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Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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# READING IN ENGLISH AS A FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

## An annotated bibliography

2007-2020

compiled by

C. Biesman-Simons (University of the Witwatersrand) and  
K. Dixon (University of Queensland and University of the  
Witwatersrand)

with E.J. Pretorius  
(University of South Africa)

2021

**PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION (PrimTEd) PROJECT**  
Consolidated Literacy Working Group





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This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union.

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# Abbreviations and acronyms

CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EAL	English additional language
EFL	English first language
EFAL	English as first additional language
ESL	English second language
FAL	First additional language
FET	Further education and training
HL	Home language
L1	First language
L2	Second language
LoLT	Language of learning and teaching
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
ORF	Oral reading frequency
WCPM	Words correct per minute

# INTRODUCTION

This annotated bibliography was compiled as part of the Primary Teacher Education Project (PrimTEd), which is a component of the Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) Teaching and Learning Development Capacity Improvement Programme (TLDCIP), looking to improve initial teacher education in literacy and numeracy.

The bibliography provides a summary of research that has been done on reading in English as a first additional language (EFAL) in South Africa from 2007 to 2020. Like any bibliography, it provides a list of research sources, according to specific topics within the field of reading. Unlike typical bibliographies, the research articles within each section are arranged chronologically rather than alphabetically. This helps to situate the reading research within a recent historical perspective and also to identify emerging interests in different aspects of reading research in EFAL at various or overlapping points in time. In addition to bibliographic data, each annotation briefly restates the main issues or argument of a source by identifying its research questions, or hypotheses, its major methods of investigation, and its main findings and conclusions. The participants, research context and measures used are presented in a table for easy identification. Because reading research articles often deal with several issues within the same research ambit, cross references to other topics will be flagged with the section symbol § and the subheading number. For example, §2 indicates that the author also deals with reading comprehension (see topics below) in the source document.

There are an increasing number of PhD theses and Master's dissertations/research reports and across South African universities that focus on reading in EFAL in South Africa. PhD theses are included within the body of this bibliography. A comprehensive list of Master's dissertations and research reports is included at the end of the bibliography. Readers are encouraged to refer to them for further reading.

This bibliography has been divided into seven parts. Parts 1-5 include annotations of research on reading in EFAL. These are organised according to the key focus areas on reading in EFAL that emerged in the compilation of the bibliography. There are additional texts relevant to reading in EFAL that have not been annotated. These articles are cited at the end of each section or sub-section as recommendations for further reading.

**Part 1** focuses on the foundational reading skills that support the process of learning to read for understanding. It presents research on phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency and vocabulary. Research that highlights barriers to acquiring foundational skills is also included.

**Part 2** reviews research on reading comprehension in South Africa. With the PIRLS results of 2016 revealing that 78% of Grade 5 South African learners are unable to read for meaning in any language, contributions to this area of research have to be highlighted in identifying the underlying challenges that contribute to poor levels of reading comprehension, as well as identifying potential interventions that could assist in addressing this crisis.

**Part 3** is centred on reading instruction with a strong focus on teachers' classroom practices and knowledge of teaching reading in EFAL. As there is extensive research in this area, it is sub-divided into five sections, according to the different phases of formal schooling in South Africa. These are Foundation Phase (Grade R-3), Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-6), Senior Phase (Grade 7-9) and Further Education and Training (FET) Phase (Grade 10-12).

There is a small body of work emerging on reading assessment in South Africa and this is covered in **Part 4**. It looks at teachers' assessment literacy and looks particularly at the importance of reading assessments being culturally and linguistically appropriate to the diverse South African context.

**Part 5** presents research that does not fall under any of the first four sections. This research is not necessarily specific to EFAL reading but offers a value contribution to understanding the reading landscape in South Africa.

**Part 6** is a consolidated reference list of all research annotated or referenced in the body of the bibliography and is arranged alphabetically.

The increasing attention being paid to EFAL reading is evident to the vast number of Master's dissertations and research reports conducted at universities across South Africa. Although much of this research is small-scale, many of the studies are based within schools and provide detailed insight into the role that individual schools and teachers can play in improving reading instruction and learners' reading ability. They also provide a possible foundation for further, large-scale research that can contribute to strengthening EFAL reading research in South Africa. These studies are not annotated but are included in **Part 7** which provides an additional reading list, organised according to the sections that constitute the body of the bibliography.

In annotating texts, the terms employed by the authors of individual texts are used. For example, the use of the term "additional language" versus "second language" in an annotation will be in line with the original text.

This annotated bibliography should be read in consultation with Pretorius's (2018) *Annotated Bibliography on Reading in African Languages*. There are articles annotated in Pretorius (2018) that discuss reading in both EFAL and African languages and these are included in this bibliography with the permission of Pretorius. These annotations are indicated with an asterisk [\*] for cross-referencing purposes. The *Annotated Bibliography on Reading in African Languages* can be downloaded from <https://www.jet.org.za/clearinghouse/printed/resources/language-and-literacy-resources>.



## **PART 1: FOUNDATIONAL READING SKILLS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

Learning to read is complex and understanding how children learn to read in both their home language and an additional language requires constant awareness and review of current and emerging research that can inform methods of teaching children to read.

According to the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement*, the national curriculum for basic education, learners should be taught in their home language for the first three years of formal schooling. The language of learning and teaching then changes to English (or, less frequently, Afrikaans) in Grade 4.

Critical to this transition, is the ability to read for comprehension in English; an ability few learners have mastered in any language by Grade 4. Much of the research on EFAL is thus centred on the teaching of the foundational reading skills necessary for improving reading comprehension. The development of foundational reading skills thus constitutes the first part of this bibliography. It is these skills that form the basis for decoding which, along with the development of reading comprehension skills, are fundamental to successful engagement with texts. As learners have often not developed these skills in their home language, articles in this section often consider the development of reading skills in an African language and English.

Lessing, A. C. and Mahabeer, S. D. 2007. *Barriers to acquiring English reading and writing skills by Zulu-speaking Foundation-phase learners*, *Journal for Language Teaching*, Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 139–151.

**Key words:** medium of instruction, English second language acquisition, barriers to learning, Foundation Phase, reading, writing, home language

<b>Participants and Context</b>	104 Foundation Phase teachers from 16 schools in the greater Durban area Learners across the schools had little or no reading and writing ability
<b>Measures</b>	Closed-formed questionnaire

This article reports on 104 Foundation Phase teachers' perceptions as to if isiZulu-speakers are disadvantaged at a Foundation Phase level when English is the LoLT. It further examines teachers' opinions of what factors assist or impede learners' acquisition of reading and writing skills. The barriers were categorised as contextual, language, school, and intrinsic learner factors.

Key findings from the questionnaire indicate teachers' belief that learners' reading and writing abilities are significantly influenced by the level of parental involvement learners' socio-economic background (which often determines access to English before school years); learners' knowledge of phonological skills; learners' proficiency in the English language structure and learners being scared to respond to tasks and instructions. Importantly, teachers with higher proficiency in isiZulu are better equipped to support learners as their understanding of isiZulu's language structure equips them to understand learners' mistakes in English. Teachers reported that the following factors do not affect learners' reading and writing abilities: the extent to which learners' culture is reflected in teaching materials; the quality of teachers' training in outcomes-based education and bilingual/multilingual training; teachers' proficiency in English and the availability of resources at home.

The researchers recommend that teachers acquire isiZulu skills and that schools employ some isiZulu-speaking teachers to provide additional support to struggling learners. Basic English phonetics must be taught and revised on a daily basis. Parents must be motivated and assisted in supporting their children in English and this could be promoted through Adult Basic Education Training. In addition, it is important that parents realise the value of children learning in their home language.

O'Carroll, S. 2011. *An exploratory study of early letter-sound knowledge in a low socio-economic context in South Africa*, **Reading & Writing**, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 7–8.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v2i1.10>.

§3.1

**Key words:** letter-sound knowledge, phonological awareness low socio-economic status, Grade R, vocabulary

Participants and Context	Two high poverty primary schools, Cape Town. English is medium of instruction; majority of children speak English as a second language  <i>Study 1:</i> 191 children, School A, n=85; School B=n=106 <i>Study 2:</i> 14 Grade R children at School A, English-speaking teacher, isiXhosa-speaking teacher assistant
Measures	<i>Study 1:</i> Children tested in February of Grade 1 year Assessment tool based on Multilingual Phonics Ability Test (name pictures, say beginning sounds and write the letter: c, b, m, s, t, f, r, a, o, e) <i>Study 2:</i> Children assessed at the beginning of Grade 1 Adapted version of Clay's Letter Identification Test

This paper focuses on knowledge of letter-sound relationships as part of the early literacy curriculum. It argues that in light of low literacy levels it is important to consider early literacy learning prior to schooling.

The first study aimed to establish if levels of letter-sound knowledge prevail in disadvantaged communities. The letter-sound knowledge of Grade 1 children from two high poverty schools were tested in February of their Grade 1 year. They were asked to identify pictures of common items and then name, say and write the beginning sound. Results indicated limited exposure to letter-sounds before formal schooling. School A and B learners obtained a mean letter writing score of 1.7 (SD=2.6) and 2.1 (SD=2.52) out of a possible score of 10. Almost half of the children could not recognise any of the ten letters. The second study conducted was situated in a Grade R class in School A. In 2008, 14 learners participated in an intervention to build literacy and language skills and assist with letter recognition prior to Grade 1. Learners worked in pairs with a volunteer and attended an average of 14 lessons of 30-40 minutes. At the start of Grade 1 (2009), the learners' letter-sound knowledge averaged 11.86 of a possible score of 26 (SD=6.18). In 2009, 18 Grade R children participated in the volunteer intervention. Additionally, the teacher and teacher assistant attended workshops and were provided with resources to strengthen the teaching of beginning sounds and letter-sound knowledge. Testing at the start of Grade 1 (2010) indicated the success of the volunteer intervention. Participating learners had an average mean letter identification score of 15.6 (SD=6.7), significantly higher than non-participating children (n=15) in the same class who averaged 6.9 (SD=7.4) and the average of 1.86 (SD=1.86) achieved by children (n=79) who had not attended or had attended pre-school elsewhere.

Using data acquired from the 2008 Grade R intervention in the second study, the researcher also established a strong correlation between learners' letter knowledge at the beginning and end of Grade 1 with the improvement in the intervention cohort being significantly higher than those who did not participate.

While the study had a limited number of participants and focused on only one aspect of literacy development, it suggests the value of and need for development of letter knowledge prior to Grade 1.

Wilsenach, C. 2013. *Phonological skills as predictor of reading success: An investigation of emergent bilingual Northern Sotho/English learners. Per Linguam*. Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 17–32. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/29-2-554>. [\*]

**Key words:** phonological skills, syllable awareness, non-word repetition, phonological working memory, word and passage reading, Northern Sotho

<b>Participants and Context</b>	50 Grade 3 learners (Group 1 n=25 with Northern Sotho as the LoLT in Foundation Phase; Group 2 n=25 were Northern Sotho speakers but had English as LoLT in Foundation Phase) Quintile 1 and 2 township schools in Gauteng
<b>Measures</b>	Non-word repetition (NWR) task in Northern Sotho Syllable awareness in Northern Sotho (deletion of initial, end and medial syllables) Phonological working memory (digit span, conducted in English) Word reading in Northern Sotho and English Text/passage reading in Northern Sotho and English

Because the role of phonological processing in reading in African languages has not yet been well researched, this study focused on phonological skills and reading in emergent bilingual Northern Sotho/English learners. Fifty Grade 3 learners (all native speakers of Northern Sotho) were tested on non-word repetition skills, syllable awareness, phonological working memory and reading ability. Phonological awareness (PA) was only tested at the syllable and not the phoneme level, and only in Northern Sotho, not in English.

The Northern Sotho group read more fluently in their first language (L1) than in English. The English group could hardly read at all in Northern Sotho and not very well in English. The results showed a significant correlation between phonological skills and reading in Northern Sotho. Regression analyses suggested that Northern Sotho PA was a robust predictor of both Northern Sotho and English word reading, and to a lesser extent, passage reading in Northern Sotho. In this particular study, Northern Sotho PA was not a robust predictor of fluent English passage reading. The raw score on the NRT also significantly predicted learners' performance in Northern Sotho passage reading.

The author suggests that the results of the study can be interpreted in terms of the Central Processing Hypothesis of Geva and Siegel (2000), where literacy acquisition is seen to depend less on the nature of the language of instruction, and more on the development of common underlying metalinguistic and cognitive processes such as PA, lexical ability, working memory and automaticity. On this view, these (or some of these) processes are not properly developed in children who struggle to read.

van Rooy, B. and Pretorius, E. J. 2014. *Is reading in an agglutinating language different from an analytic language? An analysis of Zulu and English reading based on eye movements*, *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 281–297. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2989/16073614.2013.837603>. [\*]

## §2

**Key words:** Grade 4 reading, reading in agglutinating/analytic languages, eye-tracking, reading rate, fixations, refixations, comprehension levels

Participants and Context	22 Grade 4 isiZulu learners (grouped into 3 levels of comprehension: weak comprehenders, borderline comprehenders and comprehenders) Quintile 3 township school with isiZulu as LoLT in Foundation Phase
Measures	Reading comprehension Eye-tracking data (words and characters read per minute, fixations, refixations, regressive fixations)

This article examines the reading ability of 22 Grade 4 learners in their home language, isiZulu, and in their second language, English, using both eye-tracking data and traditional pen-and-paper reading comprehension assessment. Two aims underpinned the study: firstly, to compare bilingual reading performance in an agglutinating language (isiZulu) and an analytic language (English). The learners' eye-tracking profiles were obtained in both languages to see how they differed across the two languages and their eye-tracking profiles were also analysed according to their comprehension performance in both languages. Secondly, the eye-tracking profiles in both languages were also analysed in terms of reading ability, to determine how eye-tracking profiles differed among strong, average and weak readers in the two languages. In general, pen-and-paper tests show that the entire group performed poorly on comprehension.

The main findings from the eye-tracking analysis showed significant differences when the learners read in the two languages, on nearly all the selected eye-tracking variables. The eye movements in isiZulu may be attributable to the longer word units in the conjunctive orthography of isiZulu. Although there were several significant differences in eye movements between the reading ability groups in English, differences in eye movements due to differential reading skills did not emerge strongly in isiZulu. Further research is called for.

Pretorius, E. J. 2015. *Failure to launch: Matching language policy with literacy accomplishment in South African schools. International Journal for the Sociology of Language*. Vol. 2015, No. 234, pp. 47–46.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2015-0004>. [\*]

**Key words:** Grade 4 literacy, primary language in education, decoding, syllable identification, phonemic awareness, word recognition, oral reading fluency, isiZulu reading

<b>Participants and Context</b>	44 Grade 4 learners Quintile 3 township school
<b>Measures</b>	Decoding subskills in isiZulu and English: Syllable identification Phonemic awareness Word recognition Oral reading fluency Reading and academic performance

In this article it is argued that the education crisis in South Africa stems largely from a literacy problem. Understanding the reasons why use of the primary language in formal schooling does not unambiguously yield beneficial outcomes in the South African context is critical for improving the use of African languages in early schooling. By assessing early reading skills such as syllable identification, phonemic awareness, word recognition and oral reading fluency in isiZulu and English, this article examines the isiZulu and English reading literacy skills of a Grade 4 cohort of learners after three years of schooling in their home language. Descriptive and correlational statistics are provided.

The research reveals low reading levels in both languages, suggesting a mismatch between language policy and literacy accomplishment. Syllable identification in both isiZulu and English did not correlate with any subskills, while phonemic awareness showed strong and significant correlations with both word reading and oral reading fluency in both languages, but especially in isiZulu. It is suggested that one of the primary reasons for the poor results in schools that have African languages as initial LoLT lies in the oral orientation to classroom practices in these schools and the lack of opportunities for exposure to reading in African languages. The author argues that a more fully specified language in education model that emphasises literacy in the primary language may help to shift the instructional focus where it belongs.

