

**FACTORS AFFECTING THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH READING SKILLS IN A
SECOND LANGUAGE OF GRADE 3 LEARNERS**

by

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DECLARATION

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I declare that Factors Affecting the Teaching of English Reading Skills in a Second Language of Grade 3 Learners is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills in a second language of Grade 3 learners in three primary schools, in Ongwediva town of Oshana Regional Education Directorate in Northern Namibia. It also investigated methods and approaches that were used to promote the teaching of reading in English as a second language and the linguistic environment of the classroom in which the teaching of reading occurs. Classroom environments were observed and telephonic interview was conducted with the circuit inspector of the three schools selected. Individual interviews were also done with the principals, Grade 3 teachers and Grade 3 learners of the three chosen schools. Focus group interview was also done with the same Grade 3 teachers.

This study found out that insufficient reading books, poor teaching methods, insufficient teachers' and learners' interactions and overcrowded classrooms were some of the factors that made the teaching of reading unsuccessful. From the interviews of the circuit inspector, principals and teachers it was revealed that inadequate teacher training workshops for teachers teaching English reading, lack of parental involvement, low budget allocation to Primary Education and lack of reading capacity in vernacular affected the teaching of reading negatively. The outcome of learners' interviews indicated that phonemic awareness and lack of comprehension created reading problems.

Given the factors referred above, it is recommended that more interesting readers should be purchased to solve the shortage of reading materials. In addition, more effective teachers' workshops should be given to strengthen the teachers' approaches to reading skills development for Grade 3 learners.

SUMMARY

The research focused on the investigation of the factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills in a second language of Grade 3 learners at the three Primary schools in Northern Namibia. To accomplish this goal, this study used classroom observations and interviews to the inspector, principals, teachers and learners.

From the results and findings of the study, the main factors hampering the teaching and learning of English reading skills in a second language of Grade 3, Primary schools of Namibia were: inadequate reading books, deficiency teaching methodologies, insufficient teachers' and learners' interactions, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teachers' training workshops for English teachers for reading, lack of parental involvement, low budget allocation to Primary Education and lack of capacity in the vernacular that affect negatively the teaching of reading. Likewise, from the interviews, it indicated that phonemic understanding and incomprehensibility of texts results to reading problem.

KEY TERMS:

English reading skills, second language teaching, teaching of English, Grade 3 learners, primary schools, promoting teaching reading, investigated factors, classroom environment, insufficient reading books, inadequate teacher training.

DEDICATION

This work is wholeheartedly and devotedly dedicated to my beloved son, Paavo Tuli Ndeshipanda Munenguni. You tolerated and patiently endured my absence and stresses for the sake of this study.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

L1- First Language

L2- Second Language

UNICEF- United Nations International Children Education Fund

SACMEQ- Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality

LPAI- Learner Performance Assessment Instrument

UNESCO- United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization

LAD- Language Acquisition Device

RH- Right Hemisphere

LH- Left Hemisphere

ESL- English as a Second Language

LEP- Limited English Proficiency

LEA- Language Experience Approach

IRI- Informal Reading Inventory

NANTU- Namibian National Teachers Union

ECP- Education Certificate Primary

HPEC- Higher Primary Education Certificate

SEC- Secondary Education Certificate

NEC- National Education Certificate

BETD- Basic Education Teacher Diploma

UNAM- University of Namibia

NIED- National Institute for Educational Development

IOL- Institute for Open Learning

ELETDP- English Language Education Teacher Development Program

TESL- Teaching English as a Second Language

JSC- Junior Secondary Certificate

NQA- National Qualification Authority

CLIL- Content and Language Integrated Learning

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

After the independence of Namibia, English became the official language of the country and became mandatory in all government schools. This was the start of the educational problems. Problems emerged with regard to the teaching of English as a second language, in particular the teaching of reading. English teachers in the next school level also felt the effect of the reading problem. They complained about learner's poor language skills and lack of reading proficiency.

Carter and Nunan (2002:22) raised the question whether problems with reading is a reading problem or a language problem. Not surprisingly, they concluded that it involved both. But to other critics they differ from each other. Francis (2000:1) explained that "reading problem is the presence of more errors in a brain's neurological network that clearly direct the interactive, predictive, integrative or mental processes known as "reading" which may be worsen by witness in the reader's desire to read".

But to (Audiblox n.d.' <http://www.audiblox.com/readingproblem.htm>.) it is explained that "reading problem can be identified by several symptoms like reversing letters or words on writing letters, loosing ones' place, reading unfluently or inaccurately, remembering little of one has read or reading with poor comprehension".

Meanwhile, from the context of (American speech-language-hearing Association n.d.' <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/language-speech.html>) "language problems are characterized by children in not having a good understanding of the meaning of the words and, how and when to use them. Due to this condition, the children and even adult may have trouble following directions and speaking in long sentences. This can be the results of language and speech disorder or language impairment".

They further stated that much depends on the stage of second language development where second language readers need a minimum starting level of general second language competence before they are able to generalise their first language reading abilities into the second language. Furthermore, they said that proficient second language learners are good readers in their first language. These views were based on a wide range of research studies and teachers' observation that reading abilities can, indeed, be generalised across language even in the case of differing scripts.

Carter and Nunan (2002:22) further stated that "there is a difficulty in attending specifically to sound-symbol relation in texts, as happens with phonics instruction in that there is always a mismatch between the second-language learner's phonological system and that of English". Additionally, they claimed that the kinds of difficulties which cohesively ties in texts, such as pronouns, causes first-language learners as old as 14 to commit errors. Such difficulties are likely to be correspondingly greater for second-language learners.

Hammer (1999:37) suggested that "students can acquire the first-language spontaneously whereas consciously studied language is only acquired through learning and is therefore much more difficult to produce spontaneously". He further stated that acquired language is somehow "better" than learnt language because the learner has to concentrate to produce the latter, thus interrupting the flow of language production.

Moon (2004:1) in his study of children learning English, enumerated some interesting beliefs about learning a language. Children learning English as a second language can also make errors. To him, this is a sign of active learning. These errors provide the evidence that both first and second-language learners are not merely imitating what they hear, like parrots but are working out how the language system operates. They give teachers insight in what learners have discovered about language, at any given point. He continues by saying that there are important differences between children learning a second language at school. Second-language learners have already mastered one language that they bring along to the language classroom, as well as a great deal of experience of language and life and many other natural abilities that help them to learn English. He also talked to some Bangladeshi primary teachers about difficulties in

teaching English. They said that they felt it was very difficult for young Bangladeshi to learn English at the primary level. These Bangladeshi teachers remarked further that they used translation as their main teaching method to make things easier for children. They could not imagine how a pupil can learn without a translation.

Burnham and Jones (2004:244) indicated that the learning environment needs to be free from distractions, because it is not possible to work if the children are unable to concentrate on their reading or what is being said.

Cullingford (2001:73) stressed that “some children learn to read with difficulty to understand how they acquired the art of reading”. Some children learn to read regardless of being hampered by not receiving any help. He mentioned that one of the important factors that prevented learners from progressing with reading is their inability to recognise the purpose of reading. Learners tend to devalue the importance of reading and this turns them to shy away from the joy and pleasure of reading activities.

Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002:310) pointed out that because reading is basically about understanding written language, general language difficulties may cause specific difficulties for example, in letter-sounds or phonic information where a learner may have difficulties in perceiving visual differences between similar letter shapes or the order of the letters like b and d. Secondly, reading involves understanding the flow of written language. The forms and grammar of language have to be understood and used if learners are to progress beyond reading isolated sounds or disconnected bits of texts. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002:310) said that “if learners experience reading difficulties in this area, they will not be able to use a grammatical flow of information that is contained in any passage of reading materials and that would lead to slow laboured and disconnected ‘word calling’ “. Thirdly, it also has to do with the information from the meaning of the material being read whether it is understood for example from the phrases, sentences and whole passage. Where a learner has a vocabulary or concepts or meaning difficulty, then reading progress becomes severely restricted.

1.2 AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM

In Namibia, literacy in the second language has been a great concern since independence on March 21, 1990. The author became seriously aware of the problem when reading a newspaper headline in which the Namibians education system was criticised by the World Bank: “only one child out of fourteen children can read before they reach Grade six or eight” (UNICEF Report 2004: 22).

In June 1995, the same situation became a national issue as a “talk of the nation hot topic in the English national radio programmes open line called “national chat show” and in the Oshiwambo local language open line called “ewi la manguluka” as well as in the national assembly TV program that was aired in Namibia Broadcasting Corporation nationwide. As a result of these controversial national shows and programmes, many parents echoed their complaints that teachers are not teaching children how to read properly. Children are being promoted to higher grades level without the ability to read. As a result, they end up failing in the upper ladder of the educational curriculum, especially in Grade 10 national examinations.

The findings of the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educationally Quality (SACMEQ) II report by Makuwa (2004: 144-147) compounded an awareness of the problem. The report contained statistics on the reading skills scores in Namibia of the learners and teachers as compared to south and east African countries. The report stated that the reading scores of learners (listed by countries), put Namibian learners as one of the tail end compared to other countries (see also chapter 3:14, figure 1).

The report of the survey done by the Basic Education Support Project Phase 3 (BES 3), Ministry of Education (9) (2007) also drew my attention to the Learners Performance Assessment Instrument (LPAI) survey. This survey was conducted during the years 2006 and 2007, in the six Educational Regions, in Northern Namibia. Oshana Educational Region was also included in the survey that is the focus of this study. The assessment was based on three subjects, including English, which is the focus of this study. The reason why the survey was done in these six

educational regions is because the Namibian government considered these six regions as disadvantaged groups as a result of the liberation struggle. In these six regions, learners' failure rate in their national examinations (Grade 10 and 12) was always high, especially in English. This is a recurring problem annually. The results reflect the poor background of English teaching in their lower primary Grade levels.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Namibian public felt that children are not properly taught how to read in English as a second language. They are also of the opinion that their children have insufficient opportunities to develop reading skill in the classroom. They felt that the way the teachers teach reading skills to learners is not effective enough to develop reading capacity. Namibian parents felt that teachers, because of their great influence on learners, have added obligations and responsibilities towards their learners to develop their reading skills in schools. Parents of Namibia still maintain that, children's reading activities should not be the parent's duty, since most of them are not schooled for that purpose.

Children's inability to read in the classrooms posed a big risk to the articulations between one Grade levels to the next. From Grade 3 onwards teachers experienced inadequacy and incompetency in reading capabilities among learners. As a result, the situation impacted heavily on the learner's progress in all facets, because English reading proficiency is a prerequisite for understanding all other subjects. In Namibia, English is an official language and the medium of instruction from upper primary onwards.

Namibian learners lose interests in learning and merely attend classes for the sake of attending. Learners became de-motivated, demoralised and psychologically affected victims of the high failure rate in their national examinations. They developed a low self-esteem with low self concept-personality traits that devalues young children's' dreams to achieve success in life.

When Grade 3 learners have problems with English as a second language, it thus becomes necessary to investigate those factors in the school that might contribute to poor reading skills.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

This study will address the following research question:

What are the factors that influence the teaching of reading skills in English as a second language of Grade 3 learners?

1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY

This study aims to investigate the factors that influence the teaching of reading in English as a second language of Grade 3 learners in the research area.

As a secondary aim, this study will investigate:

- methods and approaches that are used to promote the teaching of reading in English as a second language and
- the linguistic environment of the classroom in which the teaching of reading occurs

1.6 EXPLORATION OF THE PROBLEM

1.6.1 READING CULTURE

Namibia is a vast country, geographically speaking, and, in terms of various indigenous languages used by Namibians in their regions of origin. These local languages became their first languages, while English became the second language and at the same time decreed as an official language by constitutional edict. Sociologically, the country has a big disparity that one percent of the whole population comprises the rich people while the remaining ninety nine percent are poor. Educationally, eight percent of Namibians are illiterate or uneducated, while twenty percent are literate. This may be the reason why lovers of reading are scanty or non-existent

among the many Namibian people. This situation has a carry over effect to schools as well as to the community.

1.6.2 READING INTERVENTION

In strengthening English reading skill among the learners, remedial teaching is necessary. This is reaffirmed by Ziolkowska (2007:76-86) who discovered that remedial teaching is not the only remedy to help learners with reading difficulties, but above all teachers' interventions is needed for preventive measures. According to Cullingford (2001:88) this intervention strategy by teachers can help individual children who have difficulties in learning to read. This can be done by using direct instruction, real teaching and from unthreatening sources like blending of the clue in decoding the text. This intervention in reading is valuable and enjoyable as well as important to improve reading.

To make reading intervention workable, Barkley (2006:194-210) recommended cooperative learning as a necessity. In his study on the subject of teaching reading technique, he found that there is a positive correlation between the learner's prior knowledge in reading comprehension and achievement.

