phase (grades 4 to 6) of one school.** The **Assistant** will be a ....in the ...., ("the Subjects") acting as an **Investigator observer and -Interviewer** with regard to ....("**the Purpose**") and the Parties have agreed to enter into a Non-Disclosure Agreement ("the NDA") or confidentiality clauses for this Purpose.

1. In connection with the Purpose it will be necessary for certain Confidential Information to be provided by the Subjects and/ or the University to the Assistant. This Confidential Information means any information disclosed to the Parties which has been defined as confidential in terms of the NDA;

2. The Parties specifically agrees not to disclose any Confidential Information to a third party and to protect it through the exercise of reasonable care. The Parties agrees to keep the Confidential Information in a secure environment, and not copy or use the Confidential Information except as it is reasonably necessary in connection with the Purpose. Access to this Confidential Information is for the sole purpose of the Purpose and the Parties agrees that breach of confidentiality may result in sanctions, civil or criminal prosecutions against the University or the Parties and/or University disciplinary action against the Parties.

3. The foregoing obligations shall not apply to any information which -

   3.1 can be demonstrated to have been lawfully in the public domain at the time of disclosure or subsequently and lawfully becomes part of the public domain by publication or otherwise;

   3.2 can be demonstrated through documentary proof to have been lawfully in the Party's possession prior to disclosure;

   3.3 subsequently becomes available to the Party from a source other than the Subject, which source is lawfully entitled without any restriction on disclosure to disclose such information; or

   3.4 is disclosed pursuant to a requirement or request by operation of law or by any court of competent jurisdiction, provided that the Party gives as much notice of such impending disclosure as is reasonably possible and provide the the University with all reasonable assistance in preventing and/or limiting such disclosure.

4. Notwithstanding the completion or non-completion of the Purpose, or the termination of University's involvement with it, this Agreement shall commence on the Signature Date and shall remain in force and effect for a period of one year, ending 31/12/2022, unless replaced by another agreement concluded between the University and the Party/s superseding this Agreement.

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY   **THE ASSISTANT**

Signature: _____   Signature _____

Print Name: _____   Print Name: _____

Print Title: _____   Print Title: _____

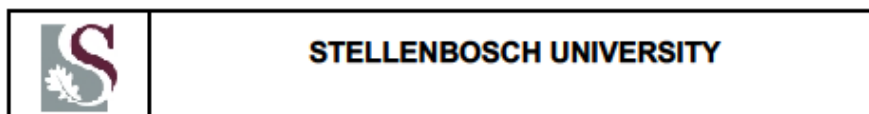UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
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THE STUDENT

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Student Number:_____

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Appendix L: Notification to Parents

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PARENTAL NOTIFICATION LETTER

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is MITCHELL MESSINA, and I am a fulltime student at the University of Stellenbosch, currently studying towards a Ph.D. (Doctor in Philosophy). I am conducting a research study on promoting the teaching of reading comprehension in the Intermediate Phase in your child's school.

This study has been approved by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and your child's school. For this reason, I need to inform you about the procedures. The researcher will observe teachers while teaching in class. Although the research focuses only on the teachers, your child will be in the classroom where observation of teachers will take place. The purpose of these observations is to see what teachers do when teaching reading comprehension to their learners.

An observer, who will represent me, will be in your child's class once each week from the second week in August 2022 until the middle of September 2022 for about an hour per session. While they are in the classroom, they will observe the teacher's instruction methods and take notes. They will not record your child's name or any other materials that will identify your child. Your child will not do anything outside of his/her normal classroom activities and there is no risk to your child.

The study does not involve any risks, inconveniences, or discomfort. All observation visits and interactions with teachers will be done by appointment and with the permission of the principal and the teachers. There will be no interruption of normal class activities or your child's learning program.

Participation in this study requires no payment and any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential and will only be available to the researcher and his supervisor. In the final dissertation and any report intended for publication, generic descriptions for persons (teachers and learners) and organizations (schools) will be used to ensure anonymity. The researcher and his direct supervisor are the only persons who have access to all information.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, contact Mitchell Messina (the researcher) by telephone at (082 375 1488), or by e-mail at mitchm@iafrica.com Alternatively, my supervisor, professor Michael le Cordeur, can be contacted at (082 857 8067).

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KENNISGEWINGSBRIEF AAN OUERS

Geagte ouer of voog,

My naam is MITCHELL MESSINA, en ek is 'n voltydse student aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch en studeer tans vir 'n Ph.D. (Dokter in Filosofie). Ek doen 'n navorsingstudie oor die bevordering van die onderrig van leesbegrip in die Intermediêre Fase in u kind se skool.

Hierdie studie is goedgekeur deur die Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement (WKOD) en u kind se skool. Om hierdie rede moet ek u inlig oor die prosedures. 'n Persoon sal onderwysers waarneem terwyl hulle in die klas onderrig. Alhoewel die navorsing slegs op die onderwysers fokus, sal u kind in die klaskamer wees waar waarneming van onderwysers sal plaasvind. Die doel van hierdie waarnemings is om te sien wat onderwysers doen wanneer hulle leesbegrip aan hul leerders onderrig.

'n Waarnemer wat my sal verteenwoordig, sal een keer elke week vanaf die tweede week in Augustus 2022 tot middel September 2022 vir ongeveer 'n uur per sessie in u kind se klas wees. Terwyl hulle in die klaskamer is, sal hulle die onderwyser se onderrigmetodes waarneem en aantekeninge maak. Hulle sal nie u kind se naam of enige ander materiaal wat u kind sal identifiseer, aanteken nie. U kind sal niks buite sy/haar normale klaskamer-aktiwiteite doen nie en daar is geen risiko vir u kind nie.

Die studie behels geen risiko's, ongerief of ongemak nie. Alle waarnemingsbesoeke en interaksies met onderwysers sal op afspraak en met die toestemming van die skoolhoof en die onderwysers gedoen word. Daar sal geen onderbreking van normale klasaktiwiteite of u kind se leerprogram wees nie.

Deelname aan hierdie studie vereis geen betaling nie en enige inligting wat in verband met hierdie studie verkry word, sal vertroulik bly en sal slegs aan die navorser en sy studieleier beskikbaar wees. In die finale proefskrif en enige verslag wat vir publikasie bedoel is, sal generiese beskrywings vir persone (onderwysers en leerders) en organisasies (skole) gebruik word om anonimiteit te verseker. Die navorser en sy direkte studieleier is die enigste persone wat toegang tot alle inligting het.

Indien u enige vrae of bekommernisse oor die navorsing het, kontak Mitchell Messina (die navorser) telefonies by (082 375 1488), of per e-pos by mitchm@iafrica.com Alternatiewelik kan my studieleier, professor Michael le Cordeur, gekontak word by (082 857 8067).