Draper, K. and Spaul, N. 2015. *Examining oral reading fluency among rural Grade 5 English Second Language (ESL) learners in South Africa: An analysis of NEEDU 2013*. **South African Journal of Childhood Education**. Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 44–77.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v5i2.390>

## §2

**Key words:** oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, Grade 5, English second language

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Non-random sample of 1 772 Grade 5 English Second Language (ESL) learners from 214 rural schools across all 9 provinces Learners are a subset of 4 697 learners from 214 rural schools who participated in a 2013 NEEDU (National Education and Evaluation Development Unit) study.
<b>Measures</b>	Descriptive quantitative analysis NEEDU’s evaluation cycle in 2013 on Grade 5 ESL learners’ reading in terms of ORF and reading comprehension (National Education Evaluation and Development Unit. 2014. NEEDU Grade 5 Reading Study. Pretoria: NEEDU)

This study was the first large scale study on ORF in South African children. Drawing on data obtained by NEEDU, it aimed to establish rural Grade 5 ESL learners’ ORF levels. It further investigated the possibility of identifying tentative ORF benchmarks for the number of words correct per minute (WCPM) for Grade 5 learners in rural areas that correspond to acceptable reading comprehension levels.

In measuring ORF, learners were given two passages (ORF 1 and ORF 2) considered suitable for testing Grade 5 ESL learners at the start of the year. Learners who could not read ORF 1 or were unable to read the first paragraph of ORF 1 at a minimum pace of 50-60 words in one minute were not assessed on ORF 2. 855 learners were able to read ORF 1 and complete the assessment. Findings from the study indicated that 41% of learners were non-readers (<40 words WCPM). Results from ORF Test 1 indicated a mean of 46.1 WCPM with a standard deviation (SD) of 31.1. Learners reading ORF 2 averaged 78.3 WCPM (SD 24.2).

The two passages selected for written reading comprehension tests were deemed level-appropriate (Flesch-Kincaid grade level 4.9). Learners were asked a range of literal and inferential questions. Learners achieved a mean of 20.5% (SD 16.1%).

Establishing accurate WCPM benchmarks for English additional language readers is difficult as existing WCPM benchmarks have generally been calibrated based on English home language learners. However, by conducting a thorough review of international benchmarks and data, analysing the results of the NEEDU testing, and identifying the minimum level of comprehension necessary for reading to occur; the authors suggest a tentative benchmark of approximately 90-100 WCPM for Grade 5 ESL learners in the South African rural context.



Based on their findings, the authors recommend the following be adopted as policy: increased sustainable evidence-based interventions; the implementation of a course to prepare Foundation Phase teachers to teach reading; the National Research Foundation (NRF) designate early literacy as a key research area; and that teaching children to read must be the most important goal of the first half of primary school and be supported by the principal, teachers and parents.

Test instruments and questionnaires are available at

<https://nicspaul.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/draper-spaul-2015-online-appendix.pdf>.

Wilsenach, C. 2015. *Receptive vocabulary and early literacy skills in emergent bilingual Northern Sotho-English children*. **Reading & Writing**. Vol. 6, No. 1, Article 77.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v6i1.77>. [\*]

**Key words:** vocabulary development, early literacy skills, mother tongue education, socio-economic factors

<b>Participants and Context</b>	99 Grade 1 learners Quintile 1 and 2 township schools Northern Sotho and English
<b>Measures</b>	Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) (a receptive vocabulary test) Letter knowledge Phoneme-grapheme correspondences Early writing (name and surname)

In this study a receptive vocabulary test, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, was used with two groups of Grade 1 learners (assessed in the third term of Grade 1) to examine the relationship between receptive vocabulary knowledge and early literacy development. Group 1 was at a school that went straight for English in Foundation Phase, while Group 2 had Northern Sotho as LoLT in Foundation Phase, with English as FAL. Both groups were given the PPVT in English (Form B of the PPVT) and Northern Sotho (Form A of the PPVT). The findings showed that although receptive vocabulary knowledge was low in both languages, it had a significant effect on early literacy skills in both Northern Sotho and English. English receptive vocabulary significantly predicted the outcome of all the early literacy skills, while Northern Sotho receptive vocabulary predicted the outcome of phoneme-grapheme correspondences and early writing.

The results suggest that mother tongue education in itself does not guarantee successful literacy development. The study emphasises the importance of developing both home and second language vocabulary knowledge of bilingual learners. Measuring receptive vocabulary not only predicts early literacy skills but can also identify children at risk of not acquiring basic literacy skills such as phoneme-grapheme correspondences.

Probert, T. and de Vos, M. 2016. *Word recognition strategies amongst isiXhosa/English bilingual learners: The interaction between orthography and language of learning and teaching. Reading & Writing*. Vol. 7, No. 1, Article 84.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v7i1.84>. [\*]

### §3.2

**Key words:** word recognition, non-word recognition, transparent and deep orthographies, reading strategies, language of teaching and learning

<b>Participants and Context</b>	47 Grade 4 learners 1 township school with isiXhosa as LoLT in Foundation Phase 1 former Model C school with English as LoLT in Foundation Phase for isiXhosa first language (L1) learners
<b>Measures</b>	Word recognition test in isiXhosa and English Pseudo-word recognition test (nonword recognition) in isiXhosa and English

The aim of this study was to examine the reading strategies (lexical and sublexical) used by learners in isiXhosa, with its agglutinating linguistic structure and conjunctive orthography, and the transfer of such strategies when reading in an additional language, English. Sublexical strategies involve using phonological decoding skills to decipher words, while lexical strategies involve whole word recognition or transfer. The ways in which reading was taught in the two schooling contexts is not discussed.

The findings indicted that isiXhosa LoLT learners (i.e. those with isiXhosa as LoLT in the Foundation Phase), familiar with a transparent orthography, showed transfer of skills at the sublexical level (i.e. phonological decoding skills) when reading words in a novel context in both isiXhosa and English. There was less felicitous transfer of lexical strategies when encountering unfamiliar words in English with its opaque orthography. The English LoLT learners (i.e. isiXhosa learners who had had English as a LoLT in the Foundation Phase) seemed to acquire a combination of lexical and sublexical strategies for reading unfamiliar words in English. Although they were able to transfer decoding strategies to reading words in novel contexts in both languages, they did not always readily do so. The authors conclude that the results support the premise that reading strategies and cognitive skills are fine-tuned to specific language structures. Readers seem to develop “suites of cognitive skills” depending on the particular linguistic typologies and orthographies to which they are exposed and in which they become literate.

The authors note four pedagogic implications that arise from the findings:

- language-specific reading instructions are needed for early literacy development in different languages
- teachers should help to reduce learner confusion between different orthographies
- teachers should be sensitive to infelicitous transfers that learners can make when reading in different languages
- adequate practice opportunities should be provided in all the languages in which reading occurs.

le Roux, M., Geertsema, S., Jordaan, H., and Danie Prinsloo, D. 2017. *Phonemic awareness of English second language learners. South African Journal of Communication Disorders*. Vol. 64, No. 1, Article 164.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajcd.v64i1.164>.

### §3.1

**Key words:** phonemic awareness, phonological blending, segmentation, home language, second language

<p><b>Participants and Context</b></p>	<p>12 8-10 year old, Grade 3 English first language (L1) speakers at 1 former Model C school, English as LoLT: the “norm” group, no intervention 15 8-10 year old, Grade 3 English second language (EL2) (Setswana L1) learners at 2 former Model C schools, English as LoLT: intervention group 15 8-10 year old, Grade 3 EL2 (Setswana L1) learners at 2 former Model C schools, English as LoLT: control group</p> <p>EL2 learners attended the same 2 former Model C schools. English L1 learners were at another former Model C school in a higher socio-economic area</p>
<p><b>Measures</b></p>	<p>Quasi-experimental design Pre- and post-testing of intervention group Regression analysis Test of auditory processing skills, <i>Third edition (TAPS-3)</i> (Martin &amp; Brownell, 2005), testing word discrimination, phonological segmentation and phonological blending The <i>One-Minute Reading Test</i> (Transvaal Education Department, 1987) The <i>UCT Spelling Test</i> (University of Cape Town, 1985)</p>

This study investigates the effects of a vowel perception and production intervention on 15 Grade 3 EL2 learners’ phonemic awareness and literacy skills. Thirty EL2 learners were randomly assigned to the participating and control groups pre-intervention. Participating learners attended weekly 45 minute sessions over a twelve week period, where they were organised into groups of three learners. They were exposed to a maximum of two vowel sounds per session, and related segmentation and blending activities were conducted. These sessions were hosted by English L1, final-year speech and language therapy students.

Following the intervention, learners were tested on five skills: word discrimination, phonological segmentation, phonological blending, reading and spelling. A paired t-test was employed to establish if differences from pre- to post-intervention were significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). There was no statistically significant difference in the control group and EL2 group in phonological blending pre- and post-intervention. In the other four subtests, both the control and intervention groups recorded significant differences but the EL2 group

outperformed the control group in all areas, indicating that the interventional was, overall, a success. The authors attribute the differences in the control group to maturation. None of the improvements achieved by the intervention group members were sufficient to close the gap between the English L1 learners and intervention group. The authors stress the need for additional focus on phonemic awareness within the curriculum from Grade R, as strong phonemic awareness skills contribute to developing reading and writing skills. Although this is a small-scale study, the authors hope it provides a framework for further, wider research.

Schaefer, M. and Kotzé, J. 2019. *Early reading skills related to Grade 1 English Second Language literacy in rural South African schools*, **South African Journal of Childhood Education**, Volume 9, No. 1, Article 644.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v9i1.644>.

### §3.1

**Key words:** isiZulu, Siswati, English second language, language and literacy, reading

<b>Participants and Context</b>	80 no-fee predominantly rural schools, Mpumalanga province, medium of instruction = isiZulu (27%) and Siswati (73%) 20 randomly selected Grade 1 learners/school (January 2017, n=3 327; November 2017, n=3040)
<b>Measures</b>	Secondary analysis Early Grade Reading Study (EGRS) II data Schools formed the control group of EGRS II Assessment based on EGRA tool, adjusted for isiZulu and Siswati

This study responds to the lack of knowledge as to how initial L1 language and literacy skills at the beginning of Grade 1 predict L1 and English language and literacy skills at the end of the year.

Baseline assessment results indicated learners entered Grade 1 with varying L1 oral proficiency and listening comprehension abilities. Addressing this requires explicit L1 vocabulary instruction. There was limited development in learners' English abilities with learners having insufficient vocabulary to comprehend a short story by November. Although there was progression in L1 and English decoding skills, this was limited, highlighting inadequate explicit instruction in both languages.

Further findings indicated that L1 phoneme awareness and L1 letter-sound knowledge at the beginning of the school year transferred to ESL phoneme awareness, letter knowledge, word-reading and spelling by the end of the year. Additionally, learners who enter Grade 1 with stronger phoneme awareness and knowledge of letter-sound correspondences in their L1 are more likely to develop stronger word reading abilities in both L1 and ESL by the end of the year. Initial L1 letter-sound knowledge correlated to increase L2 oral proficiency. These findings provide evidence that, even if learners' L1 language and literacy levels are poor at the beginning of Grade 1, these skills are transferred to ESL language and literacy levels at the end of the year.

As many learners in rural contexts have no exposure to English outside school, teachers hold primary responsibility for developing learners' language and literacy proficiency in ESL. Succeeding in overcoming this requires teachers who create print-rich environments that support literacy development and who are highly-skilled in teaching decoding and in explicit vocabulary instruction.

Manten, A. et al. 2020. *An investigation into the early literacy skills of English second language learners in South Africa*, *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, Vol. 45, No. 2. pp. 142–154.

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§2

**Key words:** English additional language, early literacy skills, reading, reading comprehension, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness

<b>Participants and Context</b>	21 Grade 1 learners at a private school with English as Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) 7 female and 14 male learners selected through non-probability, convenient sampling English was the LoLT for all learners in Grade R
Measures	<i>January:</i> Kindergarten Language Screening Test (KLST); Phonological Awareness Test (PAT-1); Test of Preschool Early Literacy (TOPEL) <i>June:</i> Letter Sound Knowledge (LSK) and Early Word Recognition (EWR): subtests of the York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC), used to assess phoneme-grapheme (P-G) knowledge and single word reading of the participants; The One-Minute Reading Test (OMRT) (Transvaal Education Department, 1987), to assess how many one-syllable words learners could read in one minute; The University of Cape Town (1985) spelling test; Gray Oral Reading Test-4 (GORT-4) for reading comprehension

This quantitative study was conducted within the Comprehensive Emergent Literacy Model. This model was selected because it recognises contextual circumstances in acquiring early literacy skills, including that of learning literacy skills in additional language. It sought to establish if there is a positive correlation between English additional language learners’ early literacy skills in January of their Grade 1 year and their reading, spelling and reading comprehension skills in June of the same year. The assessments conducted focused on quantitative data associated with a phonics and skills-based approach to acquiring reading and literacy skills.

Results indicate a positive correlation ( $p < 0.05$ ) between learners’ early literacy skills in January, and their reading and reading comprehension assessments in June. The null hypothesis was rejected, highlighting the importance of early literacy skills in reading and reading comprehension. In assessing spelling, the null hypothesis was rejected in all areas bar the impact of rhyming (as a component of phonological awareness) and the segmentation of phonemes (within phonemic awareness).

The study was limited by the use of Western assessment tools that included vocabulary and images that South African learners may not have encountered. Despite the significant effect of learners' socio-economic backgrounds on reading abilities; this variable was omitted from the study.



## Further research on foundational reading skills in English First Additional Language

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Geertsema, S. and le Roux, M. 2014. *Engels Addisionele Taalleerders: Ondersteuning vir fonologiese bewustheidsuitvalle [Learners with English as additional language: Support for phonological awareness fall-outs]*, **Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe**, Vol. 54, No.1, pp. 96-110.

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doi: [10.4102/rw.v10i1.209](https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v10i1.209).

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doi: <https://doi.org/2010.4102/rw.v11i1.263>.

## **PART 2: READING COMPREHENSION**

This section focuses on reading comprehension.

Much of the research on reading comprehension is drawn from primary and secondary analyses of data emerging from the Progress in International Reading Study (PIRLS) conducted in 2006, 2011 and 2016. The reader is advised to refer to Pretorius (2018) for a more detailed discussion of PIRLS.

Pretorius, E. J. and Mampuru, D. M. 2007. *Playing football without a ball: Language, reading and academic performance in a high poverty school. Journal of Research in Reading*. Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 35–58.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9817.2006.00333.x>. [\*]

**Key words:** L1 reading, L2 reading, (additive) bilingualism, reading comprehension, academic performance, access to print material

<b>Participants and Context</b>	104 Northern Sotho Grade 7 learners (with English as L2) Quintile 1 township primary school in Gauteng
<b>Measures</b>	Dictation test in Northern Sotho and English Reading comprehension tests in Northern Sotho and English (similar, with literal and inference questions, cloze items, anaphoric resolution items)

In this article the language/reading questions in the L2 reading debate are examined from an African perspective, using data from a high poverty urban primary school attended by mainly Northern Sotho learners, where Northern Sotho is used as the LoLT in Foundation Phase and EFAL becomes the LoLT from Grade 4 onwards. The authors argue that discussions of literacy accomplishment in the African context must take into account three macro variables, viz. the complex linguistic fabric of African communities, widespread poverty, and generally low adult literacy levels. All these variables impact crucially on the educational context and give it diverse shapes and outcomes.

Language and reading comprehension in each language was tested at the beginning of the year and then again at the end of the year, first in English and then in Northern Sotho after a three-week interval. Overall, reading comprehension levels were generally low in both languages, and reading rates were slow. By the end of the year, reading comprehension in English was slightly better than in Northern Sotho. Although large discrepancies occurred between performance on the language measure and reading comprehension in the same language, the correlation between language and reading was more robust in English than in Northern Sotho. L1 proficiency did not significantly predict L1 reading performance. Instead, L2 reading was a far stronger predictor of L1 reading ability. It is suggested that this may be due to the fact that what little reading these learners do, tends to be done in the L2. Reading skills developed in a dominant language can seem to support the development of reading skills in a language in which reading is not often done.