Learners read by decoding or recognising the words without understanding them. This is didactically not advisable and Høien and Lundberg (2000:188) maintain that "teachers spent too much time on decoding practice in reading rather than on reading comprehension". To make it instructionally correct, both activities need to be given the same weight. In other words, learners need to recognise the words correctly and to find the correct meaning of the words.

1.6.3 TEACHING AND DEVELOPMENT OF READING

Frost (1999:108) insists that reading should be considered as a product of written word recognition and comprehension so that if the word has been recognised, reading and listening will draw on the same linguistic processes.

Gill (2005:214-221) believes that as reading word recognition is considered, the goal is seen as “automatic” in decoding words.

There is also the assumption that some of the teachers do not vary their methods of teaching reading, and that their monotonous style does not stimulate learners to learn. Teachers who teach learners in that way are not responsive to the demands and needs of the present day situation. This is actually contradictory to the outcomes of the study undertaken by O’Sullivan (2003:131-133). He made the point that by using an eclectic approach to teaching young pupils, teachers are directly and indirectly developing reading skills in their pupils. This strategy applies a bottom-up approach which includes phonics and look and say and a top-down strategy that are composed of extensive reading, contextualisation and pictorial clues.

Teachers presume that learners read by memorising letters of the alphabet or texts without knowing the meaning. Linked to this observation, O’Sullivan (2003:133) highlighted that the use of only one teaching strategy has become common practice in developing countries. This is known as rote reading. Namibia, as a developing country, having this type of practice is not exempted from O’Sullivan’s comments. He, however, suggested that a low teaching standard can produce rote reading and this may be remedied by applying eclectic reading strategies plus the use of meaningful approaches to reading.

Despite their rigid training at the teachers’ training colleges, teachers, both new and old became amnesic and myopic in applying both Piaget’s developmental stages in language and cognitive learning as well as Thorndike’s three laws of connective behavioural learning, for example, theory of readiness, theory of exercise and theory of effect (Mwamwenda 2004:182-184). This needs to be revisited to refresh and renew the effect of the teaching practice.

Honig, Diamond and Gutlohn (2000:9 -11) coined the word “Matthews’s effects”. This means that a good and consistent reader increasingly becomes richer in reading ability while non-proficient readers get increasingly poorer in their reading capabilities. Or, it also means that the less the learners read in the first Grade, the less likely they will be able to read in subsequent

school years. Honig, Diamond and Gutlohn (2000:9-11) also maintained that “there was a significant positive relation existing between the measures of the amount reading or book reading and the measure of reading comprehension, vocabulary and reading speed.”

1.6.4 VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Limited vocabulary development, demonstrated an observation that learners are not trained to become vocabulary wise. This is not educationally sound, and Høien and Lundberg (2000:188-189) discovered that the vocabulary of many poor readers is poorly developed. Consequently learners’ reading is limited as they lack good strategies to increase and widen their grasp of words. On the positive side, they discovered that learners are able to learn many new words if the words are presented in a meaningful context and are fully explained. In summary, they say that learners can add up to 3000 new words per year on their own volition, if given a chance by their teachers.

In the same vein, Biemiller and Boote (2006:44-62) supported that teaching vocabulary to children in the primary grades is essential in learning the word meanings of the storybooks they are using.

In addition, O’Sullivan (2003:133) maintains that an increase in vocabulary can enhance children’s mental power, through the use of oral work. This is considered enough to be effective in the development of children’s reading skills.

Honig, Diamond and Gutlohn (2000:10) stress that “if learners can be helped to do word sorting activities, will increase their spelling as well as reading abilities”.

In explaining the nature of reading, Jackson and Coltheart (2001:11-37) recall that reading is a cognitive activity done through the information processing that composes of specific processing subsystems. They further meant that from print that is the input, it could produce the meaning.

The syntactic sequences of words as well as the pronunciation form the output or the product. In children, this mental process is however, affected by individual differences in the ability to read as well as by age factors (child vs adult) skilled or beginners, poor reader and progressing reader learner with brain damaged or not. Therefore in a related matter, reading capabilities are affected by the internal environmental cause that includes biological (abnormality left temporal lobe), cognitive (lack of knowledge of grapheme-phoneme) and behavioural (poor performance on word attack subtest).

1.6.5 LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

William (2004:33) reported on his research which involved a survey conducted in 32 countries that if learners' home language differed from the school language the learners perform less well in a reading test compared to those who were tested in their home language.

However, the above survey has been repudiated by the findings of Baker (2003:166-170). He indicated that "both first-language ability and second-language proficiency level are significant predictors of second-language ability. But, if reader's second-language proficiency is below a certain threshold, their proficiency in first-language reading does not affect second language reading. However, if second language is above the threshold the degree of first-language reading proficiency is related to the second-language".

1.6.6 READING MATERIALS AND INSTRUCTION

As far as the personality of the teacher is concerned, Rasinski and Padak (2000:30) views that, although the personality of the teacher is an important factor in teaching reading, the application of correct reading processes is more important. Further to their idea, they also established that materials for instruction in reading could make a difference. Their findings, revealed a wide difference in reading achievement noted among classes and school system even though they

were using similar instructional methods. They therefore concluded that the differences in reading achievement lie in the teacher's role in reading instruction.

In the investigation done by Høien and Lundberg (2000:24) it was revealed that "reading is not a natural process in a child development, but rather a culturally determined phenomenon. It is determined by teaching methods and the child's experiences with printed matter". In this regard, the child's early reading activities need home reading materials and schoolbooks. These must be available at all time and in different formats. Reading should be an interesting and enjoyable learning experience for young children.

A lack of reading materials is affecting the effective teaching of reading. This observation is in agreement with the findings of Hurd, Dixon and Oldham (2006:73-88) who say that book provision is a significant factor in the success of any literacy program.

Cullingfold (2001:194) stated that "different books are suitable to different ages and temperament of learners, for example poems and children's stories". Likewise, shared reading among children become more enjoyable to them as they exchange their ideas pertaining to what they read.

1.6.7 MOTIVATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

Motivation is another tool to use in developing skills in English as a second language as defined by Sisulu (2006:1) as a kind of internal drive that allows someone to do reading to achieve something.

According to Mwamwenda (2004: 188-189) the learning of the English language is induced by the desire to become competent in the language, hence, competencies becomes the drives for learners to avoid failure and to fulfil their needs to achieve language proficiency. This is called achievement motivation. Goal setting, past success gained as well as self-esteem and self-concept, enhances this type of motivation to language learning. Mwamwenda found that positive

self-esteem and a high self-concept (including positive attitudes) are desirable personality traits in learners that correlated to a high performance in the English subject.

1.6.8 A GOOD READING ENVIRONMENT

A good linguistic classroom environment can also play a very important part in contributing to the development of reading skill. The secret beauty of language that can draw their interests to reading can easily be dazzle learners. Baker and Westrup (2000: 162-163) stated that “language teachers who turn the classroom into a world of English can encourage learners to do projects in English”. These initiatives can encourage learners to become familiar with English language. This can be done in many ways. One is by pinning up any newspapers or magazines or journals, comic books in English that are related to the learner’s context, say, in Namibia.

The class library with many books of various human interests at the level of the learners can be displayed. The teacher can pack items for shops or series of boxes to look like a shop in one of the corner of the classroom. The condition can create discussion dramatization or role-playing of the role of the shop in the community. Travel brochures in a reading corner can stimulate interest in places in other countries that they visit at a later stage. The display of cinema posters can incite attention on picture words and theatrical English drama presentations. In displaying pictures and wall chart, learners become fascinated to create the whole meaning on what the pictures are all about. Such display can generate mental creativity and enriches the imaginations of the viewer. It can also promote accidental reading by learners. The display of student’s work is the most important channel by which learners can be strongly motivated and be deeply inspired by their own achievements. Learners can become proud of taking ownership of whatever literary attempts they have tried. This can improve their self concept and self-esteem. Showing some selected songs, poems and some speeches in English will arouse learner’s attention, motivate them and prevent boredom. Lastly but not the least, listening session at listening corner, if allowed by the teacher, can stir audio learning skills developments.

With regard to use of internet in the classroom by learners, Piskozub, Wach and Raulinajtys (2008:82) stated that “reading skills in the classroom can be achieved”. It can also foster learner’s autonomy and thus help improve their reading test performance.

In the views of Hugo (2002: 4-5) the regular classroom should provide the setting to allow children to acquire language as they interact with peers and teachers. She feels that children with limited second language proficiency need: an environment that helps them to draw meaning from the context in which they are working, activities that provide a range of opportunities to use language in a variety of ways, content that is meaningful and is often repeated, opportunities and to be interested in the content of the subject matter. She suggested that younger children should learn oral language first and second language learners can be immersed (completely surrounded) in oral language by means of techniques such as story, conversation, dialogue, poetry, songs, dramatization and language games. There should also be suitable materials for learners to read for examples captions for pictures, word cards/labels, wall charts, wall friezes, phonic cards, reading cards and suitable games.

Husselmann and Kotze (2002:2) pointed out that it is important for the language classroom to have plenty of labels, charts and notices for learners to read for examples the names of furniture, names of learners and instruction on how to care for the classroom, weather charts, season charts, different corners and displays and class newspapers. Learners must be encouraged to read the sight words. This is a welcome environment to the children on the magical and fascinating world of reading.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is of considerable value because it can provide knowledge on what effective techniques and strategies may be used to help influence development of reading skills in English as a second language. With this study, the researcher will be able to recommend what best instructional materials and theories of teaching will help improve the reading competencies of learners in English in Grade 3. The research will shed light on the role of teachers and the school

as important facilitators in promoting literacy development in children. At the end of this study, the researcher will make some recommendations to the Namibian government, its teachers, teacher educators, advisory teacher services and school managers in order to advise them on how to develop properly and improve the teaching of English reading skills to learners with English as a second language.

Hugo (2008:88-89), Matchet and Pretorius (2003:8), Rasinski and Padak (2000:42-48) are all united in proclaiming that reading is very important for learners to read properly in order to acquire knowledge about the letter sounds, recognise the shapes of letters, and syllables that make up words. Reading activities that will enable learners to acquire decoding proficiency as an inroads to reading skills development. Language provides opportunities for learners to construct meaning as they read, share ideas, transmit meaning and make sense of what they read, in order to discover the joy, fun and appreciation of reading. By reading, they can learn their own culture, values, issues and concern with high sentiments of the issues.

Chatry-Komarek (2003:92), Rasinski and Padak (2000:42:43), Matchet and Pretorius (2003:13) commented that if the learning environments are interesting and attractive with rich reading materials inside the classroom, the learners are enticed to read the materials which are significant factors for motivating them to read. They are exposed to different interesting resources that develop their abilities as readers. This interest in reading of books, establishes positive habits and desirable attitudes that will urge learners to achieve and succeed in their later studies.

It is very important for teachers to become experts in teaching reading in the second language, by using a variety of reading techniques, so that learners in the reading class will not become bored and dissatisfied with reading. Instead, their love for reading should be nurtured and used as a means to form concepts, increase their vocabularies, create positive attitudes and maintain enduring interests in reading as passport to reading skills (Hugo:2008:36).

1.8 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is confined to three public government primary schools of the Oshakati Circuit in Northern-Central Namibia. These schools are all located in the same municipality of Ongwediva town in the Oshana Region Education Directorate. This study will focus only on the three selected Grade three primary classes, one from each of the three selected schools. There will be three Grade 3 learners participants selected from each of the three primary schools. In total, nine learners will be involved in this study. There will be three Grade 3 teachers, one from each of the selected focus schools who are also a subject of this study. On the same line, there will also be three principals, one from each of the selected schools that will be an object in this study.

1.9 EXPLANATION OF CONCEPTS

1.9.1 SECOND LANGUAGE

For the purpose of this study “second language” (L2) means a language that is learned after the first language or mother tongue (L1) and is used for certain purposes such as education. In this study the words “English or foreign language” is used to mean second language (Wikipedia English- The free Encyclopaedia 2009).

1.9.2 LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

For the purpose of this study ‘language acquisition’ “refers to the natural or artificial tendency of an individual to learn a particular spoken or written words belonging to his/her own culture or not willingly or unwillingly” (Wikipedia English The free Encyclopaedia 2009).

1.9.3 LITERACY

For the purpose of this study “literacy” in the Namibian context means the ability to read and write with understanding in any language (UNESCO 2005).

1.9.4 READING PROFICIENCY

For the purpose of this study “proficiency” refers to a learner who is skilful, skilled, expert or competent in reading (Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 2007).

1.9.5 OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

For the purpose of this study ‘official language’ “refers to a language that is recognized by law and given a special legal status in the countries, states and other territories for official business in a particular country”. This language may be a foreign language or it may be a national language, in Namibia it is English. Usually, the official language is used in government, commerce and industry and in education (Wikipedia English- The free Encyclopaedia 2009).