The authors argue that the findings highlight the importance of examining more closely the ways in which factors such as quality of teaching, time spent on task, class size, availability of and access to books affect language and reading accomplishment in the L1 and L2. More carefully controlled quasi-experimental studies, the use of a variety of assessment tools, qualitative research involving classroom observations, and case studies of individual learners would help gain greater understanding of language and reading interactions in bilingual reading research in learning contexts that are so vastly different from those that generally prevail in more affluent developed countries.

Manyike, T. V. and Lemmer, E. 2008. *A comparative assessment of the L1 and L2 reading performance of Grade 7 learners in English*. *Per Linguam*. Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 62–74. doi: <https://doi.org/10.5785/24-2-44>.

**Key words:** reading, writing, comprehension, English, Xitsonga

<b>Participants and Context</b>	162 Grade 7 Xitsonga-speaking learners selected through purposive sampling from 3 schools in greater Tshwane metropolitan area, Gauteng LoLT Grade R-3 is Xitsonga and from Grade 4 onwards, LoLT is English
<b>Measures</b>	HSRC's Reading Performance Test and Writing Performance Test (intermediate level) in English and translated into Xitsonga, 40% a guideline for pass mark

This study compared the reading performance in English and Xitsonga of Grade 7, Xitsonga home language learners from three township schools. The researchers used the HSRC's standardised Reading Performance Test and Writing Performance Test (intermediate level). Only the reading performance results are discussed in this article.

In the reading comprehension test learners achieved means of 5.15 (SD=2.31) in English and 5.79 (SD=2.75) in Xitsonga out of a maximum score of 22. Over 90% of learners performed below the pass mark. There was a correlation between a strong performance in English with success in Xitsonga but not between a strong performance in Xitsonga being associated with success in English. There was no significant difference between learners' performance in English and Xitsonga ( $p>0.05$ ).

17% of learners passed the grammar component of the test with a mean of 4.13 (SD=2.31) in English and 5.14 (SD=3.24) in Xitsonga with a possible score of 18.

The authors state that providing children with only three years of instruction in EFAL is insufficient for a successful transition from Xitsonga as LoLT to English as LoLT. This is reflected in the overall results that indicate that learners lack sufficient language skills to comprehend instructions in English at a Grade 7 level.

Pretorius, E. J. and Lephalala, M. 2011. *Reading comprehension in high-poverty schools: How should it be taught and how well does it work?* *Per Linguam*. Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 1–24. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/27-2-105>.

§3.2

**Key words:** comprehension, reading, reading ability, decoding, fluency

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Grade 6 learners at 2 high poverty primary schools, Atteridgeville township, west of Pretoria. Each school had 2 Grade 6 classes Control school is Quintile 1, intervention cohort school is Quintile 3 1 period a week, 2½ terms teaching explicit comprehension
<b>Measures</b>	Quasi-experimental pre- and post-test design

In light of South African learners’ poor literacy and comprehension abilities, the authors implemented a Grade 6 reading comprehension intervention. The programme occurred once a week over two terms with the objective being to establish if explicit short-term reading comprehension interventions, over a short instructional period and in poor-resourced environments, could assist in improving learners’ comprehension abilities. The intervention provided support for reading in English second language and Northern Sotho home language. In one school, the intervention occurred during teaching time. In the second school, voluntary sessions were held after school with very low attendance and frequent cancellations and it was thus used as a control school.

The researchers conducted pre- and post-testing in both languages. There were non-significant improvements in comprehension abilities and performance at the control school. Learners from the intervention cohort improved significantly in English comprehension abilities. There were small but non-significant improvements in Northern Sotho comprehension abilities for the intervention cohort. Within the intervention cohort, stronger readers showed greater levels of improvement in comprehension abilities. Test results also indicated a close correlation between oral reading fluency and comprehension skills. The researchers thus posit that learners need to have achieved decoding fluency and accuracy before succeeding in comprehension strategies and that these should be taught concurrently.

Despite improvement in English comprehension in the intervention cohort, post-tests indicated that comprehension means remained low. The researchers express concern that the majority of learners from both schools will not have sufficient comprehension skills to manage the literacy demands of high school, particularly in terms of accessing textbook content.

The study indicated that compulsory reading interventions are more likely to achieve success than voluntary after-school interventions.

Pretorius, E. J. 2012. *Butterfly effects in reading? The relationship between decoding and comprehension in Grade 6 high poverty schools*. *Journal for Language Teaching*. Vol. 46, No. 2, pp. 74–95.

doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jlt.v46i2.5>. [\*]

## §1

**Key words:** decoding, precursor reading skills (word recognition, oral reading fluency), reading comprehension, academic literacy, high poverty schools

<b>Participants and Context</b>	305 Grade 6 Northern Sotho learners over 2 years (2008-2009) School A was a Quintile 1 township school in Gauteng with Northern Sotho as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in Foundation Phase and English as LoLT in Grade 4 School B was a Quintile 3 township school in Gauteng with English as LoLT and Northern Sotho as language subject from the start of schooling. School A = 150; School B = 155; total learners = 305
<b>Measures</b>	Longitudinal data over 2 years (2008-2009), at beginning (February) and end (November) of each year Reading comprehension (literal, inferential questions, vocabulary, cloze items, visual literacy – graphs, maps), similar in Northern Sotho and English, texts taken from Grade 6 textbooks Subsample of learners from School B from each year tested individually on phonemic awareness, word recognition and oral reading fluency in English (n=79)

Using the metaphor of butterfly effects, this paper considers how literacy inequalities in comprehension performance amongst Grade 6 learners in high poverty schools can be linked to skills that should have been developed in earlier stages of reading development. One component of the article looks at the reading comprehension skills of Grade 6 learners in the home language (HL), Northern Sotho, and in English in two disadvantaged primary schools, assessed over a two-year period, using large group pen-and-paper tests. Generally, reading comprehension levels were low, irrespective of language. Early home language instruction did not confer obvious advantages on academic literacy skills such as sequencing of events, inferencing and comprehension of visual aids. School B performed better on comprehension in both Northern Sotho and English than School A. Across both schools, learners at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile showed greater reading growth from the beginning to end of the year than learners at the 25<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> percentiles.

The second component of the article focuses on a smaller sample of learners who were then also tested individually for English decoding skills each year to see if English decoding competence could shed light on the English comprehension levels and differential reading effects amongst learners. Strong correlations were found between three measures of decoding skills and reading comprehension, with oral reading fluency a strong predictor of comprehension. The pedagogical implications of these findings for early reading instruction in South African classrooms are briefly discussed.

Manyike, T. and Lemmer, E. 2015. *Lessons from small-scale standardised testing of English reading and writing performance in two types of primary schools in South Africa. Journal for Language Teaching*. Vol. 49, No. 1, pp. 53–79.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.4314/jlt.v49i1.3>.

**Key words:** home language, English second language, reading, writing, Grade 7, standardised testing

<b>Participants and Context</b>	31 Grade 7 learners from a former Model C school: Forest Primary 23 Grade 7 learners from an independent for-profit school: Maxima College Greater Tzaneen municipality, Limpopo
<b>Measures</b>	HSRC's Reading Performance Test and Writing Performance Test in English (Intermediate Phase). 40% considered as a pass mark

In this article, the researchers report on their findings of small-scale standardised testing of Grade 7 learners' English reading and writing abilities at the two schools. Both schools use Xitsonga, the learners' home language, as the LoLT for Foundation Phase and transfer to English as LoLT in Grade 4. The purpose of the testing was to identify specific needs requiring attention in both schools.

In assessing reading comprehension (maximum score 22) Forest Primary learners achieved a mean of 11.77 and Maxima College 8.86. Within the grammar component (maximum score 18) Forest Primary achieved a mean of 7.23, and Maxima College, 4.59. In presenting the combined results, Forest Primary (mean=19, maximum score = 40) significantly outperformed Maxima College (mean=13.46). Nineteen of the Forest Primary learners performed above the 40% pass mark while the majority of Maxima College learners failed.

Forest Primary (mean=37.32 of maximum score 50) outperformed Maxima College (35.91) in writing but by a smaller margin. The researchers posit that the stronger writing assessment results to the presence of a sequence of five illustration that served as prompts; while there were no such prompts in the reading assessment.

The researchers attribute Forest Primary's stronger results to experienced, well-qualified teachers, access to better resources, and academic support and additional extra-curricular language being offered to struggling learners. Further, Forest Primary parents and the surrounding community participate in the school to a greater degree than at Maxima College.

The researchers state that, although this is a small-scale study, it is valuable as it enables the two schools to identify required focus areas. Additionally, the findings may assist other schools that face comparable challenges to conduct similar assessments. They recommend, however, that this form of assessment is complemented by ongoing assessment at the school.



Pretorius, E. J. and Spaull, N. 2016. *Exploring relationships between oral reading fluency and reading comprehension amongst English second language readers in South Africa. Reading and Writing*. Vol. 29, No. 7 pp. 1449–1471.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-016-9645-9>.

§1

**Key words:** English second language, Grade 5 learners, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Non-random sample of 1 772 Grade 5 English Second Language (ESL) learners from 214 rural schools across all 9 provinces for testing oral reading fluency (ORF) and reading comprehension Learners are a subset of 4 697 learners from 214 rural schools who participated in a 2013 NEEDU study. ( <i>National Education Evaluation and Development Unit. 2014. NEEDU Grade 5 Reading Study</i> . Pretoria: NEEDU.) 1 Grade 5 class per school
<b>Measures</b>	40 minute written reading comprehension test Oral reading fluency test (2x 200 word narrative texts)

There is limited large-scale quantitative data available on the correlation between English ORF and comprehension levels for English second language speakers, particularly within developing countries. This is despite strong empirical evidence indicating that such a relationship exists. Addressing this limitation is important within the South African context as the majority of learners are ESL speakers but, from Grade 4 onwards, English is the LoLT. Establishing what level of ORF is acceptable is necessary for indicating when interventions and remediation are required and for informing policy development. This article responds to this limited data by, firstly, investigating the strength of the relationship between ORF and comprehension for rural South African Grade 5 ESL learners and, secondly, by establishing if there are differential returns to additional fluency at different points in the ORF continuum in relation to reading comprehension.

All learners in each Grade 5 class completed a 40-minute written reading comprehension test (readability equivalent to Flesch–Kincaid levels of Grade 4.9), consisting of literal and inferential questions. Thereafter, ten learners per class (three top, four middle and three bottom achievers) participated in an ORF test where two texts were presented with Flesch–Kincaid levels of Grade 3.8 and 4.3 respectively. Learners achieved poorly in both tests scoring an average of 23% in the silent reading comprehension test and averaging 46 words correct per minute (WCPM) in the ORF assessment.

Using a multivariate analysis, the authors reported that an increase in ORF of 31 WCPM results in a 14%-point increase in reading comprehension levels after controlling for school-level and some individual-level variables. This confirms the strong relationship between ORF and reading comprehension skills. In answering the second research question, the authors concluded that, at lower levels of fluency, additional fluency has a stronger impact on reading comprehension levels. While this evens out at 90 WCPM in first language research, initial findings indicate a threshold of 70 WCPM for rural ESL speakers.

Mgijima, V. D. 2019. *Trajectories of the effects of translanguaging on reading comprehension among IsiXhosa-English multilingual learners*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of the Witwatersrand.

**Key words:** translanguaging, reading comprehension, inferencing, text recall, text prediction, text reorganisation

<b>Participants and Context</b>	<p>4 rural, Quintile 2 primary schools in Matatiele District, Eastern Cape                  215 Grade 4 learners, 9-12 years                  2 experimental and 2 control groups                  78 learners (54 from Group A, an experimental group, 24 from Group C, a control group) completed isiXhosa pre-test                  82 learners (51 from Group A, 30 from Group C) did English pre-test                  215 learners completed isiXhosa post-test; 210 learners completed English post-test                  Variation in number of learners due to absenteeism on day of a test                  Grade 1-3, LoLT=isiXhosa, Grade 4, LoLT=English                  4 teachers (Groups A and B) received training in translanguaging techniques</p>
<b>Measures</b>	<p>Mixed-method analysis                  Solomon four, pre- and post-quasi experimental design                  Reading comprehension tests, 15 questions</p>

This thesis investigates if the implementation of translanguaging techniques in teaching reading resulted in improved reading comprehension in isiXhosa (learners' home language) and English (LoLT and an additional language). It assessed potential improvements in four focus areas: drawing inferences from texts, recalling information, text re-organisation (summary skills) and the ability to make predictions when reading a text. Four teachers received training in translanguaging techniques prior to the intervention. They were also provided with lesson plans and stories to use in lessons.

Combined results from isiXhosa tests indicated a statistically significant differences in learners' recall abilities, ability to draw inferences, and reorganisation of texts when learners were exposed to translanguaging techniques. There was no statistically significant difference in learners' ability to make predictions. English test results revealed no statistically significant difference in recall abilities between experimental and control groups. There were significant differences between drawing inferences, making predictions and text reorganisation. Learners performed better in isiXhosa tests. It could be that they lack sufficient English vocabulary and understanding to complete assessments in English.

Overall results indicate that translanguaging techniques have a positive effect on learners' reading comprehension. However, variables such as learners' vocabulary, familiarity with the context, an ability to bring necessary background knowledge to the text, and learners' writing skills also influence learners' reading comprehension and/or their ability to respond to questions. The researcher concludes that a classroom environment that supports the incorporation of translanguaging in teaching facilitates knowledge acquisition and successful learning.

## Further research on reading comprehension

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doi: <https://doi.org/10.5785/26-1-12>.

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## **PART 3: READING INSTRUCTION**

Part 3 focuses on reading instruction and teachers' classroom and literacy practices in teaching EFAL reading.

The majority of annotations are on teachers' approaches to reading instruction and implementing reading strategies within the classroom. Additionally, this section reports on reading and literacy interventions that have attempted to provide support in improving learners' reading.

This section is organised into five parts, according to the different phases of formal schooling in South Africa. These are Foundation Phase (Grade R-3), Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-6), Senior Phase (Grade 7-9) and Further Education and Training (FET) Phase (Grade 10-12).

## PART 3A: READING INSTRUCTION: FOUNDATION PHASE

Kruizinga, A. and Nathanson, R. 2010. *An evaluation of guided reading in three primary schools in the Western Cape*. *Per Linguam*. Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 67–76.

doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/26-2-22>.

**Key words:** guided reading, literacy levels, reading policy

<b>Participants and Context</b>	6 Grade 1 and 2 teachers at 3 government schools in the Western Cape School A: Afrikaans as LoLT School B: isiXhosa as LoLT School C: Afrikaans as LoLT
<b>Measures</b>	Fountas & Pinnell's Guided Reading instruction Self-Assessment (completed by 6 teachers and the researcher) Guided Reading Self-Assessment Inventory (completed by researcher) Classroom observations

In their efforts to improve South African children's low literacy levels, the government advocated for guided reading in their National Reading Strategy (2008) and the Foundation for Learning Campaign (2008) to assist with reading for meaning. In this study, the researcher (Kruizinga) evaluated teachers' abilities to implement guided reading according to these guidelines. All six teachers reported adhering to these guidelines.

The researcher conducted non-participant classroom observations for a period of one week at each school. Each teacher completed a self-assessment of their ability to implement guided reading. Following observations, the researcher completed the self-assessment test for each teacher, based on observations. In all instances, the teachers' self-evaluations were higher than the evaluations made by the researcher.

Teachers from only one of the schools followed the implementation guidelines set out by government but still struggled with assisting children to read for understanding. Other teachers focused on children reading aloud and not reading strategies. Teachers struggled to use appropriate texts due to a shortage of books and not having levelled readers to assist with level selection. All teachers had a limited understanding of implementing guided reading. They did not engage interactively with children and children were grouped according to where they were seated and not their reading levels. Without providing additional support, improved resources and clearer guidelines, teachers are unlikely to change their current methodologies which are based on their limited understanding of guided reading. Although it was conducted on a small-scale, the study suggests that government is not providing sufficient guidance or materials to assist teachers in implementing this method.