1.9.6 LEARNER

For the purpose of this study ‘learner’ means a person who is learning a subject or skill. However, the words “pupils, students and child/children” will be used by the researcher to mean learner. The researcher will investigate the Grade 3 learners.

1.9.7 LOWER PRIMARY EDUCATION

For the purpose of this study in the Namibian context this refers to Grade 1 to 4 phase level. The words ‘primary education/ school and elementary education’ are used to mean lower primary education.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter aimed to familiarise readers with the background to the study and stated the research question and research aim, namely to investigate the factors that can influence the teaching of English reading skills in a second language of Grade 3 learners in the research area.

Chapter 2 will discuss literature on language and new developments in the teaching of reading in a second language.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the background to this study by referring to the research problem and the rationale for the study. The research question that seeks to understand what factors in the school can influence the teaching of English reading was stated to guide the research process. Chapter 1 also outlined the aim of this study, namely, to investigate the factors that influence the teaching of reading skills in English as a second language of grade 3 learners.

In this chapter, different processes and theories of acquiring a second language will be discussed. Literature that will shed more light on factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills, which is the subject of this study, will be reviewed. The ways and means of how a teacher can teach the second language and how to guide learners in gaining knowledge about the importance of the language as communication medium, to express identity, to serve as a repository of history and the fact that language contributed to the sum total of human knowledge will be discussed. Baker (2003:43-51) touches on these issues in expressing the significance of a language. However, Lindsay and Knight (2007:12-13) state that fluency, accuracy, complexity and appropriateness of the language are important.

2.2 THEORIES ON THE ACQUISITION OF A SECOND LANGUAGE

2.2.1 ACCULTURATION THEORY

The importance of the context of the language is cited by Baker (2003:115) who mentioned the acculturation model to explain the second language acquisition. According to this model language is one aspect of culture, and the relationship between the language community of the learner and the second language community is important in language acquisition.

According to this theory the basic premise is the significance of the degree to which a learner practise and apply the target language since this can control the degree to which he or she acquires the second language. Furthermore, the theory explains the power of language in societal contexts. This observation serves to explain why some children with aptitude and ability fail to learn or use a second language.

Following Skinner's theory, Baker' (2003:117) went on to say that language acquisition can be achieved thoroughly by intensive drills and repetition. This also complements Thorndike's three laws of learning: law of exercise, law of effect and nevertheless and law of readiness. Also, he advised to follow the theory to teach the second language correctly, to encourage teachers to prepare tapes in the language laboratory or to use computer-assisted language programs.

2.2.2 *ACCOMMODATION THEORY*

In the theory of Baker (2003:115) accommodation theory is an important factor in explaining a second language acquisition in a group or intergroup situations. This theory considers the perception of social differences between the ingroup (the language learner social group) and the outgroup (the target language community) as very important factors to consider. According to this theory, the relationship between the ingroup and the outgroup areas are seen as both fluid and constantly negotiated. To the accommodation model, the relationships between ingroup and outgroup are dynamic and always changing, for example, a person in the subordinate group is likely to acquire the language of the dominant group. The difference between the acculturation model and the accommodation model is that in the former acquisition is static or changing slowly over time. This is the opposite of the accommodation model that is dynamic and always changing. In the accommodation theory, it is assumed that the learner is likely to show the following characteristics:

- 1. Learners have weak identification within their own ethnic group. They do not see themselves as purely members of their minority language group separate from the dominant language group. Meaning that, their first language is important to membership of the ethnic group.**
- 2. The learners do not regard their ethnic group as inferior to the dominant group. A good language learner makes a quiescent comparison between their ethnic group and dominant group or is not concerned about the difference in status.**
- 3. Learners perceive that their ethnic group have low vitality compared to that of the dominant group. Baker (2003) talk of a perception of ethno linguistic vitality that includes (a) economic, historic, social, political and language status of the ethnic group like (b) size and distribution of ethnic group, mismarriages, amount of in-immigration and out-immigration and (c) institutional support for ethnic groups such as (mass media, education, religions, industry, services, culture and government).**
- 4. Learners consider their ethnic group as boundaries as it is soft and open and not hard and closed.**
- 5. Learners enjoy adequate status within their ethnic group for example concerning employment, gender power and religion.**

2.2.3 SCHEMATA THEORY

In line with the Schemata theory, Scott (2001:1-6), Schank (2001:1-5) and Brewer (2000:1-6) view the mind as a highly complex set of mental structures serving to organise and relate experiences in memory, thus, a process of background knowledge development is involved. In this theory, schemata include knowledge structures and concepts linking new information,

inferring or instantiating certain experiences and information. These are then stored, retrieved and reused by modifying, adjusting and linking them with other ideas and concepts when needed on demand. The theory presumes that a person uses his or her mental stores during learning. These help learners to determine how to interpret the task to be learned, how the learner understands the information and what knowledge the learner acquires. The theory simply signifies that no text divulge a complete meaning but rather provides direction for readers as well as listeners as to how they should build up or form meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge.

2.2.4 LANGUAGE ACQUISITION DEVICE (LAD)

Conteh-Morgan (2002:192) noted Chomsky's language acquisition device (LAD) theory that children do not simply imitate the sounds they hear when learning a language, instead, they piece together the grammar of the language as they go through the natural development process of language acquisition. This LAD switches off, once the critical period for language learning is passed. This refers to adolescence and adulthood. According to Chomsky's LAD is an innate built- in device.

2.2.5 DISCOURSE THEORY

In his second language acquisition theory, Mezirow (2003:1) stated that learners can do actions and develop rules of language structures and its use communicating and interacting with other children. It is a type of transformative learning within the dialectical discourse. Mezirow has enunciated four principles of this theory as follow:

- a) **A second language follows a natural route in the set arrangement and analysis of grammatical words arrangements.**
- b) **To negotiate meaning and understanding native speakers adjust and simplify their speech with non-native speakers.**
- c) **The communicative strategies applied in negotiating meaning and affected input usually influence the rate and route of second language acquisition that is when learners acquire a common formula it is later analyse into their components parts.**
- d) **The natural route is the result of learning how to hold conversations.**

2.2.6 *NEUROFUNCTIONAL THEORY*

In a neurolinguistic study made by Baker (2003:143-146) he explained that there is a complex connection between language function and the brain. That means, the brain has two hemispheres with different functions. The right hemisphere (RH) is for storing holistic processing of formulaic speech and the second language processing in the early stages of informal language acquisition. The areas of the left hemisphere (LH) are known as the Wernickes and Broccas areas. They have been localised as being associated with the comprehension and production of language. This involves creative language use, such as syntactic and semantic processing and the basic grammatical processing as well as the motor operation involved in speaking and writing by younger learners. The neurofunctional language processing of the two areas of the brain are affected by age differences, formulaic speech, fossilisation and the pattern practice done in the second language acquisition classroom.

Connected to this theory, are the further explanations advanced by Baker (2003:143) when he said that:

The right hemisphere of the brain is used more when the person is bilingual than when the person is monolingual for first language (L₁) and second language (L₂) processing. The RH is

more involved in second-language processing than first-language acquisition. When one is more adept to a second-language, then the RH functioning decreases and LH working increases. It is therefore presumed that RH is more involved where instant, changing and impulsive aspects of language usage are concerned, while the LH controls the analytic aspect of language. It is further assumed that the centre of language processing resides in the left hemisphere. A person who acquires a second language naturally will use more RH for language processing than those who learn a second language formally in the classroom. Adult bilinguals are presumed to be using the RH more than the early bilinguals.

2.2.7 INTERACTIONIST THEORY

Another language theory is Hymes Interactionist theory (Conteh-Morgan 2002:192-193). This theory of second language acquisition is more focused on the use of language in the communicative act, on the function of language, and on the language use in various situations. This theory indicated that by integrating and communicating, learners gain language proficiency and communicative competence. It stresses the use of authentic, real life language materials on the classroom and not a simulated decontextualised one, and the creating of a situation by which meaningful instructions enhance learning. The teacher acts as a facilitator, using collaborative learning in groups. Here all kinds of communication in a unified way is used to stimulate productive use of language.

2.2.8 THE UNIVERSAL HYPOTHESIS

According to Baker (2003:129) Chomsky's universal hypothesis, postulates that there are mental mechanisms that are specifically linguistic. He called this 'the language acquisition device'. This device contains an inherent design for a person to acquire a language. Language production as a linguistic process requires the operation of the universal principles of grammar that the learner is provided by nature. Meaning that, the processing of a language in the brain is done through the complex and interwoven connections of nerve networks linking it to the information

centre. Through the continuous and repetitive use of words, it becomes activated and potentially vigorous but may become weak through disuse. When a learner processes a word form and its meaning on a daily basis it is strengthened and remembered by a learner. On the other hand if a learner seldom uses the word, he or she will forget that word.

2.2.9 ASSOCIATIVE COGNITIVE CREED THEORY

Second language acquisition is a construction based, rational, exemplar-driven, emergent, and dialectic in nature. According to the proponents of this theory, the process of language learning is similar to that of other types of learning, for example, learning how to play table tennis or chess (Conteh-Morgan 2002:3).

2.2.10 NATIVITISATION THEORY

Ellis (2002:378-379) claimed that Andersen's Nativitisation theory or native language theory, "learners make the input conform to their own internalised view of what constitutes the L2 system. They simplify the learning task done by forming hypothesis based on knowledge possess (L1 knowledge and knowledge of the world)". It provides a much clearer explanation saying that language proficiency in native language can be used as basis or be drawn on when learning any second language. He believed that even if the surface aspect of a child's native language, for example Oshindonga and English are different, the underlying cognitive base that includes an understanding of areas such as, literacy concepts, logic, abstract thinking, comprehension, analysis, application, synthesis, evaluation, inference, notions, as well as metalanguage and conceptual aspects of thinking are similar. The learner can transfer this underlying thinking process and literacy related skills used in the native language to the acquisition of any second language. This transfer process can however only be effective if the learner's developmental competence in language and literacy of his or her own native language is of minimal level before the transfer occurs. Hence, if the competence level is nil, no transfer of learning can take place.

2.2.11 MONITOR MODEL HYPOTHESIS

According to Lightbown and Spada (2010: 36-38) teaching a language is done in a behavioristic approach, but was later revised. One approach to the acquisition of a second language that influenced Chomsky's theory in obtaining the first language was that of Stephen Krashen's monitor model proposed in the early 1970's. This is then a replacement to the method of language teaching based on behaviorism. In Krashen's styles he described his model in terms of five hypotheses as follow:

Firstly, in the *acquisition-learning hypotheses* Krashen differentiate the two terms "acquire and learn". With acquire he said that "we acquire as we understand in much the same way that children pick up their first language-with no conscious attention to language form. We "learn" on the other hand through conscious attention to form and rule learning".

Secondly, once a scheme *monitor hypotheses* is acquired, it can start to verbalize word which will trigger an instinctive and spontaneous language. This scheming system can act to revise and oversee in making changes-thus rectifying mistakes on what was vocalized and produced based on observed rules.

Thirdly, in the *natural hypotheses*, it hypothesizes that as the first language evolved out the second language may come out in a predictable manner. The easiest aspects in a language to state or learn are not expected to acquire first hand, for example the rule for adding an "s" to third person.

Fourthly, is the *input hypothesis*. It is claimed that once language acquisition occur to a person and it is comprehensible and that contains "i + 1 ". The "i" represents the level of language already obtained. The "1" is a metaphor for language (words, grammatical forms, and syntax or analogy, aspects of pronunciation) that is just a further step after that level.

Fifthly, the affective filter hypothesis refers to the emotive or interests or altitudinal behavior or needs of learners towards the language. If a learner is tense, anxious eager or bored towards the language, a learner may acquire or abandon the language.

2.3 THE SCHOOL'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE PROMOTION OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Baker (2003:343) discusses some strategies in promoting reading skills as part of the literacy and illiteracy upliftment programme in the classroom. His suggestions are divided into three main headings: general, reading and writing. But, these are seen as integrated whole and not as separate entities. The discussion will however, focused on the general aspects and readings.

To be specific the classroom teacher should create a classroom environment that promotes literacy. To do this, Baker (2003:345), proposed among others, the following: charts, a content study area, attendance list, menus, calendars, words of favourite songs, classroom libraries containing various genres on different reading levels, information books to cover all the areas of the curriculum, reading corners in the classrooms with comfortable chairs or pillows, writing centres, display of children's original writing and published work. Furthermore, the school setting should encourage collaborative and cooperative learning. He suggests that teachers should encourage children to learn with, and from each other as well as learn from the teacher.

Children need to see each other as resources and regard the classroom as a workshop where learners work cooperatively and independently as well as interdependently with the teacher who attends to small groups and individual's problems and needs. Additionally, the school must include literacy development as part of the content areas of the curriculum through interdisciplinary project work, on themes such as: racism, prejudices and supremacist attitudes. To enrich this scope, Baker (2003) gives examples of issues and projects such as making learners active participants in their own literacy development, integrating oral work with reading and writing development, promoting interaction with others and requiring topics that are linguistically stimulating to everybody. His proposal was supplemented by his statement that primary school teachers should attend at least four to six workshop sessions per year and this

must be complemented by classroom visits. To me, this can be done at the school, cluster, and circuit, regional and national levels, on a compulsory basis (Baker 2003:345).

Schools, on what the researcher understood has the function to nurture the second language development can become effective by what their teachers can do.

2.4 TEACHERS' ROLE IN PROMOTING LEARNERS' SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Baker (2003:344) stressed that “sufficient book in the classroom libraries increased the amount of reading that children do in the learning of English as a second language. Children’s books were written purposely to interest children. They range widely in levels difficulty vocabulary or syntax”. To this situation, the teacher is the dominant figure in the classroom, and learners follow his or her advice. Baker emphasized to teachers the need to encourage learners to do reading on a wide scale this include good children’s books, by including also comics, magazines, newspapers, cartoons. This could lead to stimulating experiences and accelerated growth and increase reading competencies. He further explains that books that can be read for pleasure or general information must be present in the classroom libraries to develop reading skills and make reading more enjoyable and exciting. Additionally, the supply of interesting reading materials must always be available to children to sustain their love for reading. Meanwhile, to support reading interests in the class, the value of the reading aloud activities by learners from interesting literature must be undertaken regularly in the classroom. These activities will enable teachers to assess learners’ progress and detect learners’ individual needs in reading and will promote continued growth in reading skills.

Baker (2003:118) pointed out that there is a problem in the acquisition of a second language because of the interference of the first language and he cautioned teachers to focus on areas of difficulties posed by negative transfer from the first to the second language. Secondly, many educationalists claimed that the acquisition and learning of a second language can occur everywhere a person can ask questions about correct grammar mistakes and difficulties. Thirdly, to make the acquisition of the second language more successfully effective, pleasurable and

enjoyable, there is a need for a teacher to apply additive strategies such as allowing learner's to read and tell stories. Learners should be allowed to describe their experiential background.

Moreover, let learners write their own texts to read to others in the class in order to express their own ideas and demonstrate their understanding of what they have read.

A report by N'Namdi (2005:3) supports the above. According to him language teachers should be responsive to the vast and varied needs of each child. This will promote an educational climate that facilitates the desire to read. It employs various behavioural and teaching strategies to promote pupil motivation, create an environment that motivates children to read, as well as act as knower/informer (Ellis 2002:227). In addition to this, teachers need to expose learners to various inspiring reading materials. English classes need less intervention by the teacher and teachers must always use exercises designed to increase learners' reading speed.

Landsberg (2008:155) maintained that it is important for English Second Language learners to develop a love for enjoyment of listening, speaking, reading and writing English and concentrate on what they do know and can do, rather than on what they do not know and cannot do. Children should learn to draw on the strategies and skills which they have learnt to use in their first language. They look for sounds, gestures and actions of speakers to identify words as they would in their first language. This trial and error character of the children's attempts as well as responses from competent users in their first language is valuable for learning the second language. Strategies used to learn the first language can also be used when learning a second language, especially if the conditions are the same than those of the first language.

Teachers should grant learners opportunities to experiment with language by making mistakes and learning from their mistakes. Teachers need to encourage peers to accept these learners by explaining that multilingual learners need to learn in their second language. It is important for teachers to treat learners as individuals, to encourage them to use their home language and to learn their language and culture. Making use of the services of a bilingual speaker with a similar cultural background as the ESL learners and creating opportunities for them to participate in extramural activities can benefit the learner enormously. Learners who can use their first

language when talking to others can provide support and confidence in the interactions. This sustains the learning of a second language and ensures that it takes place more quickly and progresses well (Landsberg 2008:155).

Hugo (2002:4) stressed that teachers play an important role in children's acquisition of the second language, in the way they present their lessons and how children participate. If children connect the oral and written language, it can have an influence on their language development.

In building an understanding of the second language, teachers working with second language learners must take the suggestions of Craig (2001:5) to the heart. These are as follows: create opportunities for learning of all kinds, relate frequently and personally to the students, challenge the students to speak, think, and learn, ask critical questions while listening, and act as a backup resource and support system, which allows the learners to build on prior communication experiences, engage in class presentations, and extend post classroom experiences.

Any teacher who would like to develop a working theory on second language acquisition such as learning the English language should take note of the theory on language acquisition by Craig (2001:4). He explained the importance of understanding of what language is, classroom learning, the teaching process, and linguistic contrasts. Knowledge and understanding of first language acquisition, and, all that it entails, and an awareness of the differences between first and second language acquisition are important. Included in this venture are: general principles of human intelligences and how they affect or relate to learning and knowledge, awareness and appreciation of the variation among cognitive learning styles and personalities of learners, the importance of culture and learning and finally the importance of communicative competence in the learning process.

Celce-Murcia (2001:163) who was seriously concerned about the teaching of English suggested to teachers to use strategies to facilitate second language literacy development that can help their learners achieve the required standards. This could be done by exposing them to many forms of print for example, label items in the classroom, focus attention on the print around the classroom, school or neighbourhood. To manage aspects of classroom business in writing on could for

example include attendance lists, classroom chores or charts showing the number of books read, establish a regular place to post announcements or messages, create areas in the room for specific literacy purposes for example a reading, listening or writing corner.

Gonzalez, Yawkey and Minanya-Rowe (2006:88) alluded to the fact that learners' English Second Language academic success depended on the teacher's knowledge and the application of effective pedagogy in the classroom.

Teaching is not a discriminatory profession: the practice embraces all learners and their needs especially those of disadvantaged learners.

2.5 HOW DISADVANTAGED LEARNERS ACQUIRE A SECOND LANGUAGE

From the sources available, the groups of learners who constitute disadvantaged learners include immigrants, minority language groups children from illiterate families, children from poor families, autistic children, and children with dyslexia (Cummins 2004:41, Knapp 2006:7-8, Yeon 2003:2-3).

Knapp (2006:7 – 8) stated that children from immigrant backgrounds have a much poorer command of a second language especially regarding vocabulary, morphology, syntax. Due to these deficiency learners cannot link up important relationship words in the sentences. So, learners cannot produce more complex sentences. They also have very poor auditory skills and phonological awareness. He added that children from immigrant families have concealed language difficulties, for example, they do not pronounce words clearly, speak at a great speed, swallow the ends of words and avoid difficult constructions of sentences. Finally, Knapp commented that because of learners' language difficulties in the second language it then creates an impact on their textual skills in understanding and writing texts. Learners have limited understanding of more complex conversations in the classroom including exercises and texts set out in textbooks.

In his conclusion report, Knapp (2006:9-13) reported on the positive impact on language acquisition by using, extra support lessons and extra hours of targeted coaching given to disadvantaged German learners from migrant background to enable these learners to acquire German as a second language.

Yeon (2003:1 - 2) mentions that pronunciation problems and perceptual differences between the first language and the second language are the cause of problems experienced by disadvantaged Korean learners of English.

Migrant children are disadvantaged and have less chance to achieve success at school in acquiring a second language, because they have no background, no experience or no knowledge of the second language (Van Avermaet 2006:1 - 2).

Ortiz (2001:1) viewed that English language learners with special needs can also be regarded as disadvantaged learners when trying to acquire a second language. This is because of the scarcity of appropriate assessment instruments, a lack of personnel trained to conduct linguistically and culturally relevant educational assessment and special educators who are trained to address their disabilities related to their educational needs.

Cummins (2004:41-42) states that immigrants from Mexico and Haiti who have inadequate literacy skills in their native language make acquiring literacy skills in a second language difficult. He also noted that the combined effects of parental illiteracy and a lack of interest in their children's education are the causes of failure of Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Finally, he, however, mentions that parents have high aspirations for their children and want to be involved in promoting academic progress for their children. But, parents do not know how to help their children academically, even if they wanted to.

The Ministry of Education in Namibia is mandated to provide education and training to learners with special needs and abilities. Included in this group are children with vision, hearing or other physical, emotional or mental impairment and the underachievers in the classroom (Ministry of Education and Culture (1) (1993:130). This is also governed by the policy of inclusive education (1990).

In a study on how disadvantaged learners acquire second language, Armand, Lefrancois, Baron, Gomes and Nuckle (2004:438-441) concluded that reading books to the class and then interacting with learners help them to understand what they learn from the story telling. In addition, games enhance their development of meta-phonological abilities. When underprivileged plural-ethnic learners perform various activities it enables them to improve, their vocabulary recognition skills, text comprehension and writing skills.

Zhonggangao (2001:8-24) reported that although learning the second language is not as easy as learning the first language it is further hampered by the age factor and the length of learning process. However factors such as positive attitudes, motivation (the desire to learn the language for utilitarian purpose) communication and acculturation (the desire to belong to the group for survival jobs and pay) are the driving force to learn to acquire competence in the second language. These acquired competencies in reading English as a second language can be developed through grammar instruction.

Sheehy (2005:293-301) noted that by applying morphine software as tool to teach word recognition among children with severe learning difficulties, after 16 teaching sessions, improvements were made and learners were able to do word recognition much easier.

For teachers to be competent and effective in imparting knowledge and skills in teaching reading they must be cognisant of all the techniques and strategies used in teaching reading.

2.6 READING PROBLEMS IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Francis (2000:1) defined reading problems as a “breakdown in the communication between the reader and the author”. He referred to a reading problem as being the presence of one or more error in the brain’s neurological network that utterly direct the interactive predictive, integrative, mental process called “reading” that likely worsened by the weakness in the readers’ intention to read.

Gagne (2006:1 - 2) regarded reading dyslexia as the condition in which an individual has no specific physical or mental limitations but has difficult reading age appropriate material. These reading problems have nothing to do with intelligence or ability but rather with how the person processes the print. He said that learners therefore struggle with reading because they lack the necessary skills.

Gagne (2006:1-3) identified general reading problems as the inability to process print phonetically that include whole word type errors, word guessing and memorising texts, not processing print phonologically, the inability to read simple phonetics words, poor spelling skills, lacking knowledge of the phonemic code, not sounding out words and reading with much effort. Furthermore, gaps in foundation skills in reading as well as in proficiency in phonological processing are developed among the learners if the following are present poor phonemic awareness, choppy sounding out or inability to blend smoothly, improper direction tracking, gaps in direct knowledge of the complete phonemic code and not paying attention to details.

Brist (2002:1) expressed that reading problems can be identified by a number of symptoms, such as reversing letters or words, or omitting letters, losing one's place when reading, not reading fluently or inaccurately, remembering little of what one has read or reading with poor comprehension. He added that learners with reading disabilities fall behind very rapidly in nearly all school subjects. They are likely to develop negative concepts of themselves and lose motivation to succeed. They have limited access to the rich world found in books.

Lastly, (Learning RX 'n. d '<http://www.learningrx.com/reading-problems.htm>) stated that “weak auditory processing skills are the major cause of struggles for learners who read and spell below grade level. He further explained that English language is difficult to learn because it is made up of 43 phonemes, 26 consonants and 17 vowels but only uses 26 letter symbols to represent those sounds. Furthermore, to learners with weak auditory or cognitive skills, this is a complex system with rules that makes learning to read and spell one of the most difficult tasks a child can encounter”.

2.6.1 HOW TO HELP CHILDREN WITH READING PROBLEMS IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

To work out a solution to reading problems, Francis (2000:4) suggested the use of vocabulary, language structure, cadence, sound and symbols while reading.

Gagne (2006:4) advised that direct phonemic awareness training is a significant step towards the development of a positive impact on reading and spelling as a mean and way to develop proficient reading. Additionally, Gagne suggested that direct phonic systematic programmes are the most effective approach for teaching children to read. This will help to develop correct phonologic processing pathways and build proficient reader skills.

Supplementary to the development of reading proficiency Gagne (2006:3) proposed that learners should be taught how to break long words into syllables and learn about common affixes. Learners with poor comprehension can begin with guided reading and specific actions to develop comprehension skills. Teachers should help learners with limited vocabulary to expand their vocabulary knowledge. Learners with a lack of fluency can be built up by automatic fast reading through repeated correct phonological processing.

Brist (2002:2) recommended that before good reading becomes possible, the following basic skills are required, for example, concentration, visual discrimination, perception and memorising, skills of association, auditory memory and interpretation of position in space are all the functions that form the foundations of good reading and spelling.

Landsberg (2008:167) insinuated “parents should provide teachers with information regarding the children language development such as how old they were when they confronted with a new language, who they communicate with at home, whether they are exposed to reading materials and television”.