In Schools A and B, the researcher focused on reading in the LoLT only. In School C, the evaluation was of guided reading in Afrikaans and EFAL.

Singh, R. J. 2010. *Teaching reading to English first additional language (EFAL) foundation phase learners*. *Mousaion*. Vol. 28, No. 2, pp. 117–130.  
<http://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC123995>.

**Key words:** reading, Foundation Phase, English first additional language, home language. Multilingualism

Participants and Context	1 Foundation Phase teacher with 26 years' experience. For 16 years she has taught home language isiZulu learners in classrooms where English is LoLT
Measures	Open-ended questionnaire Telephonic interview

This article presents a case study of one experienced home language isiZulu Foundation Phase teacher's approach to teaching reading in classrooms where English is the LoLT and learners are home language isiZulu speakers. Initial data was generated from an open-ended questionnaire that the teacher completed, stating her approach to teaching reading in EFAL. This was followed by a telephonic interview to corroborate responses.

The researcher describes the teacher's approach to reading as holistic and praises the teacher's use of a balanced approach to teaching reading that includes phonics, look and say (the use of flash cards), and group reading. The researcher relayed that the teacher faces many challenges that impact negatively on learning to read, e.g, learners' inability to speak English, limited supported for reading in the home environment and children being tired due to travelling long distances. However, the researcher concludes that the participating teacher's success in developing learners' reading skills highlights that, if learners are taught well, they can succeed in learning to read regardless of their circumstances.

Based on the case study and a review of literature on reading in South Africa, the author suggests that daily teaching and revision of phonetics, the implementation of a balanced reading programme, increased teacher training and commitment, and a heightened awareness of South Africa's multicultural diversity can all contribute to success in teaching reading. The importance of the Department of Education's role is emphasised. This role should include implementing a strategy for teaching reading in EFAL, improved pre- and in-service teacher training on teaching reading in an additional language, clearer policies as to the role of English as LoLT beyond foundation phase, and the monitoring and evaluation of learning, reading and writing skills at the end of each year of Foundation Phase.



Lenyai, E. 2011. *First additional language teaching in the foundation phase of schools in disadvantaged areas*. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*. Vol. 1, No. 1, Article 76. doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v1i1.76>.

**Key words:** English, first additional language (FAL), Foundation Phase, teaching, language skills, language of learning and teaching (LoLT)

Participants and Context	30 Foundation Phase teachers from 10 township schools in Gauteng 3 teachers were selected from each school, with 1 teacher selected randomly from Grade 1, 2 and 3 respectively
Measures	Qualitative interviews Classroom and learning observations Document review (learners' books)

This study focuses on the teaching of English literacy in Foundation Phase classrooms where English is taught as FAL. It investigates teachers' ability to teach and equip learners with the necessary communication skills for a successful transition from studying EFAL as a subject in Foundation Phase to adopting English as the LoLT from Grade 4.

Classroom observations revealed that Grade 1 teachers focused on teaching reading in the home language and did not devote time to reading in English. Grade 2 teachers sometimes devoted limited time to teaching English vocabulary but it was often disregarded. Grade 3 teachers focused on structural issues such as grammar and building vocabulary. If reading occurred, teachers concentrated on pronunciation and neglected comprehension. There was no evidence of English creative writing in any of the grades. Children were unable to communicate fluently in English or read with comprehension.

28 teachers reported that they use a phonics approach and two stated they use a combination of phonics and whole word in teaching reading in English. The researcher provided no explanation of how educators understood these teaching approaches. CAPS states the importance of teaching the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing in an integrated manner. However, only three teachers reported covering all four skills. Fifteen teachers experience challenges with teaching letters and words, 28 with comprehension, 15 with reading and writing and all 30 teachers with speaking.

The researcher concluded that teachers are ill-equipped to prepare learners for the demands of Grade 4 and adopting English as LoLT. She recommends in-depth, in-service training to equip teachers in the effective implementation of CAPS and to assist them in employing a range of methods to improve learners' communication skills and comprehension levels. She contends that English should be introduced as an additional language from as early as Grade R and that the Department of Basic Education must ensure teachers are completing the EFAL requirements outlined in CAPS.

van der Mescht, C. 2013. *Positions on the Mat: A micro-ethnographic study of teachers' and learners' co-construction of an early literacy practice*. Unpublished PhD thesis. Rhodes University.

**Key words:** literacy practices, Grade 1, reading, decoding, assessment, agency

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Study occurred over 1 year in 3 Grade 1 classes in former-Model C schools, Eastern Cape
<b>Measures</b>	Qualitative, ethnographic study Participant observation Field notes, video and audio recordings Teacher interviews Analysis of reports, assessments and texts used during the literacy event

In this thesis, the author studied a core, daily literacy practice – reading on the mat – in three Foundation Phase classrooms. Although the study was conducted in schools where English is the LoLT, the majority of learners are EFAL speakers and teachers are faced with the challenge of supporting English home language and FAL speakers simultaneously. The author approached the study by analysing approach on analysing teachers' identity forming decisions, discourse and actions through micro-interactions that occurred during the daily literacy practice of reading on the mat. The literacy practice takes a similar approach to read as that of group guided reading with the teacher and a small group of learners sitting in close proximity.

Findings revealed that the supportive, small-group environment assisted in children identifying themselves as successful readers and enacting specific reading practices. Their confidence as readers grew considerably, as did their enjoyment of reading. However, several factors impacted the positive outcomes of this literacy event. Firstly, an over-emphasis on decoding decreased the time spent on questioning and engaging with whole texts, and on the comprehension of these texts. Consequently, learners identified themselves as primarily code breakers. Teachers' selection of texts was the primary determinant of their identity as code breakers. Secondly, the teachers' choice of questioning practices and their attention to preparing for assessment limited children's agency in their construction of themselves as capable and competent readers. Finally, the concentration on decoding and preparing for reading assessment diverted attention from the importance of considering and responding to cultural and linguistic diversity and differences within the classroom, thereby disregarding the bilingual identity of Afrikaans and isiXhosa speakers.

The author concluded that the enactment of these literacy practices was key in developing an understanding of what reading is and who readers are as children learn to read in Grade One. The author acknowledges the limitations of the research being conducted in only three classrooms within a specific context but posits that a detailed study such as this can contribute to other studies and further research.

Govender, R. 2015. *Factors that affect foundation phase English second language learners' reading and writing skills*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of South Africa.

**Key words:** second language acquisition, home language, reading, writing, phonics, parents, CAPS

<b>Participants and Context</b>	4 urban and 1 semi-rural school. All schools are well-resourced English medium primary schools in Port Shepstone, KwaZulu-Natal Combination of English home language and isiZulu home language speakers 48 Foundation Phase teachers, across 5 schools Class sizes of 30-49
<b>Measures</b>	Mixed-method Phenomenological study Survey: stratified sampling of 10% of parents/caregivers per school Participant observation of reading and writing lessons Semi-structured individual teacher interviews

This study investigates the factors that affect foundation phase, isiZulu home language learners' reading and writing skills when attending English medium schools. It then provides suggestions for improving learners' reading and writing ability. This annotation concentrates on learners' reading skills and practices.

Parent/caregiver responses indicate a majority belief that their children are proficient in oral English and have good reading and writing skills. In contrast, educators rated learners' skills at a lower level, with phonics and pronunciation reported as particular areas of struggle. While some learners are anxious when reading in English, parents/caregivers and educators report that many learners' attitude to reading and writing is positive in English. Often, learners' only exposure to English is at school and this limited opportunity to speak English is reflected in poor reading and writing ability.

A phonics approach to teaching reading dominated. Educators contend that CAPS' requirements are too demanding for second language learners and that the curriculum provides inadequate guidance on teaching phonics. They further state that there is inadequate teaching time due to the extensive focus CAPS places on assessments.

The author concludes that many educators require additional knowledge of second language acquisition. Pre and in-service teachers need to be supported in developing a range of skills to teach reading and writing to second language learners, in this instance isiZulu learners. This could include approaching reading and writing through a combination of the whole language, phonics and the language experience approaches. Furthermore, if educators increase their Zulu proficiency, they will be better positioned to communicate with isiZulu learners, and to teach reading and writing effectively. An additional key finding is that stronger interaction among parents/caregivers and schools would contribute positively to an improvement in learners' English reading and writing skills.

Prosper, A. and Nomlomo, V. 2016. *Literacy for all? Using multilingual reading stories for literacy development in a Grade One classroom in the Western Cape*. *Per Linguam*. Vol. 32, No. 3, pp. 79–94.

doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/32-3-622>.

**Key words:** Grade 1, multilingualism, biliteracy, readers, home language

Participants and Context	Grade 1 class in a former Model C school with English as LoLT Learners' average age was 7 years. 17 isiXhosa HL speakers; 12 Afrikaans HL speakers; 6 English HL speakers; 1 HL speaker of the following: Setswana, French, Lingala, Shona and Kirundi Afrikaans HL teacher fluent in English and Afrikaans isiXhosa-speaking teacher assistant competent in English
Measures	Observations of 17 literacy lessons over a 5-month period Field notes for all lessons and video recording of 6, randomly selected lessons Semi-structured interviews with the teacher and teacher assistant

The school in this study participated in the Western Cape Education Department's (WCED) Literacy for All project that aimed to support literacy instruction, and to promote multilingualism and biliteracy. As part of the project, the school received English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa Kagiso readers that were the same stories across languages.

The authors observed a multilingual Grade 1 classroom with English as the assigned LoLT. The authors focused, firstly, on if the multilingual readers were effectively used to improve multilingual literacy in two of more languages (English being one of the languages) and, secondly, on the readers' limitations.

At the beginning of a lesson, the teacher and her assistant read the books in Afrikaans and isiXhosa respectively and then translated the stories into English. This took place because the teacher places importance on learners reading books in their home languages to facilitate comprehension. However, learners were not given the chance to read the texts in their home language and all tasks, consolidation of the lessons and assessments were in English. Although reading the stories in Afrikaans and isiXhosa assisted in scaffolding reading comprehension, the teacher and assistant did not use the multilingual resources to integrate reading, writing and speaking with listening in Afrikaans and isiXhosa and thus did not sufficiently support these components of literacy development in any language other than English. The five learners of other languages received no support in their language so had unequal learning opportunities.

The teacher assistant was not trained in teaching reading and was guided by the teacher's strategies. Neither the teacher nor the teacher assistant was adequately trained in implementing multilingualism strategies as the teacher had attended only one workshop and the teacher assistant had had no training. Thus, while the teacher and teacher assistant had bilingual competency, they both lacked awareness of how to use the Kagiso readers in implementing multilingualism for literacy development.

The multilingual readers provided learners access to listening to reading in their home language (if Afrikaans or isiXhosa), but as they were not employed in reading, writing and speaking tasks in Afrikaans or isiXhosa, their success was limited. The authors acknowledge the small scale of the study but concluded that, based on their findings, the project failed to lay strong literacy foundations and that additional teacher training from the WCED is essential to the project's success.

Sibanda, J. 2017. *Grade 3 ESL teachers' (mis)conceptions about vocabulary acquisition, learning and instruction: A case study*, *Journal for Language Teaching*, Vol. 51, No 1, pp. 115–139.

**Key words:** vocabulary development, vocabulary learning and acquisition, incidental and explicit instruction, teacher practices

<b>Participants and Context</b>	10 Grade 3 teachers, isiXhosa as HL from 8 schools (2 schools in each of 4 selected Eastern Cape school districts) LoLT isiXhosa School criteria: functional, not multi-grade, not former Model C.
<b>Measures</b>	Case study Semi-structured, recorded interviews

Based on the premise that teachers' conceptions and beliefs are reflected in their pedagogical practices, this study explored ten Grade 3 teachers' conceptualisation and teaching of ESL vocabulary acquisition, learning and instruction in ESL.

Core findings indicated that teachers taught ESL and vocabulary acquisition and learning intuitively. The teaching of vocabulary was frequently decontextualised and the selected vocabulary was drawn primarily from textbooks. Explicit vocabulary instruction was favoured by 7 teachers with the remaining three advocating for a combination of explicit instruction and incidental acquisitions. The majority of teachers' [n=7] presentation of their practices reflected a teacher-centred approach with frequent use of word drilling, flash cards and writing words on the chalkboard; and learners considered unable to learn independently.

In discussing learners' exposure to English outside the classroom, all teachers agreed that learners learnt new English words outside of the classroom environment with television and interaction with friends and older children most commonly cited as sources of exposure. Teachers were divided as to how isiXhosa complemented ESL learning but overall findings suggested that learners benefited from code-switching and translations from isiXhosa. However, differences in orthography, phonics and pronunciation impeded the learning of ESL vocabulary.

Omidire, F., Ebersöhn, L., Leask, M., Konza, D., and du Plessis, A-B. 2018. *A case study of teaching English as a second language in three rural primary classes*, ***Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies***, Vol. 36, No. 4, pp. 277–290.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.2989/16073614.2018.1548289>

**Key words:** English first additional language, content, learning process, product, assessment, learning environment, literacy skills, language

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Research was conducted in 1 Grade 3 classroom in a rural school, and 2 Grade 3 classrooms in another rural school 3 educators Majority of learners speak siSwati as home language
<b>Measures</b>	Mixed-method comparative case study Data collection through non-participative classroom observations, semi-structured interviews and document review Quantitative data generated through the Classroom Observation Schedule Revised (CLOS-R) 4 field trips (duration of 1 week) over a 2 year period Observation of 3 educators

This study explores reasons for poor reading assessment results in rural schools by analysing how EFAL teaching is conducted in three Grade 3 classrooms. Findings were situated within a differentiation instruction theoretical framework and organised according to the choice of content, the learning process, the product of teaching, and the learning environment. The CLOS-R scale was included to ensure data validity.

Researchers considered explicit instruction practices and language proficiency in analysing content differentiation. This revealed unclear lesson planning and a lack of adherence to lesson plans and CAPS guidelines. In developing vocabulary, English words or texts were translated directly to siSwati, without ensuring learners' comprehension or offering opportunities to practise the vocabulary. Similarly, in developing language proficiency, the necessary consistent and frequent practice of reading, writing, speaking and meaning making in English was lacking. Within the learning process, there was inadequate support for learners and their individual needs. Educators failed to contextualise teaching to meet learners' interests or to build upon their existing knowledge base. Teaching was conducted at a single level with no adjustment for learners' varying abilities. Assessments were poorly planned, unclear and did not allow learners to demonstrate their literacy knowledge. This prohibits educators from adapting teaching practices and/or content to respond to learners' needs. Finally, educators failed to create effective literacy and learning environments within their classrooms. No schools had a library or books and learners had to rely on photocopied texts or their educators borrowing books from other schools. Where visual support materials (e.g., vocabulary charts) were available, they did not relate to content or educators did not refer to them. Learners were well-behaved during observations but the teaching methods was centred on the educator and prohibited learners from engaging in discussions or meaning making.

The majority of learners live in homes where literacy resources and practices are absent. This, combined with the lack of opportunities to improve literacy skills within the classroom impedes the development of learners' EFAL reading and literacy skills.



Schaffler, D., Nel, M. and Booyesen, R. 2019. *Exploring South African Foundation Phase teachers' understanding, skills and training needs in the teaching of phonological awareness*, *The Language Learning Journal*.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2019.1655585>

§ 1

**Key words:** phonological awareness, reading, English second language, foundation phase

<b>Participants and Context</b>	5 Setswana HL, Foundation Phase teachers, teaching English second language (ESL) 2 rural, Quintile 1 primary schools in North West Learners HL: Setswana, Zulu, Xhosa, Tsonga Foundation Phase LoLT: Setswana
<b>Measures</b>	Multiple case study, constituting two phases (this article reports on Phase 1) Open-ended questionnaire, semi-structured individual teacher interviews (interview schedule determined by questionnaire responses) Classroom observations of phonological awareness teaching and learning only (20 minutes, 4 days a week for 6 continuous weeks, per teacher) Document analysis of Grade 1-3 CAPS EFAL documents and other DBE support materials Comparative data analysis, data analysed through axial coding

This study investigates five ESL speaking foundation phase teachers' understanding of phonological awareness (PA), their PA skills and what training they require to teach PA effectively.

Educators lacked knowledge of PA. They acknowledged this yet attributed learners' poor PA skills to the learners' limited English ability rather than their own teaching methods. They could not explain the term phonological awareness and often associated it with phonics. Lessons that purportedly taught PA were centred on phonics. These lessons took the form of rote teaching and observations revealed teachers' own pronunciation was poor and/or sounds were over-articulated. They struggled to clarify core concepts, with syllabification being particularly problematic. Assessment instruments focused on phonics and not PA. If teachers identified struggling learners, they stated they could not provide individual support due to time constraints. Although DBE materials were available with PA specific activities, teachers did not use them.

The CAPS EFAL policy document analysis indicated no explicit definitions for PA, phonemic awareness and phonics, with the three terms used interchangeably. Teachers reported receiving inadequate support from the DBE. School visits centred on reviewing learners' work and not teacher support. They stated that the limited training on teaching phonological awareness the DBE has offered, further confused them. They professed the need for additional, clearer training to improve their teaching of PA.

Addressing this inadequate understanding of PA is essential, for both pre and in-service teachers. PA skills are critical in learning to read and without sufficient PA skills, progression as readers is threatened. This necessitates stronger training and support from the DBE and a curriculum that provides sufficient time and guidelines for ensuring PA is well-taught and learners develop a strong reading foundation.

## Further research on reading instruction in the Foundation Phase

Gains, P. 2010. *Learning about literacy: Teachers' conceptualisations and enactments of early literacy pedagogy in South African Grade One classrooms*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of the Witwatersrand.

Verbeek, C. 2010. *Teaching reading for meaning? A case study of the initial teaching of reading in a mainstream South African school*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Mbatha, T. 2014. *Experiences of foundation phase teachers qualified in a dual medium programme*. **Per Linguam**. Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 37–50. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/30-2-564>.

Schaffler, D. 2015. *A support programme for foundation phase second language educators to improve the teaching of phonological awareness*. Unpublished PhD thesis. North-West University.

Nel, N., Krog, S., et al. 2016. *Research partnership between South Africa and China: Emergent literacy teaching and learning in early childhood education in South Africa*. **Per Linguam**. Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 102–122. doi: <https://doi.org/10.5785/32-1-647>.

Nel, N., Mohangi, K., et al. 2016. *An overview of Grade R literacy teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms in South Africa*. **Per Linguam**. Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 47–65. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/32-2-651>.

Mbhalati, N. B. 2017. *Instructional guidance for literacy teaching in Limpopo, South Africa: A case study of the foundation phase policy and practice*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of the Free State.

## PART 3B: READING INSTRUCTION: INTERMEDIATE PHASE

van Staden, A. 2011. *Put reading first: Positive effects of direct instruction and scaffolding for ESL learners struggling with reading*, *Perspectives in Education*. Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 10–21. <http://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC87652>.

§1, §2

**Key words:** sight words, vocabulary, comprehension, decoding, syntactic awareness, explicit instruction, English second language (ESL) learners

<b>Participants and Context</b>	<p>288 Intermediate Phase ESL learners with typical below grade-level performance in reading (156 boys, 132 girls): n=96 per grade. Control group, n=144, targeted group, n=144</p> <p>24 randomly selected primary schools, Free State province 24 practising teachers completing their Honour's in support teaching. 6 month intervention and occurred in the teachers' own classrooms</p>
<b>Measures</b>	<p>Quasi-experimental pre-test and post-test design UCT reading tests Diagnostic tests of syntactic awareness and reading comprehension, standardised for South Africa</p>

This article reports on a study investigating the impact of direct/explicit small-group instruction on ESL Intermediate Phase learners' reading ability and of providing support for their teachers (the 24 post-graduate students) in applying certain reading strategies and techniques. The 24 students attended four hours' training prior to the intervention and one four-hour training session per month for five months. The study formed part of a larger study on ESL teachers' and learners' experiences of reading in the classroom.

Learners in the control group followed their prescribed curriculum. Participating learners were placed in small groups of two to six learners and attended two 45 minutes sessions per week over a six-month period. The students provided participating learners with small-group, evidence-based direct instruction reading which used Fernald's visual, auditory, kinetic and tactile approach combined with interactive word-wall exercises. These were used to target improvements in 1) sight word recognition, 2) vocabulary knowledge, 3) word-decoding strategies, 4) syntactic awareness and 5) reading comprehension. A quasi-experimental pre- and post-design was used to assess intervention results.

There was a statistically significant improvement ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the targeted schools across all five measures. Cohen's d-test was calculated indicated a moderate practical significance for

this study. No statistically significant difference occurred in any of the five measures for the control group.

The results indicate the value of explicit, evidence-based direct reading instruction in improving reading skills. The author hopes that presenting research in this under-researched area will assist teachers to reflect on their approaches to teaching reading and offer policy-makers the opportunity to guide and support struggling learners.

Combrinck, C., van Staden, S. and Roux, K. 2014. *Developing early readers: Patterns in introducing critical reading skills and strategies to South African children*, **Reading & Writing**, Vol. 5, No. 1, Article 45.

<https://rw.org.za/index.php/rw/article/view/45/99>

§1

**Key words:** Early home literacy activities, parental interaction, reading skills and strategies, early reading instructional focus

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Parents of Grade 4 learners and principals in 342 schools across all provinces in SA, stratified by language so that learners were assessed in all African languages
<b>Measures</b>	Questionnaire survey for parents on early home literacy activities Questionnaire survey for principals on introduction of early reading skills and strategies

This article draws on data collected for the preProgress in Reading Literacy Study (prePIRLS) (2011), in which 15,744 Grade 4 learners in South Africa were tested for reading comprehension skills across all African languages as well as Afrikaans and English. The Grade 4 learners were tested in the language which served as the LoLT during the Foundation Phase. The prePIRLS results from 2011 showed that as many as 29% of South African Grade 4 learners did not reach the Low International Benchmark in prePIRLS 2011, not having mastered basic reading skills. A majority of 71% of South African Grade 4 learners reached the Low International Benchmark. These learners are unable to make straightforward inferences, integrate ideas and evidence across text or interpret events to provide reasons, motivations or feelings with full text-based support.

The article examines how often South African parents engage in early home reading activities with their preschool learners and when critical reading skills and strategies first receive major instructional emphasis in primary schools. In all, 14 reading skills and strategies are identified, ranging from basic to ones with increasing complexity. The focus then shifts to the effect of early home literacy activities and the early introduction of and exposure to comprehension skills and strategies in the classroom on Grade 4 reading achievement scores.

The study found a delayed introduction of four critical reading skills and strategies in the Foundation Phase, despite an indication in the curriculum that these activities should be introduced in Grade 1. These neglected reading skills and strategies included reading isolated sentences, reading connected text, locating information within text and identifying the main idea of a text. The findings indicate that early home literacy activities which, when conducted frequently by parents before the child starts school, have a positive impact on Grade 4 reading achievement, especially if reading skills and strategies are introduced early in primary schools. Learners have a higher chance of mastering reading skills if parents engage in literacy activities with their preschool children and if schools have a strong focus on early instruction in a range of basic reading skills.

Zimmerman, L. 2014. *Lessons learnt: Observation of Grade 4 reading comprehension teaching in South African schools across the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2006 achievement spectrum. Reading & Writing*. Vol. 5, No. 1, Article 48. doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v5i1.48>.

**Key words:** Grade 4, comprehension, PIRLS, vocabulary exposition, text choice

<b>Participants and Context</b>	6 Grade 4 classrooms, 5 in Gauteng schools and 1 classroom in a KwaZulu-Natal school All schools participated in PIRLS 2006 School A independent, mostly white children, English First Language (EFL) school (PIRLS score: 550); School B public suburban school, black, white, Indian and Asian children, EFL (475); School C public urban school, mostly black children, EFL (400); School D township school, black children, EFL (325) School E urban school, black and mixed-race children, EFL, (325); School F rural township school, black children, English Additional language (EAL) school (175)
<b>Measures</b>	Case study Observation of 1 Grade 4 comprehension lesson per school Teacher and Head of Department interviews, learner workbook reviews, photographs of classroom environments, questionnaires, lesson observations

As part of a larger study, the researcher conducted classroom observations of one Grade 4 English reading comprehension class per school to add to the limited data on how approaching the teaching and learning of reading leads to children's reading successes and failures.

The schools were selected according to their performance in the PIRLS test. Schools D, E and F performed below the international low benchmark and School A, B and C scored in the high, intermediate and low international benchmarks respectively.

The analysis focused on the suitability of texts chosen by the respective teachers and the questions they asked to assess comprehension. Lesson expositions and teacher-learner interactions were also compared.

The comparisons across schools indicated a discrepancy in appropriacy of texts. Findings suggest that teachers may struggle with text selection and, in lower performing schools, as to how to generate sound comprehension questions. Teachers struggled to work at a grade level and pace lessons accordingly. The teacher at the highest performing school (School A) was the only teacher who used a wide range of activities and strategies to teach and assess reading comprehension. The remaining teachers did some vocabulary exposition but missed opportunities for comprehension. Children in the three higher-performing schools were more comfortable engaging with their teachers.

The study suggests that teachers often do not know how to teach comprehension effectively, cannot apply comprehension strategies, and do not realise that children need repeated exposure to opportunities for the development of higher-order thinking and reasoning processes that facilitate successful reading.



Ntsala, S., Koen, M. and Loock, I. 2017. *Investigating teaching strategies for reading in the Motheo Education District*, *Journal for Language Teaching*, Vol. 51, No. 1, pp. 249–269. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jlt.v50i2.10>.

**Key words:** Intermediate Phase, teaching reading method, comprehension, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, fluency, resources

Participants and Context	8 Intermediate Phase (IP) teachers participated in interviews 80 teachers responded to questionnaire All teachers were from the Motheo Education District Majority of teachers taught in township schools where the LoLT was English and EFAL was a subject
Measures	Qualitative thematic analysis of interviews Descriptive quantitative analysis of questionnaires

In this two-part study comprising interviews and a questionnaire, the authors investigated 80 IP, EFAL teachers based in the Motheo District’s approaches to teaching reading. In the interviews, eight teachers were asked to describe the methods they use in reading (e.g., shared, independent), components of reading, factors inhibiting teaching reading, their classroom environment, and the use of technology in the reading classrooms. The questionnaire that followed the interview focussed on similar topics.

Questionnaire responses indicated that over 50% of teachers believed they had good or very good understanding of shared, paired, independent and group-guided reading but this contradicted the qualitative data, generated from interviews, that suggested teachers are not clear in or do not know how to carry out paired, independent and group-guided methods. In both qualitative and quantitative data, teachers stated they struggled with read aloud with only 21% of teachers claiming to have good or very good understanding of this method in the questionnaire.

Over 75% of teachers who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they understand and always or sometimes devote attention to the following components of reading: comprehension, phonemic awareness, vocabulary and fluency. The authors state that the qualitative analysis of interviews indicated a general contradiction between these responses and interview data but do not provide a detailed analysis of this.

Across interviews and questionnaires, teachers indicated that limited resources and time, poor parental involvement, weak reading foundations, grade promotion policies and large classes inhibited their success in reading instruction. In completing the questionnaires, only 25% of teachers stated that they often make an effort to improve their physical classroom environment with the remaining 75% citing the above inhibiting factors as a common reason for never or seldom focusing on creating a classroom environment conducive to reading.

The authors briefly commented that not all schools have access to technology and that, where it is available, teachers often lack the necessary technological skills and require additional support if they are to use it effectively.

In response to their findings that the majority of teachers have insufficient understanding of reading and teaching reading methods, the authors emphasise the importance of ongoing in-service training for teachers and of teachers being better equipped with and prepared to use reading resources to create appealing classroom environments.

Fesi, L. 2018. *Strategies used by teachers to promote reading in Grade 4: A case of English First Additional Language learners*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Fort Hare.

**Key words:** reading strategies, English first additional language, teacher training, Natural Science

<b>Participants and Context</b>	4 primary schools in Buffalo City district 12 Grade 4 English and Natural Sciences teachers: 2 English teachers and 1 Natural Science teacher per school, selected through purposive sampling
<b>Measures</b>	Semi-structured interviews with 12 teachers Observations Qualitative case study analysed using critical discourse analysis

This research sought to establish what strategies teachers employ in teaching reading in EFAL and the key challenges they face in implementing these strategies. According to these findings, the author makes suggestions as to how teachers could be supported in addressing these challenges.

As this was a qualitative study involving only twelve teachers, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions. The dominant challenge across schools was addressing the transition from Grade 3 to 4 as many learners cannot read in their home language and cannot speak English. Therefore, it is not possible for them to succeed as EFAL readers. Additional core findings were that teachers' ability to teach reading effectively is challenged by overcrowded classrooms and poor discipline, insufficient infrastructure, limited reading materials, and learners receiving inadequate support from their parents/guardians. How teachers approached teaching reading varied but the author identified teachers employing pre-, during and post- reading strategies as frequent. Additionally, some teachers included teaching phonics, phonemic awareness and vocabulary in their reading strategies. There was a divide in Natural Science teachers' expectations as to whether they are responsible for supporting learners to improve learners' reading skills.

In responding to the challenges, the teachers experienced, the author concluded that teachers need training to improve their confidence and competency as reading teachers. If teachers had improved access to technology and school libraries, and were supported in using these resources, this could play a role in the further promotion of reading. This requires external support from the Department of Basic Education, their subject advisors and in-school support from their heads of phase and principal.

Ramalepe, M. P. 2018. *Towards an effective approach to teaching reading skills in the intermediate phase: A case study of a rural primary school*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Limpopo.

**Key words:** read-aloud, group-guided reading, shared reading, phonemic awareness

<b>Participants and Context</b>	102 Grade 4 learners from 1 rural, Quintile 1 primary school in Motupa circuit, 22 km from Tzaneen, Limpopo 82 learners participated in intervention, 20 in control group 42 teachers from surrounding schools in Motupa circuit
<b>Measures</b>	Mixed-method analysis Close-ended teacher questionnaire Flesch-Kincaid readability test pre- and post-intervention Document analysis

This thesis aimed to establish what approach to teaching reading would be most effective within a rural primary school in Limpopo. The author conducted a seven-week EFAL reading intervention at one school. Learners were divided into five groups. 82 learners were placed in four experimental groups that each focused on one of the four strategies for teaching reading: read-aloud, shared reading, group-guided reading and phonemic awareness over a seven-week period. A fifth group of learners (n=20) acted as a control group.

A closed-ended questionnaire was completed by teachers to establish their opinions as what approaches to teaching reading are most appropriate in a rural Limpopo context. An analysis of teachers' marking records was employed to compare these results to the Flesch-Kincaid readability test results that was conducted pre- and post-intervention. Through an analysis of questionnaires and observations of learners reading grade prescribed texts pre- and post- testing, the author concluded that the read-aloud interventions had the most positive impact on improvement in reading levels. This was followed by group-guided reading.

Read-aloud strategies and group-guided reading should thus be conducted as frequently as possible. To facilitate the effective teaching of reading, teachers require additional support from their subject advisor as well as ongoing training in teaching reading, particularly with regard to phonemic awareness.

van Rhyn, A.A. 2018. *Challenges facing primary school educators of English Second Language learners in the Tshwane West region*, In: van Rhyn, A. A. 2018. *Literacy development and self-concept of English Second Language learners: An exploratory study*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Free State.

**Key words:** reading, literacy skills, home language, language of learning and teaching

<b>Participants and Context</b>	5 schools in the Tshwane West Region, learners from similar socio-economic contexts 10 Grade 4-6 teachers (2 per school), English additional language speakers
<b>Measures</b>	Phenomenological study Semi-structured interviews

This entry annotates one of four articles that constituted van Rhyn's (2018) PhD thesis. The article explores the challenges primary school educators face when teaching English Second Language learners, with a particularly focus on ESL literacy.