In Namibia, few studies if any have been conducted in relation to factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills, there might have been some works on primary school learners, but those were assumed to be limited to other subjects. However, two big educational issues have made Namibian public dump founded. One was the 2003 UN Report that made headlines in local National Newspaper “The Namibian” (Menges 2003) expressed the concern on the alarming weaknesses in reading skills among primary schools age hinting that a low quality of education exist.

The UN Report was later confirmed to be true and correct by the results of the SACMEQ II Report (Makuwa 2004), a study of the conditions of schooling and the quality of education in Namibia that 58 percent of teachers teaching Grade 6 did not reach the highest level of a reading test designed for Grade 6 learners. Then, it was assumed to be more serious in the lower education level among Grade 3 teachers as well as their Grade 3 learners combined.

2.7 THE BEST WAY TO PROMOTE A SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM

Many theories have been recommended for the best way to learn a second language in the classroom. This is even more done with the teaching methods and materials that have been developed to implement those theories. Lightbown and Spada (2010:137-180) have suggested six proposals for classroom teaching and learning in an English second language. They are listed and explained as follows:

1. Get it right from the beginning
2. Just listen... and read
3. Let’s talk
4. Two for one
5. Teach what is teachable
6. Get it right in the end

2.7.1 GET IT RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING

This proposal characterizes more on second and foreign language instruction than any kind which is based on the grammar translation approach. In doing that, the students are presented with vocabulary lists, followed by translation equivalence and grammar rules. The idea is to help the students to read literature rather than to develop fluency in the spoken language. This is done also to provide students with good mental exercise to help their intellectual as well as academic abilities develop, grow and expand. In a regular activity, students read a text together line by line and are asked to translate it from the target language into their native language. Students may answer comprehension questions based on the passage. The teacher has to draw attention to specific grammar rules that is illustrated by the text, for example a certain verb form. Following that, the students are asked to practice the grammatical rules by filling in the blanks with the appropriate verb form in the series of sentences that may or may not related to the text read and translated.

2.7.2 JUST LISTEN...AND READ

This proposal is based on Krashen's hypothesis that language acquisition takes place when learners are exposed to comprehensible input through listening and reading. Lightbown and Spada (2010:144) stressed that "this is a controversial proposal for second language teaching." It does not only says that second language learners need not drill and practise language to learn it, but also that they do not read to speak at all, unless other people have to provide their input by speaking to them.

In the same note Lightbown and Spada recommended that the classroom environment of this proposal should provide learners with a stable diet of listening and reading comprehension activities with no or very few opportunity to speak or interact with the teacher or other learners in the classroom. Their classroom should looks like a miniature language lab, packed with different English second language story books, packed with audiocassette players that contain

recorded contents and sets of earphones, illustrated science books about animals, weather, vehicles etc. Individual students during English classes have to select the materials they want to listen and read, for example for 30 minutes and the teacher is to walk around the classroom to check whether the machines are running appropriately, but not to interact with learners on what they are doing. Students are to concentrate in their work, where some may listen with close eyes; others read actively, mouth the words silently as they follow each line pointing with their fingers. The classroom has to be silent apart from the sounds of the tapes being inserted and removed or chair scraping as students go to the shelves to choose new tapes and books.

2.7.3 *LET'S TALK*

Supports of this proposal emphasize the importance of access to both comprehensible input and conversational interactions with teachers and other students in the classroom. This is done when learners are working together to reach a certain goal for example in a task-based instruction.

Lightbown and Spada (2010:150) argued that “when learners are given the opportunity to engage in interaction, they are required to negotiate for meaning that is to express and clarify their interactions, thoughts, opinions etc that is to permit them to arrive at mutual understanding”. They believe that with the interaction hypothesis, the negotiation leads learners to acquire the language forms—the words and grammar structures.

2.7.4 *TWO FOR ONE*

According to Lightbown and Spada (2010:155) “this approach to language teaching is referred to as content-based instruction. It is one of in which learners acquire a second or foreign language as they study subject matter taught in that language. It is implemented in a great variety of instructional settings, including bilingual education, immersion programmes and “content and language integrated learning (CLIL) programmes in Europe”. In this approach, learners are expected to get ‘two for one’ learning the subject matter content and the language at the same time. In immersion programmes and content and language-integrated learning (CLIL)

programmes, learners are to choose (or their parents choose for them) to receive content-based instruction in a second language.

2.7.5 TEACH WHAT IS TEACHABLE

This proposal is based on the developmental stages of questions. According to Lightbown and Spada (2010:166) “any attempt to teach a stage 4 word-order pattern to learners at stage 1 will not work because learners have to pass through stage 2 and get to stage 3 before they are ready to acquire what is at stage 4”. They further explained that the underlying cause of the stage has not been fully explained, but it is based at least in part of learner’s developing abilities to detect and remember elements in the stream of speech they hear. They said that researchers supporting this view claimed that certain aspects of language-, for example individual vocabulary items can be taught at any time. Learners acquisition of these ‘variation features’ depend on factors like motivation, the learners’ sense of identity, language aptitude and the quality of instruction, including how learners identities and cultures are acknowledged in the classroom.

2.7.6 GET IT RIGHT AT THE END

This approach recognizes an important role for form-focussed instruction, though it is assumed that not everything has to be taught. Lightbown and Spada (2010:165) concluded that “many language features-from pronunciation to vocabulary and grammar will be acquire naturally if learners have adequate exposure to the language and a motivational to learn”. They have also regard comprehension-based, content-based, task-based or other types of essentially meaning focused-instruction as critical for language learning. They hypothesized that learners will do better if they also access to some forms-focused instruction. They argued that learners will benefit in terms of both efficiency of their learning and the level of proficiency they will eventually reach. This proposal emphasizes the idea that some aspects of language must be taught and may need to be taught quite explicitly.

Lightbown and Spada (2010: 166) stressed that “there are a number of situations in which guidance-form-focused-instruction or corrective feedback-is expected to be important, for example when learners in a class share the same first language; they will make errors that is partly the result of transfer from that shared language. Because the errors are not likely to lead to any kind of communication breakdown, it will be virtually impossible for learners to discover the errors on their own”.

2.8 HOW READING IS CONDUCTED IN A SECOND LANGUAGE

According to Walter (2008:1) reading in a second language calls for fast, automatic word decoding and access to the mental lexicon (dictionary). She further explained that building speed and fluency in a second language can be achieved by: Extensive reading, learning text characteristics, handling variety of strategies for getting meaning from the texts and background knowledge of second language culture for easy comprehension.

Following the ideas of Tran (2007:61) reading can be combined into effective comprehension activities by doing individual readings and self study of vocabulary at home, exchanging readings and helping each other with comprehension in the class. Further to this, Tran attributed the success of reading activity for the English language learners to the effective implementation of cooperative learning and wider reading of appropriate materials.

Chatry–Komarek (2003:59-60) stated that teaching practices of reading in African schools have changed by using different ways, such as:

- ❖ Some teachers have put emphasis on reading skills, while others have preferred a holistic approach of teaching reading on the basis of using meaningful texts interesting for children.
- ❖ For teachers who use integrated approaches, they let children start reading short meaningful texts and also identify words, syllables and letters and combine them into new words.

- ❖ To some teachers, they still use textbooks and guides using basal reader approach. While some others prefer to teach literacy on the basis of real texts, either full-length stories or text written with and by the children themselves.
- ❖ But other teachers assume that reading is best taught following a systematic, pre-established progression, which is usually explained and written down in a teachers' guide.
- ❖ And lastly, there are also groups of teachers who prefer to use a literature-based approach, using core sets of children's literature or a whole language approach in which reading and writing skills are interrelated and used in real life situation in all subjects, using commercial books and many other learning aids instead of or as complements to text books.

2.9 READING MATERIALS

Reading materials is one of the most supportive factors in the development of teaching reading. It is valid to say that one of the main problems in many schools is the lack of reading materials that can create an ineffective learning environment. N'Namdi (2005:32) on this aspect reminds us that all the learners should be provided with all the books and materials they need to invite interests and stimulate their desire to read. He further remarked that where there is a lack of reading materials, the teachers should practise resourcefulness to acquire as many materials as needed such as basic materials e.g. various short stories. Pupils can also be encouraged to participate in the design, creation and imaginative production of classroom materials, for examples, exchange of texts, writing stories, poetry writing which can become a part of the permanent collection of materials of the classroom. Once this is achieved learners become proud owners of the initiatives. This can boost their self-esteem and self pride. For this to happen in an active and progressive manner there can be an exchange of materials between classrooms, schools and clusters. These techniques will enable teachers to build up a library at the classroom

level and at the same time it will give the learners a chance to feel responsible and be holder for their own learning.

Ideally, materials should include a variety of narrative and expository books at different levels of difficulty and reflect the interests of the learners. There should be different texts such as newspaper articles, cassette tapes, stories, proverbs, books maps, jokes, riddles, recipes, poetry, song lyrics, street signs, clothing tags (cleaning directions), rhymes, phonetic charts, conversational posters etc. (Lindsay & Knight 2007:81).

Richard and Rodger (2002:30) explained the roles of instructional materials in motivating language teaching. Some of these are the following: Materials that will focus on the communicative abilities of interpretation, expression and negotiations. Materials will focus on understandable, relevant and interesting exchanges of information, rather than on the presentation of grammatical form. Materials will involve different kinds of texts and different media that the learners can use to develop their competence through variety of different activities and tasks.

The guidelines of school principals, Ministry of Education (4) (2005:102) made a strong statement reminding all Namibian teachers that effective learning and teaching are closely linked to the use of materials such as books, posters, chart, media like radio, newspapers and audio cassettes. Teachers are urged to select and develop the most appropriate materials and media for the learners to enrich and reinforce learning. It should assist them in achieving the learning objectives. It should be borne in mind that the most effective materials are learner friendly. They must meet the learners' needs and interests. It should be stimulating as well as motivating and easy to use.

In a supportive remarks by Rasinski and Padak (2000:30) insinuated that "a literate classroom environment should offer a wide range of authentic materials for reading and writing. Reading materials for beginners of any age should support and encourage them in their search for meaning. The continued by explaining that predictable materials are especially effective because

they enable the beginning readers to process the printed page in the same way, as the mature reader employs predicting, sampling, confirming and disconfirming strategies from the first. The pattern of literature is predictable for a variety of reasons including repetition, use of familiar concepts that match illustrations and text and use of rhythm and rhyme. Materials should be conveniently available so that learners have easy access to what they need”.

In their recommendations, Husselmann and Kotze (2002:1) advised teachers to choose interesting and enjoyable texts to make the learners enthusiastic about reading. They also encourage each teacher to build up a class library and encourage learners to make use of it.

Hugo (2002:94 – 98), mentions the most common materials of teaching reading are picture graphs, pictorial graphs, books, picture books, nursery rhymes, action rhyme books, story books with pictures, information books, designing own books, magazines and newspapers, advertisements, colouring books, menus, recipes, timetables etc.

If reading materials in the school learning environment, do not suitably meet learners’ needs and are inadequate in numbers it generates enormous reading problems.

2.10 METHODS OF TEACHING READING

In exploring of educational methodology in teaching reading, N’Namdi (2005:27-28) traced back the reading specialist’s recommendations in different approaches that were believed to be the best methods of teaching children to learn how to read. He further stated that between the 1930s and 1940s emphasis was put on reading to gain meaning using the “look and say” method. But, in the 1960s to 1970s, the priority changed to skills development, using tools such as phonetics and other decoding skills. In the early 1980s the whole word approach changed.

Prior to the 1980s, Farris, Fuhler and Walther (2004:41-42) hinted that in the early stages of second language reading, specifically in reading English as a second language, a rather passive, bottom-up approach was followed. It is also primarily viewed as a decoding process of reconstructing the author’s intended meaning by recognising the printed letters and words. This

process also involves building up meaning for a text from the smallest textual units at the “bottom” (letters and words) to large units the “top” phrases (clauses inter-sentential linkages). While in first or native language reading has been recognised not as passive, but rather as active, interactive and a process approach to do so. The methods used integrated the four components of language with literature that is reading, writing, listening and speaking. This strategy was based on the basic beliefs, that in using these methods, children could learn how to read. As they learn to speak, they will also learn to read from exposures to reading skills, using literature without direct instructions in specific isolated reading skills

According to N’Namdi (2005:28) the teaching of reading today already embraces the integration of four components of language skills namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing into other subjects of the curriculum such as in science and language art which are taught through conceptual theme. Furthermore, he explained that the concurrent views of reading are that the pupils are active learners. They have to interact with new information, based on their previous knowledge and experiences. Therefore, emphasis on teaching reading is placed on helping pupils to learn how to draw on their experiences and previous knowledge in order to construct meaning. These concepts follow the schemata theory.

Supplementing his contributions, N’Namdi (2005:29) cited that the contemporary approach is a balanced process supportive of the strengths of the previous methods, as mentioned previously. These methods used literature to teach skills, and focused on reading for meaning, as integrated with direct instruction in skills development for decoding and comprehension. Therefore in this context, phonetics should not be seen as a skill. Pupils learn before using and interacting with authentic literature, so, it is rather taught within the context of reading and writing. Skills instruction should be mixed in reading and writing activities. It is not presented as a separate activity. Finally, N’Namdi concluded that language and vocabulary could also play an active role in a balanced reading method. Here, children should be able to learn sight words in context rather than in isolation. To differentiate matters, then, teachers could use word lists in order to compare and contrast, classify words or use tags and signs as a context of teaching sight vocabulary. Learners may also learn vocabularies in activities such as in games, story telling, in

peer conversation, dramatisation and that can stimulate imagination and make references to children's experiences.

2.10.1 BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VARIOUS APPROACHES TO TEACHING READING

According to De Debat (2008:1-3) the phonics approach is similar to the bottom-up approach and the whole word approach is called "look and say" or "top down" approach or sight word. However, in later years this whole word approach was modified again to become the "whole language" approach. "This whole language approach was coined by Richard and Schimdt (2002:587) to also be called the integrated whole language approach, while this nomenclature was renamed "look and say" by Matchet and Pretorius (2003:4). To Baker (2008:23) whole language approach is also known as psycho-linguistic guessing game. Recently Blair-Larsen and Williams (2004:13) and Farris et al (2004:9) for transformative purposes, renamed the same whole language approach as the "balanced approach. In order to emerge all the different approaches to the teaching of reading skills and to avoid naming games of teaching strategy alone and to prevent confusion, Zhongganggao (2001:19) insisted on the use of a new term called the "eclectic" method." Wren (2003:5) stated that "the eclectic approach sometimes involves teaching phonics first and then 'graduating' to whole language approaches". There are many ways of teaching reading in the second language as recommended by different authors who are at the same time proponents of the methods cited below: phonics approach, whole word approach, whole language approach, language experience approach, interactive model, context support, balance approach, and so forth.

2.10.2 PHONICS APPROACH OR BOTTOM UP APPROACH

Another important method in teaching early reading skills is the development of phonemic awareness. According to Armbruster (2003:1-5) there is a difference between phonemic awareness and phonics. Phonemic awareness involves sounds in spoken words, that is the ability to blend, divide and use the phonemes in spoken words. While phonics on the other hand involves the relationship between sounds and written symbols which is the study and use of sound/spelling correspondences and syllable patterns to help learners to recognise written words.

In the report by Baker (2008:24) it is clarified that “phonics is an approach that teaches the relationships between letters and graphemes and also phonemes, for examples the word “cat” would be pronounced as /k+/ae/+/t/=/kaet/. The learners are taught by sounding out all the letters”.

(Teaching Treasures TM‘n.d’.<http://teachingtreasures.com.au/homeschool/readingmethods.htm>) stated clearly that the phonetic method is said to be the best known method in teaching reading and writing. This is done through teaching children the alphabet first. The learners learn the names of the letters and the sounds they make. Upon learning the letter sounds, learners will start to blend two letters together to make simple words, then three letters, then four letters and so forth, for example:

a.-t i-t

c-a-t s-a-t

s-p-i-t g-r-i-t

Farris et al (2004:13) stated that “teaching learners how to read based on the bottom-up approach is just as it sounds”. Children begin to read at what seems like the bottom of a complex hierarchy of skills, by recognising the letters of alphabets, learning the letter names and then understanding their corresponding sound. Young learners build on their skills step by step until they reach the goal of reading comprehension. Bottom-up advocates believe that this approach makes learning easier for children because it breaks complex reading tasks into their basic skills,

which can then be mastered one at a time. When a child learns to read, he processes the simplest units that make up a word first, learning letter shapes names and sounds. Next he or she blends letters together in a left to right sequence to create more complete units. Then words are formed as he or she studiously sounds out the letters. Words grow into phrases, and eventually a simple sentence is read. In this model, learning is regarded as a one-way process, from the text to the reader, and progress is made one skill at a time. Mistakes are corrected. The text selected for use would have carefully controlled vocabulary. Text comprehension would be based upon the child's ability to pronounce the words, always moving from the parts to the whole.

Matchet and Pretorius (2003:45) found out that the children who do not understand the letter sounds relationships have a problem with reading in the way phonics are taught. But Matchet and Pretorius, through innovative means, teachers can present phonics in a funny and interesting way. Emphasis on this aspect should be on decoding and meaning by using the letter land approach for example, each sound symbol relationship has a name and a specific character. Vowels, consonant and blends are learned as a story involving different characters who can do different things. This makes learners remember their experiences using various sound symbols blending for long afterwards.

In another proposal, Cullingford (2001:102-104) suggested that "in learning phonics, learners need to know how to classify the words and how to build up parts into whole". This is done when the teacher has to emphasise blending in all the early stages of reading, because they are at the heart of written scripts and meaning in morphemes. Children should see that both syllables of sounds and units of meaning are made up by blends of letters. Moreover, the teaching of reading should be based entirely on the division of words into syllables, concentrating on the main syllabic signals and combining both vowels and consonants. In this context, children need to understand the rules of morphology as a basis for learning to read and to experiment with the relationship between phonemes and morphemes. Children should also be taught how to discriminate words and letters into diagraphs, which help them to recognise different syllables and blends in words.

Armbruster (2003:2 – 22) noted that before children learn how to read print, they need to become aware of how sounds in words work. They must also understand that words are made up of speech sounds or phonemes. Armbruster continued explaining the differences between phonemic awareness instruction, phonics instruction as well as fluency instruction that are essential for learning how to read. Phonemic awareness instruction can help children to learn to read, spell the words and manipulate phonemes by using the letters of the alphabet. To make learners practise this technique, teachers may use different activities to build up phonemic awareness, for example: phonemic isolation, phoneme identity, phoneme categorisation, phonemes blending, phoneme segmentation, phoneme deletion, phoneme addition and phoneme substitution.

Armbruster (2003:2 – 22) said that phonics instruction teaches children the relationship between the letters (graphemes) of written language and the individual sounds (phonemes) of the spoken language. In another instance, the fluency instruction referred to the ability to read a text accurately and quickly. When fluent readers read silently they recognise words automatically. They group words together quickly to help them gain meaning from what they read. Fluent readers, read aloud effortlessly and with expression. It is important because it contributes to build a bridge between word recognition and comprehension.

Explaining the ideas of De Debat (2008:1-2) the bottom-up approach or phonics, is founded on behaviourist belief that learning is a kind of habit formation brought about by repetitive association with stimulus response action and so, language learning is a response acquired by automatic conditioning processes. The responses are reinforced through drilling repetition and error correction. This method requires the learner to match letters with sounds in a defined sequence. The readers decode the text, word by word, and link the words into phrases and sentences. He added that this method treats reading as a word recognition response to the stimuli. The textual comprehension involves adding together words to get the meaning of clauses. By doing that at a lower level, skills are connected to stimulus or prints that are concerned with recognising and recalling. In this method, the reader is a passive decoder whose main task is to identify graphemes and convert them into phonics. As an audio-lingual teaching

method, the bottom-up approach or (phonics) requires strong emphasis on repetition of the sounds that make up words. In this technique, information is processed as it is received, beginning with the small units, then, to letter blending, words phrases and sentence. In the bottom up method, information flows as a series of stages that transform the input and passes to the next stage. Feedback comes in later stages of the process.

Lastly, O' Sullivan (2003:31) confirmed that the use of the eclectic approach in teaching reading to younger learners is one of the best strategies, most effectively able to develop reading skills among learners. These include bottom-up strategies, phonics and look-and-say methods. As a strategy it also includes top-down strategy that is composed of extensive reading, using context and pictorial clues.

2.10.3 WHOLE WORD OR TOP DOWN APPROACH

The whole word approach, based on the work of WikEd (2007:1) and Farris et al (2004:16) “is a method of teaching reading by way of introducing words to children as a whole unit without investigating their sub-words parts. The method involves teaching children to sight read the words so that they will be able to pronounce the whole word as a single entity. The instruction of using the whole word, involves association of word names with printed words”. By repeating an exposure to words in a meaningful context, children are expected to learn to read the words, with no conscious attention to the sub-words object. The goal of whole word instruction, is therefore, based on whole word recognition and whole word vocabulary development. This method is also viewed as a whole to part method of teaching children how to read using phonics part to whole. A top down approach to reading is a revolutionary approach to reading or is a more holistic approach to reading. It is not merely extracting meaning but is rather a process of connecting the information in the text, with the knowledge that the reader brings to the action. This method views reading as a dialogue between the reader and the text. It is an active cognitive process in which the reader's background knowledge plays a role in extracting the meaning. Furthermore, it is viewed that reading is not a passive mechanical activity but purposeful rational and dependent on the prior knowledge and expectation of the learner. Reading makes sense of the

written language rather than decoding print to sound. To Richard & Schmidt (2002:587), “Whole word is also called a word method or sight method. It is a method for teaching children to read, commonly used in teaching reading in mother tongue, in which children are taught to recognize whole words rather than letter names (as in phonics). It usually leads to the sentence method, where whole sentence is used”

2.10.4 WHOLE LANGUAGE APPROACH

As a method, the whole language approach as defined by Richard and Schimdt (2002:587) “is an approach to first language reading and instruction that has its roots in the elementary school level and refers to the teaching of English as a second language (ESL). This approach sees language as a whole entity. The whole language stresses learning to read and write naturally, focusing on real communication, and not to follow a piecemeal approach where grammar, vocabularies and word recognition are separated”. Furthermore, Richard and Schimdt mentioned that in this approach the language is taught in a holistic manner rather than in an atomistic way. It should be taught in real context and in a situation that points out the purposes for which language is used. When language is taught following this approach, activities must move from whole to part, not from part to whole. For example, students might read a whole article rather than only part of it or an adapted version of it. This method uses all four modes of language and lessons that include four language skills for example, listening, speaking, reading and writing, not only a single skill. Language is learned through social interaction. Learners work in pairs or groups, not singly or individually, for example, in conversational English.

Another educationist, Chatry-Komarek (2003:70) referred to the whole language approach as the basal reading approach, because both methods and content have a common philosophy.

In his views, Baker (2008:22-23) said that Goodman started the whole language approach, because of his beliefs that an emerging reader needs little direct instruction to decode the letters, creating sentences representing pictures and sound of the language. This is also confirmed by Farris et al (2004:42). Farris and associates further believed that learners have the ability to decode the letters, syllables, words and phrases when they read meaningful texts, therefore

making inferences about the linguistic data. By using this method, it allows learners to become proficient readers and users of the language. To use the whole language approach more effectively, it is necessary that teachers provide a literate classroom environment with wide varieties of relevant texts that are attractive to learners. By doing so, learners can create meaning out of words and sentences. By using textual cues and their experiential background learners can learn to figure out the meaning of what they have encountered.

To Matchet and Pretorius (2003:46) this method focuses on meaning, not on sound symbols correspondence, so that children can start reading short stories immediately without resorting to phonics. It is therefore their belief that by immersion in meaning children can start working out sound symbols corresponding to the words they read. Also, by teaching learners to recognise whole words within the story, they can become more motivated to read as reading exercises are meaningful and enjoyable. Additionally, in this method at a later time, learners will then learn decoding new longer words in English language, especially with difficult spelling. Finally, Matchet Pretorius indicated that to maintain a balanced literacy program in the early grades, teachers should emphasise reading story books to children as well as to provided them with daily opportunities for independent reading during class time and to integrate writing and reading activities. Learners who get enough practice are usually the ones who get the best results. But the findings of the time spent on reading instruction and the teacher's teaching style of reading instruction are two factors that play a role in early reading. This whole language method links up with the Namibian teaching philosophy of "Learner Centred Approach".

Baker (2008:24) stated that "to allow children to read various texts independently and with comprehension is the most productive strategy". By doing so, it will combine the contribution of the whole language model in promoting immersion into the world of print and serve as an extension of the skill model. Furthermore, by applying this method, it can create a literate classroom, practising silent sustained reading, taking a reading walk and examining a variety of authentic texts relevant to the child world. With this approach, involvement should be mixed especially in the early grades with the strategies designed to develop phonemic awareness and the discovery of the relationship between the sounds of the words and the patterns of letters. This will help the majority of children to decode the meaning of the texts.