At four of the five schools, teachers rated their learners' English literacy skills as problematic or below the expected standard. At the fifth school, teachers described learners' skills as meeting the required standard.

The core themes that emerged in identifying challenges teachers face in improving learners' ESL literacy and reading were:

- Learners are not being taught in their home language and struggle to understand English
- The gap between the literacy skills expected of Grade 3 and 4 learners is too big, particularly as this is when learners transition to English as LoLT
- Parents do not support their children's reading sufficiently
- Socio-economic conditions such as the long distance learners have to travel to school (and the associated tiredness) and parents' inability to assist their children with reading and other homework
- Teachers struggle with larger classes, poor discipline and classroom management
- Teachers do not have sufficient time to provide required individual support

If learners face literacy barriers, they lack confidence in their reading ability which impacts their self-concept and emotions negatively. This decreases their willingness to participate in class and their motivation to improve reading skills and complete tasks is reduced. Responses to the author asking for recommendations to address these challenges, teachers' responses varied considerably. Repeated suggestions were ongoing, frequent exposure to texts, cultivating a love for books and read, increasing learners' vocabulary, using technology to gain learners' attention, strong family/school partnerships, and the importance of a whole school approach centred on effective teaching and learning.

Malebese, M., Tlali, M. and Mahlomaholo, S. 2019. *A socially inclusive teaching strategy for fourth grade English (second) language learners in a South African school*, **South African Journal of Childhood Education**, Vol. 9, No. 1, Article 503.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v9i1.503>

**Key words:** English second language, multi-grade teaching, rural school, socially inclusive teaching strategies

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Case study in a multi-grade rural primary school 1 educator teaching 36 Sesotho home language learners from Grades 1-6 6 Grade 4 learners, 4 Grade 5 learners (Grade 5 learners were progressed from Grade 4) 2 teacher aides
<b>Measures</b>	Observation of 1 Grade 4 EFAL reading lesson Free attitude interviews (FAI) Critical discourse analysis of Grade 4 readers' texts

This study explored how employing socially inclusive teaching strategies (SITS) could improve the teaching of EFAL for Grade 4 learners and address their poor reading abilities. This was conducted through interviews with participants, a textual analysis of two Grade 4 readers and the observation of an EFAL reading lesson. The potential role of SITS was researched as such strategies address contextual challenges with a classroom, as well as how to promote socially-inclusive teaching practices to create an effective, sustainable learning environment.

Subsequent to the lesson, the researchers identified several concerns. Firstly, learners were provided insufficient opportunities for EFAL reading. Secondly, improving learners' home language reading skills and recognising the impact of the home language on English reading ability is imperative. Lastly, a significant concern was the absence of a written lesson plan; a resource that the researchers deem fundamental to successful teaching; and essential for planning that responds to learners' culture, previous experiences and their background. Researchers analysed two Grade 4 readers. They contended that the two texts discussed in this article confused learners. This stemmed from both texts depicting animals who were able to speak. Learners were further confused by animals being dressed in clothes and illustrations of an elephant and a hippopotamus: animals unknown to learners. Consequently, the learners' background and inability to relate to the texts, prohibited opportunities and for effective EFAL reading. This results in inequitable access to the teaching of EFAL reading.

Based on their analysis, the researchers recommend implementing more inclusive teaching strategies that better respond to the classroom context. These include increased support for the educator through collaboration with the two teacher aides, parents and community members. This could assist the educator in planning and implementing approaches to teaching EFAL reading appropriate to learners' prior knowledge and background. Additionally, culturally-relevant learning support materials have to be developed and made available to learners.

## Further research on reading instruction in the Intermediate Phase

Klapwijk, N. 2011. *Reading strategy instruction in Grades 4 to 6: Towards a framework for implementation*. Unpublished PhD thesis. Stellenbosch University.

Zimmerman, L. 2011. *The influence of schooling conditions and teaching practices on curriculum implementation for Grade 4 reading literacy development*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Pretoria.

Martiz, B. 2012. *Whole-school reading as intervention in a Gauteng primary school: A practitioner's intervention*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Johannesburg.

Maja, M. M. 2015. *Classroom interaction in teaching English First Additional Language learners in the Intermediate Phase*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of South Africa.

Mgijima, V. D. and Makalela, L. 2016. *The effects of translanguaging on the bi-literate inferencing strategies of fourth grade learners*. ***Perspectives in Education***. Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 86–93.

doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18820/2519593X/pie.v34i3.7>.

Phala, T. and Hugo, A. J. 2016. *Reading problems in the Intermediate Phase: Grade 4 teachers' opinions*. ***Journal for Language Teaching***. Vol. 50, No. 2, pp. 167–183. doi:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jlt.v50i2.8>.

Mawela, R. R. 2018. *Using Reading to Learn Pedagogy to enhance the English First Additional Language Teachers' Classroom Practice*. Unpublished PhD thesis. Rhodes University.

Malebese, M., Tlali, M. and Mahlomaholo, S. 2019. *A socially inclusive teaching strategy for fourth grade English (second) language learners in a South African school*, ***South African Journal of Childhood Education***, Vol. 9, No. 1, Article 503.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.V9i1.503>.

## PART 3C: READING INSTRUCTION: SENIOR PHASE

Madikiza, N., Cekiso, M.P., Tshotsho, B.P., and, Landa, N. 2018. *Analysing English First Additional Language teachers' understanding and implementation of reading strategies. Reading & Writing*, Vol. 9, No. 1, (a), Article 170.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v9i1.170>.

**Key words:** English first additional language, reading strategies, comprehension, Senior Phase

<b>Participants and Context</b>	126 isiXhosa HL Senior Phase (Grade 7-9) teachers selected through purposive sampling, Mthatha District, Eastern Cape
<b>Measures</b>	Semi-structured interviews with 6 teachers (teachers volunteered) Thematic qualitative analysis Questionnaire with 36 questions on pre-, during- and post-reading strategies Teachers were asked to respond to the questionnaire according to a Likert Scale (1=never do this, 5=always do this) Statistical Package for Social Sciences software for quantitative analysis

This study investigates 126 Senior Phase teachers' understanding of reading strategies and how this is reflected in their reading instruction practices. In particular, it focuses on the strategies used in teaching comprehension.

The authors interviewed six teachers to gain insight into their perceptions and understanding of reading strategies. The six teachers' responses in the interviews indicate an understanding of the term "reading strategy" and they described reading strategies as how one tackles reading and how reading can be taught effectively. However, they use a limited number of reading strategies that focused primarily on oral reading. Although there were some differing answers, individual reading, shared group reading, and reading aloud were the three reading strategies that teachers reported using most frequently. While teachers demonstrated understanding of the concept of reading strategies there seemed to be a focus on oral reading activities and a lack of awareness of activities associated with reading for meaning.

All teachers completed a questionnaire that interrogated their reading instruction practices. Similar to interview data, questionnaire responses indicate that teachers do have some understanding of pre, during- and post-reading strategies, but that this applied predominantly to oral reading strategies. Strategies that promote comprehension such as skimming and pre-reading, making inferences and encouraging learners to draw on their existing knowledge to facilitate comprehension, and summarising post-reading received little attention.



Findings from the study can be used to assist teachers in improving their reading instruction practices. If teachers lack sufficient knowledge as to how to teach reading and reading comprehension effectively and implement appropriate reading strategies, they are unable to prepare learners to be effective readers who can comprehend texts. The authors therefore recommend that the teachers attend training that can assist them in employing reading strategies that aid learners' understanding of a text.

Matakane, E. N. 2018. *Strategies teachers use to enhance Grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills in first additional language: Four primary schools in Fort Beaufort*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Fort Hare.

**Key words:** reading comprehension, EFAL language, reading strategies, teaching reading, CAPS

<b>Participants and Context</b>	4 Quintile 1, rural primary schools, Matatiele District, Eastern Cape 1 EFAL teacher per school, teaching in multi-grade classrooms Head of English department from 1 school, Subject advisor (had not visited participating schools) 6 learners per school
<b>Measures</b>	Qualitative case study within an interpretive paradigm Semi-structured individual interviews with teachers and subject advisor Focus groups with learners (2 strong, 2 average and 2 weak per school) Classroom observations Document analysis (CAPS and DBE education policies)

This thesis explores what strategies, if any, multigrade teachers in four primary schools use in teaching EFAL reading comprehension to Grade 7, isiXhosa home language learners. It focuses on the teachers' knowledge of these strategies and how this is reflected in their teaching of reading comprehension.

Observations revealed teachers lack knowledge of CAPS, particularly in teaching EFAL reading comprehension skills, and did not refer to the document. All four teachers reported that they did not know how to teach comprehension skills. The only skills they referred to were that three teachers reporting teaching summarising skills, one of whom also stated teaching skimming and scanning. Learners, too, referred to summarising as the one strategy related to reading comprehension they were taught. There was no evidence of this during observations. Pre-, during- and post-reading skills were not taught and learners were not guided as to how to engage with texts. Many learners are not proficient in or cannot speak English so are prohibited from accessing English texts. A further challenge is the absence of reading materials and, where materials are available, their content often holds no relevance to learners and learners cannot draw on existing knowledge that is required to comprehend texts.

The author recommends teachers attend ongoing in-service training in teaching reading to address their gaps in teaching additional language reading comprehension. Teachers need greater knowledge of how to meet CAPS requirements; facilitating this should be the responsibility of subject advisors.

Marutla, G. B. 2019. *Reading challenges in English: Towards a reading model for Grade 8 learners in Mafikeng district*. Unpublished PhD thesis. North-West University.

§1, §2

**Key words:** reading comprehension, reading fluency, reading comprehension, decoding, vocabulary

<b>Participants and Context</b>	2 fee-paying schools, well-resourced schools; 3 no-fee, poorly-resourced schools (4 schools were discussed in analysis, unclear which school was omitted) 1 teacher per school, class size of 48-51 Grade 8 learners All learners completed a baseline reading level test. 5 learners per school who were identified as weak readers, completed an additional test Learners studying English First Additional Language as a subject
<b>Measures</b>	Teacher questionnaire, open and closed-questions Standardised Reading Passage test 1 (SRT1) as a baseline reading level, completed by all learners (silent reading) SRT2 completed by 5 weak learners per school Structured classroom observations, 4 days at each school

In light of learners' poor English reading and comprehension levels, this study's objective was to identify the key gaps in reading and the underlying causes of these gaps. To address these gaps, the author aimed to develop a theme based, socio-cultural teaching and reading level.

Findings indicate that many learners read below the appropriate grade level. Observations and teachers' questionnaire responses highlighted that learners' word recognition and decoding skills are poor. Teachers also reported learners struggle with vocabulary, fluency and pronunciation. Few learners can read with comprehension.

Drawing on these findings, the author recommends that pre- and in-service teachers, at all grade levels, are well trained in teaching reading and are equipped to recognise where learners need additional support. It is critical that the Department of Basic Education (DBE) ensures reading is effectively taught and implements any necessary interventions. A theme teaching model for comprehension (TTM) is suggested to address learners' poor reading levels and comprehension. In this, teachers select texts centred on a common theme that they anticipate will interest learners and therefore possibly increase how frequently and motivated learners are to read. Numerous texts on the same theme enable word recognition which will facilitate reading comprehension. Learners are supported to adopt strategies such as inferencing, drawing on background knowledge, self-monitoring comprehension, visualisation, recall and summarization. Reading comprehension is then individually assessed. Based on these assessments, if required, remediation is offered and further texts on the same theme are introduced to increase opportunities for reading improvement and comprehension.

## Further research on reading instruction in the Senior Phase

Cekiso, M. and Madikiza, N. 2014. *Reading strategies used by Grade 9 English Second Language learners in a selected school. **Reading & Writing***. Vol. 5, No. 1, Article 42. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/rw.v5i1.42>.

Madikiza, N. 2017. *English First Additional Language teachers' understanding and implementation of reading strategies in senior phase classes of Mthatha district: South Africa*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Fort Hare.

## PART 3D: READING INSTRUCTION: FET PHASE

Rapetosa, J. M. and Singh, R. J. 2017. *Does the CAPS address teaching and learning of reading skills? Mousaion*. Vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 56–78.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.25159/0027-2639/1270>.

**Key words:** EFAL, CAPS, reading, comprehension, teaching strategies

<b>Participants and Context</b>	2 purposively selected rural schools in Capricorn district, Limpopo 60 Grade 10 learners from 1 school and 55 Grade 10 learners from the second school. All learners were doing EFAL 4 EFAL educators at Grade 10 level (2 per school)
<b>Measures</b>	Questionnaires with closed questions Standardised reading test: The Differential Aptitude Test Form K, Subtests Vocabulary and Reading comprehension for all learners Semi-structured interviews with 6 learners from each school and all 4 educators Two lesson observations per school, observation of 12 learners

This study investigates if the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) provides sufficient strategies for teaching and learning reading skills in EFAL, and if the introduction of this curriculum has resulted in improved teaching and reading skills. It also examines if educators adhere to the curriculum requirements.

Observations indicated that the participating educators did not follow the curriculum closely. This is largely attributed to educators not having received sufficient support to implement CAPS. As a result, learners are likely not being exposed to the strategies and guidelines stipulated by CAPS. All educators reported that there was insufficient time to teach reading effectively. Learners' read aloud skills were observed and assessed with results indicating all learners could read with understanding. The reliability of this is questionable as learners, with educators' assistance, had prepared the reading in advance. The standardised reading test assessed 108 learners' comprehension and vocabulary skills. Here, results were lower than recorded during observations and 32% of learners failed to achieve at an average level of 44% or above (raw scores not provided).

Educators and learners' responses to interview questions and questionnaires indicated mixed opinions of learners' reading skills. What emerged clearly overall was that, although some learners have sufficient reading skills, there is a need for further support for learners to improve reading, greater access to materials and increased contact time. Based on their findings, authors recommend that teachers receive in-depth training in implementing CAPS if it is to succeed in supporting reading skills development. Importantly, teachers must be trained in teaching comprehension skills and growing learners' vocabulary to improve Grade 10-12's reading abilities.

## Further research on reading instruction in the FET Phase

Cekiso, M. (2007) *Evaluating reading strategies instruction*. Unpublished PhD thesis. North-West University.

Ebersöhn, L., Joubert, I., Prinsloo, Y., and Kriegler, S. 2014. *Uitkoms van 'n intervensie ten opsigte van Engelse geletterdheid op die niemoedertaal-onderrigpraktyke van onderwysers in plattelandse skole* [Outcomes of an English literacy intervention on non-mother tongue teaching practices of teachers in rural schools], *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, Vol. 54, No. 2, pp. 283–303.

[https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/41232/Ebersohn\\_Uitkoms\\_2014.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/41232/Ebersohn_Uitkoms_2014.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

Rapetosa, J. M. 2017. *The effect of curriculum change on the reading ability of English first additional language (EFAL) learners in Grade 10: A case study*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Limpopo.

## PART 4: READING ASSESSMENT

The articles in this section report on conducting reading assessments within the South African context.

Articles that focus on the importance of determining the linguistic and cultural appropriacy of reading assessment tools for the different South African contexts are annotated. The value of reading assessment can only be realised if teachers possess the necessary assessment literacy and research on this aspect of assessment is included.

Koch, E. 2009. *The case for bilingual language tests: A study of test adaptation and analysis. Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*. Vol. 27, No. 3, pp. 301–317. doi: <https://doi.org/10.2989/SALALS.2009.27.3.8.942>. [\*]

**Key words:** bilingual testing, Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey, English/isiXhosa tests, linguistic equivalence, construct equivalence, statistical equivalence, differential item function (DIF) analysis

<p><b>Participants &amp; Context</b></p>	<p><b>First round of testing</b> 176 Grade 6 &amp; 7 isiXhosa learners 145 Grade 6 &amp; 7 English learners</p> <p><b>Second round of testing</b> 188 Grade 6 &amp; 7 isiXhosa learners 198 Grade 6 &amp; 7 English learners</p> <p>Rural/urban ratio for isiXhosa learners 30:70 and for English learners 40:60</p>
<p><b>Measures</b></p>	<p>The four subtests of the Woodcock Muñoz Language Survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picture vocabulary</li> <li>• Verbal analogies</li> <li>• Letter word recognition</li> <li>• Dictation</li> </ul>

In this article the author argues that the test development and design should serve human development goals and human interests, and that the purposes of tests should enhance the potential for education and human development and not undermine it through poorly designed or culturally inappropriate or biased tests. Tests used in bilingual or multilingual contexts should thus meet “the soundest theoretical and empirical bases possible” (p. 301).