Farris et al (2004:11) stressed a strong point that the idea of one approach cannot work with all children for all the aspects of literacy development in all their curricular. Therefore, a balanced or integration approach must be flexible enough. Teachers at any given time should learn to examine all the alternatives and strive each day to find the best ways to help each child develop as a reader and a writer. In this method, three basic principles were drawn out as follows: The first principle is that the curricular goals of the literacy program are to drive everything in the teaching and learning classroom. The teacher arranges instruction and reading opportunities so that the children can acquire as many kinds of reading knowledge. In reading knowledge, they should include such things as for understanding of phonics, word identification strategies, response to what is being read and effective knowledge, including motivation and a desire to read. Each child should be evaluated as a learner. Secondly, to illustrate this principle, different kinds of groupings both heterogeneous and homogenous groupings can be used depending on the skill being taught. Moreover, learners should be less teacher-directed and more independent and draw on their own initiative. The teacher must model the specific task taught before the learners practise and apply their new knowledge. The third principle involves the consideration of the various kinds of materials that should be used in the classroom to teach reading and writing.

Farris et al (2004:12) pointed out that “some knowledge goals such as a love of reading would most likely be encouraged by reading beautiful, interesting and substantive and thought provoking books”. Other goals, such as the mastering of word identification would be encouraged by reading books with repetitive patterns and highly predictable words. Consequently, in using this approach the teacher may choose a mixture of classical literature books, trade books, easy readers and predictable books to be read by learners.

This approach to reading is a combination of the elements that are involved in the whole language and phonics approach. This is what Baker (2003:23) has mentioned in the national reading panel 2000.

2.10.5 LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH

Another method of teaching reading is one by Rasinski and Padak (2000:83-84), namely the language experience approach. This method can be used to teach reading using learners' own words, and texts they have composed as well as providing word recognition instruction to help them to read. Therefore, learners have the important benefit of dealing with stories that they are familiar with. This is also noted by Farris et al (2004:94) when they said that "young and old children are always happy to tell their stories about their experiences. Using the language experience approach, for example, a learner may draw a picture of his or her father working in the garden. Underneath the drawing, the teacher or the learner can write the sentence. "Father is working in the garden". Teachers should also allow learners to collect many pictures and use them to make scrapbooks. The pictures should have simple descriptions of what the pictures are all about. This method supports children's conceptual development and expansion of their vocabularies. This also allows them to gain many opportunities for meaningful reading and writing activities through the use of personal experiences and oral languages.

Weinbrenner's thinking (2006: 86 – 87) pointed out that the language experience approach is more applicable and adaptable for the group work activities among learners whose reading capacity is at the grade level. In the Namibian context, these are learners who have difficulties in reading and who are called 'slow learners' By further employing the language experience approach, the teacher can use the words to teach letter sound recognition, build vocabulary, and teach meanings, use flash cards with words on one side and the definition on the other side. For visual learners, the definition can be a picture that they have drawn. By applying these strategies, the teacher should also find time to read real stories for them to learn to read. Learners can also be asked to read the sentences in and out of order e.g. reading forward and reading backwards. By following this process, the teacher will know that they are recognising the words.

Celce-Murcia (2001:158) stated that the "language experience approach builds upon the notion that if children are given materials to read things they are already familiar with, it will help them

to read. This method is based on two related ideas. Firstly, that learning should move from the familiar to the unknown. Secondly, that the readers whose world knowledge or schemata are similar to that underlying text they can read and their readings will enable them to make sense of the text". Celce-Murcia mentions that this approach goes one step further, suggesting that if the actual language and content of the stories are familiar to readers, they should be able to learn to read it even more easily. The LEA can achieve this by having learners invent or create their own stories. Transcripts of these stories, then, become their reading materials.

2.10.6 THE INTERACTIVE MODEL

(Teaching treasures TM 'n. d'. <http://teachingtreasures.com.au/homeschool/reading-methods.htm>) emphasizes the mixture of bottom-up and top-down approach. The method acknowledges that the lower level processing skills are essential for fluent and accurate reading. Here, the bottom processing becomes more automatic and the higher level skill becomes more engaged. This model also takes into account the continuous interaction of the bottom-up and top-down processing in the construction of the meaning of a text. Although learners can decode automatically with little cognitive effect, second language learners need help in decoding the language as the problem cannot be solved by guessing. The method asserts that the language of the text can contribute much more to the readers' reconstruction of meaning than by top-down theorist that would have made us believe. Efficient and effective reading entails both processes simultaneously.

According to Richard and Rodger (2002:21) the interactive model is defined as "the process by which learners achieve the ability to use a language when their attention is focused on conveying and receiving authentic messages". This thinking of interactivity has been linked to the teaching of reading, writing, as well as listening and speaking skills. But, to other authors such as Farris et al (2004:17-18) the idea of the interactive model referred to the simultaneous use by readers of both the top down and bottom up processing reading comprehension.

2.10.7 CONTENT SUPPORT METHOD

(Teaching Treasures TM 'n. d'. <http://teachingtreasures.com.au/homeschool/reading-methods.htm>) described that the context support method is a learning experience that concern the reading interest of learners. The teacher should choose books that interest learners, for example books with different pictures or illustrations. The learners can keep their interests in enjoying and learning while reading the books. It also encourages the enthusiasm of learners to read as the pictures actually relate to the content. The books can contain short or long sentences that the learners can read.

Rasinski and Padak (2000:93) stressed that this kind of method compels learners to analyse letter combinations to decode or recognise words. Good readers use the context to help them figure out unfamiliar words. In the contextual method, readers use the meaning of the passage and knowledge about the world to predict unknown words. For example, Maria is inside the room alone. She opened____. In the contextual model, learners use context to recognise unknown words. The meaning of the passage is important and not the sounding of the words. Similarly teachers can occasionally explain to learners how they figure out unknown words in their own reading. In the teaching of reading, this type of problem – solving process is called “think aloud”

Farris et al (2004:389) explained that in the context model learners learn most vocabulary in context, incidentally as a function of experiencing vocabulary words in reading and speaking context, and vocabulary words so acquired are going to be better learned and understood than vocabulary taught through explicit instruction. This is because the learner will have been so active and constructive in developing the meaning of the word in the former as compared to the latter situation. After the teachers have taught their learners how to read, they need to find out the progress of their learners through assessing them in many ways to evaluate their growth. This is very significant step in following up their teaching and improving weaknesses in teaching reading.

2.10.8 BALANCE APPROACH

According to Wren (2003:4-5) a balanced approach could be generically described as “mixing some phonics with whole language. To others they call it “eclectic approach”. Wren explained that very few educators today would describe themselves as strict advocates of either a phonics approach or whole language approach. Mostly they describe their teaching as ‘balanced’, which on the surface has a great deal of appeal. Wren further stressed that educators all over the world are promoting a ‘balanced’ approach to reading instruction in an effort to bring an end to the ‘reading wars’. He believed that it is important for teachers to remember that an agreement between the two approaches to reading instruction will not necessarily result in the single, best approach. However, the impression is that if either phonics or whole language could close to being the panacea of reading, education then there would not be a great debate, therefore, the fact remains that there is no evidence that either the whole language approach or phonics approach is specifically effective.

Wren (2010:6) mentioned that research in reading has suggested that phonics approaches may be improved by incorporating elements of whole language instruction or vice versa, but is doubtful that the best approach to reading instruction will be scavenged from these two philosophies, and it is even less likely that any instruction that is not squarely centered on the individual student’s learning needs will ever be universally effective. Moreover, he pointed out that the most troubling aspect of the debate over phonics, whole language and balanced approaches to reading instruction is that, the interest and debate always almost focused on the lessons and activities that a teacher should deliver and the order on how it should be done. Therefore, the suggestion is that the focus needs to shift to the students and the individual learning needs that can be revealed through ongoing diagnostic assessment. Teachers also need to become adept at planning lessons to focus on areas of instructional needs and observe individual students. Lesson plans can be thought of in broader action in advance, need to be frequently revised to suit to the new information and to be practiced to fit into the learning needs of individual students.

2.11 ASSESSMENT READING

Cullingfold (2001:172) explains assessment as a tool to measure learners' knowledge and ability. It indicates the areas in the reading programme where learners demonstrate their strengths and weaknesses. It also shows how well they are able to extract information and analyse what they are reading.

In this investigation, the researcher did not do any assessment and evaluation of the participants of this study, nor any actual formal or informal assessment as the matter is not within the scope of this research. However, as part of the terminal aspect of this report, assessment in Grade 3 reading skills, are theoretically and vicariously explored.

In the targeted schools visited by the researcher, she only did the informal inspection of learners' English exercise books, as well as their teacher's assessment reading record lists of achievement in reading English as a subject.

On the other angle of assessment, Blair-Larsen and Williams (2004:132) point out the importance of assessing oral reading fluency. In their way of assessment, a learner reads one or more samples of grade level materials out loud for one minute. These total number of words read in one minute is used as base core and the number of errors subtracted from this amount. The errors to be noted were the following: omissions, substitution and mispronunciation. If learners do not successfully read a word after three seconds, the word is supplied by the examiner teacher and counted as an error, inserted words/errors that are self corrected are not considered as errors. The final score is determined by the number of words correct per minute.

In assessing learners, Cullingford (2001:173) stated that "teachers should constantly diagnose children's abilities: not allowing an initial impression to influence their attitudes, but must be concerned with the children's attitudes as well as skills. The teacher needs to find ways of assessing the individual learner by making criteria reference marks with criteria being different for each individual child's needs. It is possible to concentrate on one weakness to make a

difference, not at a stroke, but by the use of a variety of techniques. The teacher then finds that other weaknesses are overcome at the same time, but the correction of one palpable fault gives children increased confidence”.

According to N’Namdi (2005:57) the purpose of using assessment is to test whether learning and lesson objectives are met. He further explained that forms of assessment must be based on reflection of what is taught in the classroom as well as be varied and relevant to the lessons, hence, it must be orally based.

Haley and Austin (2004:133) affirmed that assessment methods are not the only means of determining learners’ progress, but, are also tools to make the learning and instruction more cohesive and interactive, for example running record, portfolio assessment, question and interviewing, self-assessment reading readiness test and class observation checklist.

2.11.1 RUNNING RECORD

This is a system used always with early readers to determine how learners are making sense of texts. In a running record, the teacher follows a standard set of written symbols to note each miscue made by the reader, which can reflect the efforts by the reader to interpret texts ranging from insertion of particular words/sounds, omissions, repetitions or corrections. In miscue analysis, a passage is selected at the level at which the learner is expected to comprehend. The learner orally reads a passage while the assessor codes each miscue that occurs, following the reading on a separate sheet. This assessment technique is also concurred by Gunther (2006:1) and Power (2000:6)

2.11.2 PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Again in assessment, N’Namdi (2005:56) defined portfolio assessment as a compilation of a collection of materials that document children’s development in reading and writing. These

samples are analysed for children's mental growth and as challenges to reading development. This requires some guidance especially with young pupils. It allows learners to treat learning as a process and they can trace their development in reading ability and use reading in a variety of concepts.

According to Herbert (2001:57 - 67) portfolios have educational values in that it can encourage children to think about their learning. It can also respond to the individual needs of learners. It promotes tolerance for learning differences. It impacts on the meta-cognitive development of the learners. It can provide opportunities for preferring oneself in the world with confidence and insight. Children are able to comprehend and assist their trends of their understanding and to make meaningful connections between prior and present learning experiences. Through portfolio work, children can take ownership of their learning in compiling them. It can affirm or confirm to the premise that children can become participants in the assessment of their own learning. Herbert considered the objectives of the portfolio as the following:

- (a) To give primary concern to intellectual growth**
- (b) To teach the basic skills thoroughly**
- (c) To consider the child a total human being.**
- (d) To discover and respond to the variety of interests and talents of all children.**
- (e) To foster physical and mental health.**
- (f) To prepare the child for informed and responsible citizenship.**
- (g) To provide a setting that stimulates aesthetic development.**
- (h) To encourage the pursuit of excellence.**

In providing portfolio for individual learners, Herbert believed that it is a kind of commitment to the individual, it emphasises intellectual excellence, it presents the idea of social responsibility and equal opportunity in the school setting and in society at large.

2.11.3 QUESTIONING AND INTERVIEWING

Questioning is a dialogue between the teacher and pupils about the text being read. Generally, the questioning takes place during class time. It involves a teacher or pupil asking another pupil to summarise a text. It involves pupils asking each other questions about the text to determine the meaning, to predict meaning and to clarify unclear vocabulary and concepts. The teacher or a pupil may ask questions pertaining to the lesson. This is quoted by N’Namdi (2005:61). These techniques were also supported by both Haley and Austin (2004:134) as well as Lindsay and Knight (2007:129).

2.11.4 SELF ASSESSMENT

To the researcher, self assessment means pupils have to evaluate their work and progress in order to take responsibility of their own learning. This self evaluation fosters mental honesty. The learners do it by exchanging their work and marking themselves, or they assess themselves by reflecting on what is learnt or not learnt using guidelines provided by the teacher. On this aspect, N’Namdi (2005:64) said that reading journals and diaries are recommended ways of allowing pupils to express their thoughts and reflections. From there, they note their challenges and successes. This is also endorsed by Haley and Austin (2004:134-135) in that learners need to recall and retell what was read and reflect on or self-evaluate the reading and retelling scenario.