The context for the research reported in the article stems from a mother tongue based additive bilingual intervention programme implemented in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape, where isiXhosa was used as the main language of instruction at school up to Grade 6, with English as an additional language of teaching and learning incrementally phased in

from Grade 4 in some learning areas only. A test of academic language proficiency was sought in order to monitor the language outcomes of the project. To this end, the Woodcock Muñoz Language Survey was selected and versioned into isiXhosa.

The article reports on the procedures followed and some of the results obtained, following attempts to adapt the Woodcock Muñoz Language Survey into isiXhosa (and also adapting the English version into one more suited to a South African audience, although this is not the focus of the article). The Woodcock Muñoz Language Survey is a bilingual Spanish/English test of cognitive academic language proficiency that is widely used in the USA for the evaluation of bilingual programmes. It comprises four subtests comprising an expressive picture vocabulary test, a verbal analogies test, a letter word recognition test and a dictation test.

After receiving permission for the test to be adapted into isiXhosa, a team of translators, educators, linguists and a psychometrist started the process of adapting the test. The author provides a meticulous account of the processes that were followed during the workshops to translate and adapt the test, a Differential Item Functioning (DIF) analysis of the items of the two versions of the test, some of the steps that were taken to address problems in the initial adaptation of the test into isiXhosa, the results of an evaluation of the construct equivalence of the two versions and some of the lessons learned in the process.

This article draws attention to the need for tests in different languages in bilingual education settings, and highlights the practical, conceptual, methodological and statistical rigors and challenges in achieving this aim, and also the benefits of having well designed and reliable language and literacy tests in bilingual/multilingual educational contexts.



Broom, Y. and Jewson, D. D. 2013. *Assessing English reading comprehension and vocabulary in South Africa. Per Linguam*. Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 1–16.  
doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/29-2-553>.

§1,§2

**Key words:** English first language, English additional language, assessment, vocabulary, comprehension

<b>Participants and Context</b>	631 Grade 8 learners; 279 English first language (EFL) Grade 8 learners and 352 English additional language (EAL) Grade 8 learners attending a former Model C school in Gauteng All learners were from similar socio-economic backgrounds and had been taught in English for a minimum of five years
<b>Measures</b>	Longitudinal quantitative study with data collected over three years Biographical questionnaire Auditory vocabulary and Comprehension subtests of the Brown Level of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT)

The Stanford Diagnostic reading Test is a United States reading assessment test that focuses on evaluating lower-level achievers in reading to diagnose their reading strengths and weaknesses. In this study, the authors investigate the reliability and use of the test for South African EFL and EAL learners; as South Africa’s different context and processes may impact the test’s appropriateness. The authors considered the reliability of the subtests of vocabulary and comprehension. They further evaluated how results differed in terms of achievements by EFL and EAL learners and between male and female learners.

The vocabulary test was based on 40 sections. Female EFL learners performed best with a mean (M) of 30.03 and standard deviation (SD) of 6.97 with female EAL learners performing worst (M 24.58 and SD 6.16). The comprehension subtest comprised 60 sections and, again, the female EFL learners performed best (M 45.74 and SD 10.42). EFL male learners (M 34.72 and SD 11.15) performed worst. Overall, EAL learners performed worse than EFL learners in both areas. There was no significant difference in male and female performance in the vocabulary subtest but males fared significantly worse in the comprehension subtest which aligns with international research findings that demonstrate that males struggle more with language and reading difficulties. The significant difference in results between EAL learners who have experienced subtractive bilingualism and EFL learners correlates with international research that indicates that EFL learners perform substantially better. The authors posit that this may be a result of EFL learners having greater depth of vocabulary and more access to reading resources and support.

Certain questions within the SDRT are far removed from the South African context, e.g. references to baseball mitts and snowshoeing. This is a limitation of the test that may have impacted results negatively. They recommend replacing such questions with South African-appropriate content. However, the subtests indicated adequate internal consistency ( $\alpha = .77$ ) demonstrating that the tests are sufficiently reliable to be used within the South African context.

Spaull, N. 2016. *Disentangling the language effect in South African schools: Measuring the impact of language of assessment in grade 3 literacy and numeracy*. **South African Journal of Childhood Education**. Vol. 6, No. 1, Article 475. [\*]  
doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v6i1.475>.

**Key words:** school achievement, literacy (and numeracy) accomplishment, language factors, quality education, Grade 3 literacy

<b>Participants and Context</b>	3 402 Grade 3 learners Primary schools across South Africa
<b>Measures</b>	5 different literacy processes involving (1) cloze items and items requiring students to match words to pictures, (2) items involving the retrieval of explicitly stated information, (3) items involving straightforward inferences, (4) items requiring students to interpret and integrate ideas and information and (5) items involving writing sentences.

The aim of this study is to contribute empirical evidence to the debate regarding how much language (as opposed to other factors) affects school achievement, as reflected in formal literacy and numeracy assessments. In South Africa disadvantages in education are strongly correlated not only with language but also with other confounding factors such as historical disadvantage, socio-economic status, geography, the quality of school management and the quality of teachers (Although the study includes both literacy and numeracy assessments, the focus in this annotation is on literacy.)

The study exploited a unique situation in South Africa where a group of learners happened to be sampled twice, for two different surveys, with tests written one month apart. The Systemic Evaluation tested a nationally representative sample of 54 298 Grade 3 students in September 2007, to measure achievement in literacy and numeracy. One month later, the NSES tested a sub-sample of 16 000 Grade 3 learners from the Systemic Evaluation sample, using the same instrument except for the language of the test: the Systemic Evaluation tests (Test 1) were written in the LoLT of the Grade 3 learners while the NSES tests (Test 2) were written in English. Using a stringent matching technique, the author identified 3 402 learners who had written both tests, one month apart, first in their home language and then in English.

The average score for the test when written in the LoLT of the school was 33%, and 22% when taken in English. Despite learning in their home language for three years and before any switch to English in Grade 4, the literacy levels in the LoLT were low. The results also showed that performance on the more challenging ‘infer and interpret’ items in Test 1 (written in the LoLT of the school) was so low to begin with that hardly any differences in performance occurred when the test was written in English.

An important finding to emerge from the analysis was that the size of the composite effect of home background and school quality was 1.6–3.9 times larger than the impact of language (and at least 3.8 times larger for numeracy). Translated into ‘years’ worth of learning’, the author posits that the ‘language effect’ is approximately one to two years’

worth of learning for literacy and a maximum of one year for numeracy. By contrast, the composite effect of home background and school quality is roughly equivalent to four years' worth of learning for both numeracy (1.2 standard deviations) and literacy (1.15 standard deviations). The author argues that the 'language effect' should be seen within the broader context of a generally dysfunctional schooling system. The author concludes that the low literacy and numeracy achievement of learners in Grade 3, even before the language switch to English in Grade 4, should give pause to those who argue that language is the most important factor in determining achievement, or lack thereof, in South Africa.

Nel, C. 2018. *A blueprint for data-based English reading literacy instructional decision-making. South African Journal of Childhood Education*. Vol. 8, No. 1, Article 528. doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v8i1.528>.

**Key words:** assessment, reading, reading skills, reading instruction, reading interventions, English home language, English FAL

<b>Participants and Context</b>	This article does not focus on a specific participant group but rather provides a blueprint for the assessment of South African learners' reading ability and skills within the context of addressing the reading crisis that South Africa faces. The blueprint refers to assessment in both English HL and FAL.
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Assessment of learners' reading skills plays a fundamental role in ensuring quality teaching of reading skills. Skills that are important to test include phonemic awareness, alphabetic principles, phonics, word recognition, reading comprehension, and reading accuracy and fluency. Conducting effective and appropriate assessments is critical in identifying how stakeholders at all levels (from individual teachers to national level) should approach reading instruction and modify teaching of reading skills if necessary. In response to this, the author has developed a blueprint for conducting assessment of learners' reading skills in English HL and FAL in the form of an outcome-driven model.

The model consists of the following five decision-making steps that each respond to specific questions:

- 1) Identify the need for support in order to establish which learners are at risk of experiencing difficulties in reading. This should be done through screening assessments.
- 2) Once at-risk learners have been identified, they should complete diagnostic assessments to validate that they require support. These are more in-depth than screening assessments and help establish learners' reading skills' strengths and their weaknesses that need to be addressed.
- 3) Once support needs have been established, teachers should identify how and in what areas they can assist struggling learners and adapt their approach to reading instruction accordingly. Schools and districts then need to establish how they can provide support for improving learners' skills.
- 4) Interventions must be evaluated periodically throughout the year to determine the success of the interventions. If interventions do not result in the anticipated outcomes, they need to be modified.
- 5) Finally, summative assessments must be conducted at the end of the specific intervention period (e.g. the term or school year). These assessments will provide a final review for teachers as to if learners have responded successfully to teaching and interventions in line with CAPS requirements. Schools and districts must use summative assessments to identify if they have met specific goals and if/what modifications are required.

## Further research on reading assessment

Nel, C. 2011. *Classroom assessment of reading comprehension: How are preservice Foundation Phase teachers being prepared?* **Per Linguam**. Vol. ,47 No. 2, pp. 40–63. doi: <https://doi.org/10.5785/27-2-107>.

Klapwijk, N. 2013. *Cloze tests and word reading tests: Enabling teachers to measure learners' reading-related abilities.* **Per Linguam**. Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 49–62. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/29-1-541>.

Koch, E. S. 2015. *Testing in bilingual education projects: Lessons learnt from the Additive Bilingual Education Project.* **Per Linguam**. Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 79–93. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/31-2-593>.

## **PART 5: ADDITIONAL RESEARCH**

The articles and citations in this final section of annotations focus on research on EFAL reading within South Africa that cannot be specifically categorised under Parts 1-4.

The section includes articles that do not necessarily focus specifically on EFAL reading but contain content relevant to teaching reading in EFAL and to improving how reading is approached and taught in the South African context.

Hugo, A. J. 2008. *Primary school teachers' opinions of their ESL learners' language abilities*. *Journal for Language Teaching*. Vol. 42, No. 2, pp. 63–76.  
doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jlt.v42i2.43167>.

## §2

**Key words:** English second language (ESL), comprehension, listening, speaking, reading, writing, phonetic ability, vocabulary

<b>Participants and Context</b>	84 primary school teachers Urban, peri-urban and rural primary schools across four provinces
<b>Measures</b>	84 anonymous open-ended questions

In this study, the author reports on 84 teachers' opinions of their ESL learners' language abilities in terms of listening, speaking, reading, writing and pronunciation. The study aimed to identify the challenges learners face when having to study in English and not in their home language, in an attempt to establish the underlying factors that result in poor learner performance.

Teachers rated learners' language abilities poorly. They attribute children's poor understanding of English and short attention spans as the major reasons for learners not listening properly. The two key reasons cited for poor speaking ability were learners being self-conscious and their limited vocabulary which reduces their ability to express themselves. 44% of teachers attribute phonetic spelling problems as the underlying cause for poor writing abilities with the second contributing factor being learners' inability to express themselves. Learners struggle with poor pronunciation because of the different linguistic and phonological demands of their home language and English.

Of most relevance to this bibliography, teachers were divided as to why ESL learners struggle to read. 23% of the educators attributed learners' inability to read in any language as the cause of poor English reading skills. This was followed by a lack of comprehension of the English language and the challenge of pronouncing English words. As teachers report that many ESL learners cannot read in any language, it is essential that ESL teachers are equipped to teach reading skills.

Struggles with language ability and poor comprehension skills emerged as the overall factors affecting ESL learners' language skills and possibilities for academic success. Based on these findings, the author recommends improving teachers' knowledge of additional language acquisition and development. Secondly, a greater understanding of teachers' roles and selection of appropriate teaching methods and strategies is required. Finally, teachers need to be competent in English and trained in teaching ESL. Strengthening teachers' knowledge in these areas will provide learners with greater support in improving their ESL reading abilities. The author recommends that this small-scale research be used to inform a larger, national study of ESL learners' English language abilities.

Nel, N. and Swanepoel, E. 2010. *Do the language errors of ESL teachers affect their learners? Per Linguam*. Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 47–60.  
doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/26-1-13>.

**Key words:** language, language errors, mother tongue, English second language, writing, English proficiency

<b>Participants and Context</b>	435 teachers enrolled in Unisa’s Advance Certificate in Education (ACE): Inclusive Education (Learning Difficulties) 2008/2009 Home language indigenous African language speakers, teaching English second language (ESL) learners
<b>Measures</b>	Document analysis conducted through error analysis of randomly selected teacher students’ portfolios. Each student’s portfolio contained documents (such as assessments, evidence of learners’ work and support lessons) of two to five learners with the same home language as their teacher.

This study investigates how ESL speaking teachers’ limited English proficiency influences learners’ ESL proficiency. Although the study does not refer to reading specifically it highlights the need for teachers to be proficient in English when teaching ESL. The researchers conducted an error analysis of portfolios the teachers submitted for the certificate. Each portfolio contained documents from learners speaking the same home language as their teacher. Teachers and their learners’ written work were compared to identify any transfer of errors from teacher to learner and/or similarities in language deviations. Errors in phonology, syntax, grammar and tense were identified. Furthermore, there was transfer error and learners struggled to use punctuation marks correctly. Results reveal similarities in teachers and their learners’ errors that speak to the influence of the home language on English, a struggle to respond to complex communication, and an overgeneralisation of English rules.

Many of the teachers enrolled for the certificate lacked proficiency in English. The authors believe that the low, final pass rate of 44% is a direct result of this limited proficiency, and that the portfolios that teachers submitted indicated a lack of ability to transfer adequate language skills to learners whose English skills consequently suffer. Due to teachers’ lack of proficiency in English, they cannot identify some language errors and learners’ language errors are not corrected. There is much evidence of teachers needing to improve English proficiency and also to be trained in teaching English as a second language. Universities need to support students to improve their English.

Learner errors, however, cannot be assumed a direct consequence of teacher errors as learners’ English may result from interaction in English with others who share their home language. Although teachers and their lack of proficiency in English likely influence learners’ English, an in-depth study of other factors is necessary.



Klapwijk, N. and van der Walt, C. 2011. *Measuring reading strategy knowledge transfer: Motivation for teachers to implement reading strategy instruction*. *Per Linguam*. Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 25–39.

doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/27-2-106>.

**Key words:** strategy knowledge transfer, reading strategy instruction, reading intervention

<b>Participants and Context</b>	68 Grade 5 learners: 1 class of learners (n=33) was the experimental group and the 2nd class (n=35) was the control group
<b>Measures</b>	15 weeks (2 terms) of observation Pre-intervention quantitative data: Burt word reading test and cloze test During-intervention: collection of qualitative data: observation and interviews Post-intervention: quantitative data (strategy transfer test)

This study reported on the impact of a 15 week intervention in a Grade 5 classroom to assist teachers with reading strategies. It focused on the transfer of reading strategy knowledge. Despite extensive data on the positive impact of reading strategy instruction, it is often ignored and/or teachers state they lack the framework and knowledge to teach comprehension.

The intervention offered the teacher guidance for introducing reading strategy instruction as a new concept. The before-reading strategies (identifying the text type, identifying the purpose for reading, activating prior knowledge and predicting ) prepared learners for monitoring during reading and the after-reading strategies of clarifying, question and summarising the text assisted learners to access their existing knowledge that they could bring to the text.

The experimental results revealed that a transfer of strategy knowledge is possible and that there was significant improvement across questioning, monitoring and summarizing in the post-intervention tests of the experimental group. Notably, substantially improved results for summarisation indicated children’s ability to apply their knowledge of the acquired summarisation strategies. The authors state the evidence of the success of explicit reading strategy instruction should be used to motivate teachers to implement such reading strategies.

Bharuthram, S. 2012. *Making a case for the teaching of reading across the curriculum in higher education*, **South African Journal of Education**, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 205–212. [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0256-01002012000200007&lng=en&nrm=iso](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0256-01002012000200007&lng=en&nrm=iso).

**Key words:** reading comprehension, reading proficiency, reading pedagogy, academic literacy

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Pre-service teachers
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This article does not focus specifically on EFAL pre-service teachers' reading ability but on all the students' reading ability in English. However, as most students are EFAL speakers, it is included in this bibliography.

In this study, the author reflects on education students' struggles to read independently and the consequent challenge of navigating and comprehending texts independently. Many students are able to decode words but not able to read for meaning and thus cannot grasp information contained in texts sufficiently. While many students possess necessary Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS), they lack Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). This results in poor academic performance or students dropping out of university due to academic failure. This inability to succeed as academic readers is a result of not acquiring the necessary reading skills at school level and not having been suitably prepared to enter university.

The author emphasises that universities need to support students in learning to read at the level required for academic success. Universities' academic support units lack capacity to assist all students requiring reading support. Thus, although lecturers often believe teaching reading is not their role, staff need to be trained in reading pedagogy and in reading methods relevant to the texts that their students are required to navigate. Without teaching students to read with comprehension and at the necessary level, they will not succeed in their studies and will be poorly-placed to succeed as teachers, particularly as most teachers are teaching English – whether at home or first additional language level.

Mather, N. and Land, S. 2014. *Exploring educators' understanding of developing learners' reading skills and their readiness to implement CAPS. Journal for Language Teaching*. Vol. 48, No. 2, pp. 199–215.

doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jlt.v48i2.9>.

**Key words:** teacher training, Intermediate Phase, reading teaching methods

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Three Intermediate Phase EFAL educators (Grade 4,5, 6 respectively) 1 rural Kwazulu-Natal school
<b>Measures</b>	Narrative inquiry Semi-structured interviews Observations of reading lessons

The authors explored three Intermediate Phase EFAL educators' childhood experiences of reading, their training in teaching reading and how they now approach reading in the classroom. The research focused on how educators' own experiences positions them to approach and teach reading within the framework of CAPS.

All three educators were taught under the Bantu education system and report that learners were considered successful readers if they were able to decode texts and that oral reading, comprehension and critical thinking were ignored. All three educators studied at teacher training colleges. They did not specify the methods they were taught for teaching reading but reported that reading was considered an oral event and individual word understanding was promoted.

Their approach to reading in the classroom mirrored their own experiences of reading at school and during their pre- and in-service training. They focused on oral reading, decoding, fluency and correct pronunciation. All three educators asked learners questions on the text, but these questions did not activate understanding or interrogate meaning and context.

Although the educators stated enthusiasm for engaging with CAPS, the data indicates that their own experiences and training did not prepare them for meeting the stipulated objectives, particularly in terms of learners' ability to interact with and bring meaning to texts.

The authors conclude that if education students do not receive appropriate and relevant training in reading and unless in-service training is improved and ongoing, teachers will remain unable to meet the requirements outlined in CAPS to support learners adequately in developing the necessary reading and viewing skills.

Sibanda, L. 2014. *The readability of two Grade 4 natural sciences textbooks for South African schools. South African Journal of Childhood Education*. Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 154–175.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v4i2.209>.

**Key words:** textbook, readability, reading level, content analysis

<b>Participants and Context</b>	2 Grade 4 classes at two schools Majority of learners were isiXhosa speakers. Learners were using textbooks in English
<b>Measures</b>	Case study Qualitative content analysis: line by line analysis Quantitative: Text Readability Consensus Calculator

In this study, the researcher evaluates the selection and readability of two English, Grade 4 natural sciences textbooks used in teaching ESL learners. The two participating teachers based their textbook choice on their perception of the texts’ accessibility to learners.

In her qualitative analysis, the author considers vocabulary, explanation of concepts, graphics and content as indicators of readability. Both books failed to define, exemplify or explain over 30% of technical terms which makes comprehension and readability unlikely. In all other areas, Book 1 was considered readable, but for a higher level. It provided sufficient explanations of concepts and used relevant, clear illustrations and labels. Book 2 was not readable at any level. Most concepts were poorly-defined and it used unrealistic, unlabelled cartoons that did not link to the text. The book contained too much new knowledge for readers to be able to bring meaning to the text.

The author used the ‘Text Readability Consensus Calculator’ to measure readability quantitatively. The results indicate that Book 1 was appropriate for a Grade 6 level for English HL speakers and Book 2 at a Grade 7 level for English HL readers.

Neither textbook was appropriate for a Grade 4 level. This, particularly when teaching additional language learners, is essential. Teachers, therefore, have to be able to identify the reading level of a textbook and, where required, adjust content to ESL learners’ reading abilities.

This study highlights the need to assess and evaluate textbook choices carefully, and the importance of identifying the factors contributing to why and how learners struggle to engage with learning content in EFAL.

Kanje, A. and Mthembu, J. 2015. *Assessment literacy of foundation phase teachers: An exploratory study*. **South African Journal of Childhood Education**. Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 142–168.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v5i1.354>.

[§ See also Part 3 Teachers' classroom and literacy practices]

**Key words:** assessment, assessment literacy, foundation phase, summative assessment, formative assessment

<b>Participants and Context</b>	A professional development project conducted by the Tshwane University of Technology 3 primary schools in urban Gauteng 7 teachers from each participating school
<b>Measures</b>	21 teachers completed an open and closed question reflective exercise to determine their assessment knowledge Random sample of one teacher from Grade 1-3 for document reviews and semi-structured interviews and classroom observations

In this study, Kanjee and Mthembu explored South African foundation phase teachers' assessment literacy, their understanding and implementation of formative and summative assessments and how this contributes to their daily practices.

The study comprised a Quintile 2, a Quintile 3 and a Quintile 5 school. It revealed that teachers from all schools across had equally low levels of assessment literacy and lacked the knowledge and expertise to implement assessments that can address children's learning needs. Approximately half of the teachers' assessment literacy was at a basic level and the other half were below basic level. Teachers demonstrated higher, but still insufficient, knowledge in summative assessments. Teachers are thus unable to determine if learners have learnt what was taught and/or to provide additional support if needed.

The authors concluded that, even with a small sample size, it is evident that there is a clear need for government to provide clear policies and practices and to offer teacher development training in assessment literacy across schools from all quintiles.

Guzula, X., McKinney, C. and Tyler, R. 2016. *Languaging-for-learning: Legitimising translanguaging and enabling multimodal practices in third spaces*, *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 211–226.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.2989/16073614.2016.1250360>.

**Key words:** third space, bilingualism, literacy, language, translanguaging, translation, multiliteracies, multimodalities

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Saturday literacy club for 30-60 Grade 3-6 learners, aged 9-12 years located in Khayelitsha, Cape Town
<b>Measures</b>	Case study

While this article focuses on both a mathematics programme and a literacy club, this annotation reports on the findings from the case study on the literacy club. Although the article is not centred on reading alone. In both studies, the authors report on how participants’ use of their full language and linguistic repertoires and multimodalities without the traditional expectations of communicating in a specific variety of English, contributed to their literacy and language learning and development. The article cites three examples of activities at the literacy club where this occurred.

The first example is a language game “The Lion Hunt” where children were asked to reflect critically on their experiences of the game. Through the facilitator’s modelling of bilingualism and translanguaging practices, as well as a multimodal approach, children were enabled to express themselves critically in either or both languages. The authors description of one child’s feedback illustrated this in that, by drawing on isiXhosa and English in using her full language and literacy repertoire, she could offer more detailed and critical reflections than if she had had to communicate in one language and through word only.

The second example centred on children listing story elements that were then written on the board. Children were comfortable and encouraged to respond in either language and were then assisted by peers in translating between isiXhosa and English. This offered the chance for greater knowledge-sharing and opportunities for translation which further contributed to children’s emerging bilingualism, and language and literacy development. In the third activity, translanguaging was used as a tool for story writing where children were asked to list potential story starters (e.g. “Kudala-dala” and “Once upon a time”) in either language. Their translanguaging demonstrated awareness that neither English nor isiXhosa assumed a more powerful position within this third space.

Importantly, by writing responses in both English and isiXhosa, the facilitator challenged the accepted norm of English as the accepted language of writing. Based on this study, the authors positioned the full use of learners’ language and linguistic repertoires as essential. They highlighted the value of multimodalities and translanguaging within the classroom space for meaning-making, activating prior knowledge and experiences, and as an academic tool.

Kimathi, F. and Bertram, C. 2019. *How a professional development programme changes early grades teachers' literacy pedagogy*, **South African Journal of Childhood Education**, Vol. 9, No. 1.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v9i1.554>.

**Key words:** literacy pedagogy, teaching practices, professional development, English first additional language

<p><b>Participants and Context</b></p>	<p>3 black African, Grade 2 female educators            The educators were selected through a convenient and purposive sampling of 173 Foundation Phase educators enrolled in a two-year Advanced Certificate in Teaching (ACT) at University of KwaZulu-Natal</p> <p><i>Anne</i>, a teacher at a moderately resourced urban, Quintile 4 school, English as LoLT; majority Zulu HL learners, 44 learners (2014) and 36 learners (2015)  <i>Lisa</i> a teacher at a Quintile 3 township school with adequate resources, Zulu as LoLT, 42 learners (2014) 44 learners (2015)  <i>Jane</i>, a teacher at a Quintile 2 no-fee school, Zulu as LoLT, 54 learners (2014), 52 learners (2015)</p>
<p><b>Measures</b></p>	<p>Case study            Videos of 6 classroom observations per educator (2 at beginning of course, 2 midway and 2 at the culmination of the course)            Educator interviews            Field notes            Observations evaluated within a rubric reporting on 9 principles of teaching EFAL presented in the ACT</p>

This study investigates how three Grade 2 educators' approaches to early grades literacy pedagogy was altered during their completion of the Advanced Certificate in Teaching offered by the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Teacher Anne was deemed most effective in her teaching methods throughout all periods of observation. The assessment rubric indicated a consistency in results at the start and end of the evaluation period. As Anne already exhibited strong practices in teaching EFAL, she was less likely to alter practices.

There was significant improvement in Lisa's literacy teaching practices throughout the course, suggesting that the ACT affected her practices markedly. However, she was simultaneously receiving support through an NGO's phonics intervention programme so success cannot be attributed definitively to the ACT.

Jane lacked subject knowledge and English proficiency. She scored poorly in all criteria across the observation period. It cannot be concluded if this was due to limited English proficiency, a struggle to grasp and/or implement acquired course content or a lack of commitment to affecting change. Furthermore, efforts to alter practices may have been impeded by inadequate resources.

The authors conclude that formal training programmes cannot guarantee improvements in literacy teaching practices. Additional factors such as a school's context, other professional development opportunities and educators' motivation levels will also affect teaching practices.



Wildsmith-Cromarty, R. and Balfour, R. 2019. *Language learning and teaching in South African primary schools*, **Language Teaching**, Vol. 52, Issue 3, pp. 296–317.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444819000181>.

**Key words:** English as an additional language, home language, language of learning and teaching, reading, educator training, translanguaging

<b>Participants and Context</b>	Review of texts on literacy and language teaching and learning in the South African context Review focused on texts produced from 2006-2018
<b>Measures</b>	Literature database consisted of South African and international journals, research these, books, reports, government databases and research projects Emerging data was analysed, collated and synthesised for the review

This article provides a comprehensive review of literature and research on language learning and teaching in South African primary schools in both home language and English as an additional language focusing on the period 2006-2018.

The review highlights the poor results South African learners achieve in large-scale international and national assessments. The consistency in this poor performance indicates the lack of progress in supporting reading successfully. The increasing number of small-scale studies is referenced with the contention that, although such results cannot be generalised, if consolidated they provide a strong foundation for providing contextual background to large-scale studies.

In reflecting on research on English as an additional language, the authors stress the essential role of building a strong reading foundation in the LoLT as critical to learning to read in English. Where this does not occur, learners are unable to transfer established reading strategies and skills when learning to read in an additional language.

In analysing poor assessment results and learners' failures to succeed in learning to read in English as an additional language, they cite suggested solutions and interventions reported on in the literature under review. This includes the provision of adequate resources and materials and, critically, improvement and an increase in effective pre- and in-service training in reading instruction in African languages and English. Furthermore, they emphasise that successful translanguaging practices within a classroom has a critical role to play in facilitating effective language and literacy instruction in learners' home language and English as an additional language.

## Further additional research

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## PART 6: REFERENCE LIST (ALPHABETICAL)

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## PART 7: MASTER'S RESEARCH ON READING IN EFAL

The final part of this bibliography provides a detailed list of research conducted by Master's students across South African universities. It is organised according to the section headings above.

This list draws together research from emerging researchers across South African universities.

### FOUNDATIONAL READING SKILLS

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### READING COMPREHENSION

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## **READING INSTRUCTION: FOUNDATION PHASE**

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## GLOSSARY

### ***Bantu education***

The Apartheid government implemented the Bantu Education Act in 1953 which legislated for the transfer of the administration of all education for black Africans from provincial administrations and church control to central government control and enforced racial segregation of education institutions. Schools attended by White learners received the highest amount of funding per learner and schools attended by Black learners, the least. Although repealed in 1979 all elements of Bantu Education were eliminated after 1994.

### ***Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)***

CAPS was implemented from 2012 onwards as a revision of the National Curriculum Statement. It provides teachers with detailed guidelines as to what to teach and assess, according to grade and subject.

### ***Further Education and Training (FET)***

In relation to formal academic schooling education: Grades 10-12

### ***Foundation phase***

Grade R-3. Grade R is the reception year. Learners can enter Grade 1 once they are six years old.

### ***Grade R***

This is the year prior to Grade 1. While Grade R is included in CAPS, not all schools offer Grade R.

### ***High school (senior/secondary school)***

Grade 8-12

### ***Intermediate phase***

Grades 4-6

### ***Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT)***

A somewhat confusing equivalent of the term “medium of instruction”, misleading because whilst the language the teacher is using is observable, in what language the learner is thinking and learning in is not (and may well not be the language the teacher uses in instruction).

### ***Model C schools***

After 1991 “white” schools were required to select one of four models: A, B, C, or D. Model C schools had greatly increased autonomy to operate as semi-private schools and engage in limited desegregation, though with decreased funding from the state. By the end of the apartheid era nearly all white public schools became Model C schools. Though all these models were abolished by the post-apartheid government, the term “Ex Model C schools” is often used to describe these former whites-only government public schools.

### ***Oral Reading Fluency***

Oral reading fluency refers to the ability to read unfamiliar text aloud with sufficient speed and accuracy and with proper expression. It is one of the critical components required for successful reading comprehension. Unless learners have ORF they are less able to be able to focus on the meaning of the text. ORF includes reading with automaticity and with appropriate speed, accuracy and proper expression.

### ***Primary school***

Grades R-7

### ***School quintiles***

All South African state schools are divided into five categories from Quintile 1 to 5. Quintile 1-3 schools serve poorer communities and are no-fee schools. Quintile 4 and 5 schools are generally fee-paying schools in less poor areas.

### ***Senior phase***

Grades 7-9

### ***Township schools***

Township schools are situated in poor communities situated within cities/towns or on the outskirts of urban areas. Community members generally live under poor conditions in informal housing or government-subsidised housing. The schools are generally Quintile 1-3 schools and are frequently under-resourced with poor infrastructure and over-crowded classrooms.





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Biesman-Simons, C. and Dixon, K. with Pretorius, E.J. 2021. *Reading in English as a First Additional Language: An annotated bibliography: 2017-2020.*

<https://www.jet.org.za/clearinghouse/primted/resources/language-and-literacy-resources-repository/annotated-bib-efal-20210311.pdf/download>

This publication has been printed through the support of the Teaching and Learning Development Capacity Improvement Programme which is being implemented through a partnership between the Department of Higher Education and Training and the European Union.