2.11.5 READING READINESS TEST

To determine if the learner is school ready, the school needs to have an assessment program. Assessing learners’ readiness for reading is an important feature of an effective reading program. Farris et al (2004:233) advised that “assessment techniques should focus on the experiential/conceptual areas associated with success in reading, such as concept print, language of reading instruction and phonological awareness”. They said that a large number of reading tests are available and they vary in terms of content, format and purpose. These tests are often

used to determine learners' mental age, reading instruction, to predict future performance in reading and to diagnose specific strengths and weaknesses. Representative test items include: associating pictured objects with spoken word for that object, visual and auditory discrimination, letter recognition, knowledge of sound letters, sentence comprehension, drawing a human figure, ability to count and to write numbers, ability to recognize digits, word recognition and copying a model.

2.11.6 CLASS OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

N'Namdi (2005:60) recommended that the checklist chart may be used for reading, writing and listening exercises. In this scheme, teachers may decide also to use an observation record that allows for more notes to be taken about what the teacher observes. This may be useful when a teacher is observing an individual child or a small group of children, for example when the child is presenting an oral assignment such as a speech or reading aloud.

2.12 HOW ASSESSMENT OF READING SKILLS CAN AFFECT THE LEARNERS' LEARNING

Farris et al (2004:205) viewed that "most of what we want to know about children's reading is invisible. How they process print, what meaning making strategies they use, their personal connection or their confidence are not readily obvious; it is up to the assessment tools to make them invisible. The way to make the intangible tangible is to use artefacts of daily reading samples of learners' work, examples of story reflection, weekly journal, illustrations, character maps are good reading artefacts". In their further remarks, retelling is used to access comprehension that will give insight into the understanding of the text, in re-telling a guideline must be used to access comprehension. Running records is a teaching tool used to determining learners' reading capacity, its behaviours as well as accuracy level. Apart from the above mentioned items, the trio included the use of informal reading inventory (IRI). This is done to find out the proper fit of the book to the child's age level. This process is good and helpful to differentiate instruction. By using this IRI, the teacher can estimate the learners reading level and select their levels of reading achievements after they have read the word list aloud.

Assessment for English Grade 3 in the Namibian context, the curriculum Lower Primary Phase Grade 1 – 4, Ministry of Education (2) (2005:2), in English Second language syllabus, has indicated that in the English syllabus the basic minimum competencies should be attained by the learners. Teachers are not intended to limit the initiatives of the teacher or the class. Teachers are encouraged to extend the learners beyond their basic competencies.

The curriculum for the Lower Primary Phase Grades 1-4, Ministry of Education (3) (2006:5-6) requires that all learners in completing the Lower Primary Phase, should respond appropriately to instructions and questions, ask for permission to do things or ask for things they need or want to know: read prepared and unprepared complex sentences from a variety of fictional and non fictional texts, write several simple and complex sentences, recognise and appropriately use basic language structure in speaking, reading and writing where errors do not hinder comprehension or clarity within a passive vocabulary of about 4000 and an active vocabulary of about 1000 words. Failures of the learners to achieve the minimum basic competencies, learners should receive compensatory teaching as much and as long as is needed.

Based on the Directives for the completion of promotion schedules, Republic of Namibia (11) (2007:2) of primary grades registered in the public schools of Namibia, the provision for failures of learners are:

- (a) A learner who obtain E symbol in the language used as the medium of instruction should not be promoted to the next Grade (1 – 4).**
- (b) A learner who has E symbol in English should not be promoted to the next Grades (3 – 4).**
- (c) Although a learner might have a D symbol or better as an overall Grade in the language used as a medium instruction, a learner who does not meet the minimum requirement for reading should not be promoted to the next Grade.**

The policy guide further indicated that assessment in English reading skills is an ongoing process in Grade 3, within the Namibian context. It is a school practise by the teachers to assess what learners know and can do, so that it can point out strengths and weaknesses of the teaching and learning. By subjecting the learners to evaluation, teachers can also find out about their shortcomings and apply decisions to improve them but not to do anything means teaching is a failure in all its forms and objectives, and precious time is wasted. Assessment needs to be reflexive and teachers need to act in case. It helps to mirror the design of the English reading programmes. It can enrich further development, revisions, modifications and implementation to suit the needs and the levels of the growing child. English as a Second Language is taught as a subject in the Namibian schools. It is still in its pre adolescence stage of execution phase (18 years of the making). The practise can offer insights into the nature of the evaluative process, as applied to Grade 3 English Reading subject.

Reading skills development are strengthened or reinforced by different but appropriate and relevant reading materials.

2.13 BENCHMARKS FOR READING SKILLS IN ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE

According to Cambridge Advance Learner's Dictionary (2007:108) benchmarks is described as a level of quality which can be used as a standard when comparing other things. In education, it means quality or standard of learning. The following are the benchmarks in English reading skills expected to be achieved by the grade 3 learners during teaching and learning and at the end of the Grade level. This is based from the syllabus of English second language grade 3, Ministry of Education, Namibia.

2.13.1 READING BENCHMARKS FOR NAMIBIA EDUCATION, GRADE 3 LEVEL

According to the Ministry of Education (2) (2005:56) all the grade three learners are expected to include and achieve the following in their readings:

- ❖ Read prepared and unprepared text of about 50 words from fictional and factual texts.
- ❖ Correctly answer comprehension questions on the texts and talk freely about them.

- ❖ Find basic information from factual texts.
- ❖ Demonstrate good reading habits through eagerness to read.
- ❖ Learners to read for understanding the information.
- ❖ Learners to read for enjoyment.
- ❖ Learners to develop reading skills and fluency.

2.14 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the factors affecting teaching reading skills in English of Grade 3 learners in their second language, theories explaining and clarifying language acquisition including the second language were discussed. The chapter made references to the Second Language Acquisition theories proposed by Baker (2003), Brewer (2000), Conte-Morgan (2002), Ellis (2002), Mezirow (2003), Scott (2001) and Schank (2006) are discussed.

The information gathered in this chapter forms the basis of this research and will guide the researcher in conducting the empirical research that follows in chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3: EXPLORATION OF THE NAMIBIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM (PAST AND PRESENT)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The former chapter presented a literature review, involving the teaching of reading. This served to widen the understanding of reading as subject of this study. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors that influence the teaching of English reading skills as a second language for Grade 3 learners in the research area.

In this chapter, the background to the Namibian education system before and after independence will be explored. This discussion will provide a full and wide picture of the education system of Namibia that will serve to contextualise the problem under investigation and the fieldwork that will be undertaken. The school language policy in Namibia education will be discussed to set out how Namibia incorporated the English language into its curriculum. Teacher training in languages in Namibia before and after independence will be fully expounded in order to provide readers with the background on how teachers are trained to teach languages. The language curriculum for lower primary education Grades 1 to 4 will be explained to sketch a picture of how the language is developed including English among the learners. The national policy assessment in Namibia Grades 1 to 4 will be reviewed to provide the information on what type of assessment is used in assessing the progress of learners. The nature of schools in Namibia will be explored to supply the facts about the phases that make up the formal basic education system in Namibia. The control of the schools in Namibia will be elucidated to clarify how the schools are regulated, managed and supervised.

3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO NAMIBIA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

3.2.1 THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM IN NAMIBIA BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

In the historical account of education in Namibia authored by Salia-Bao (1991:23) he emphasizes that the education system in Namibia was controlled by the apartheid policy of South Africa. It was based on the belief of the superiority of the whites and the need for racial separation. They controlled the formal and informal programmes, the academia, the curricula, teaching and examinations all of which served the purposes of apartheid. This control created weaknesses in the system as mentioned by Salia-Bao (1991:20). The second major control of education in Namibia was the examination board set up by South Africa in terms of the provisions of Section 25 (2) a, b and c of the National Education Act, 1980. The board had the power to prescribe minimum standards for primary and secondary schools but not tertiary education. The impressive curriculum development set up at the National Education level merely perpetuated apartheid's main principle of separate unequal education.

The Faculty of Education which was responsible for this had its own curricula problems which affected the teachers colleges very severely. According to Salia-Bao (1991:29-30) because of these results it was only about 70 per cent under trained teachers were produced in the system due to inadequate curricular and teacher trainers.

In the past education in Namibia was a privilege reserved for the few: there was no wider access and registration to school subject was selective and reserved for the elites and therefore only a few were educated (Ministry of Education and Culture (1) 1993:2).

Another factor determining the internal efficiency of education at the primary and secondary level was the qualifications of teachers. In 1988, only 525 teachers had teaching posts in lower primary, of whom 12.3 per cent could be considered as qualified, in 1985, only 10.7 per cent of teachers were qualified. This meant that 88 per cent of unqualified and under qualified teachers

needed to be upgraded and retrained especially in English. Afrikaans was used as the medium of instruction by most education authorities except the Owambo authority, since most indigenous Namibian languages were not being developed significantly (Salia-Bao 1991:28-29).

The official languages, Afrikaans and English were compulsory as school subjects and were introduced gradually and offered in accordance with sub-instructions (2), (3) and (4). In schools where one of the two official languages was offered at the beginning of sub-standard A, such pupils would be compelled to take the remaining one of these official languages as a second language during the course of their junior primary school education. But, if neither Afrikaans nor English was offered as a first language in sub-standard A, the pupils were compelled to study one of these official languages as a second language and the remaining one of these two official languages as a third language not later than the beginning of standard 2. There was no consistent policy with regard to the languages used by education authorities (Salia-Bao 1991:42-43).

Salia-Bao (1991:20) and his team discovered during school visits that in most rural and urban area schools, Afrikaans was used more than any other language as a medium of instruction. This shows the differences between what was stated in the Examination Board Gazette in theory and what was actually implemented.

The UNIN/CIDA team report in Salia-Bao's article (1991:22) states that in the languages, the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing were emphasized in the languages. But in the practical teaching situation, the spoken language was emphasized at the expense of written skills. This may be the reason why most Namibian speak Afrikaans but cannot write it. The curriculum for teacher training was determined by the Academy in Windhoek as elaborated by the College for Out-of-School Training. The study guides were required reading for all the candidates for the primary teachers' certificate and a perusal of these guides revealed that they had little relevance to the pedagogical and administrative matters that they purported to address.

Teachers Training Colleges offered certificate courses with the Academy:

S.E.C (Secondary Education Certificate), H.P.E.C. (High Primary Education Certificate, Distance Teaching), E.C.P. (Education Certificate for Primary, Distance Teaching) E.C.P. (Education Certificate for Primary, Senior Primary), E.C.P. (Education Certificate Primary, Junior Primary), they normally follow the matric courses and some education courses. The curricula for the primary certificates included: E.C.P. Junior Primary (Salia-Bao1991:84-85).

The curriculum in subjects studies were as follow:

First's year:

a) Matric Subjects were: English, Biology, Biblical Studies or Mother Tongue or Afrikaans.

b) Professional subjects (Major) were:

Perceptual programme (subject Didactics Sub A), School Readiness programme and Teaching Aids

c) Skills were: Physical Training, Book Education, Art

Second year:

a) Matric subjects were: English, Business Economics, History, Biblical Studies or Mathematics

b) Professional subjects were: Teaching Aids II, Subject Didactics Sub B plus Std 1, School organization and Administration as well as Education Psychology.

The curriculum for subjects was the same as in the matric course in standards 9 and 10. Professional and education studies were neglected. The primary school subjects were not well represented in the college curricula. According to Salia-Bao (1991:79-81) he was informed that

teachers had little time for demonstration lessons and teaching practice. Much time was spent on preparing the students for the matric examination.

The findings of Salia-Bao (1991:85) revealed that “the distance teaching programmes organised by the academy and college for Out-of-School Training consisted of mainly matric studies and subject methodology. The curriculum materials that were sent to the students were written in difficult English using outdated teaching methods. The print layout and structure were bad and did not encourage effective learning. To obtain an Elementary Certificate Primary (ECP) or Higher Primary Education Certificate (HEP) or National Education Certificate (NEC), or Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) a student had to pass at least five matric subjects and a pass in the education studies courses”. There was no mention of the student passing the teaching practice. As shown in the curricula used in the teachers’ colleges administered by the Academy, the students were prepared more for higher education in South Africa than for teaching. In Namibian schools, this may be the reason why about 80 per cent of the teachers are under trained. “Teacher-centred education is applied to forms of education in which the teacher dominates the learning process by determining what is taught, how it is taught and the sequences and pace of the teaching. In teacher-centred education, the teacher exercises a major influence on the kind of education that is offered, while pupils have only a minor say in shaping their education”(Salia-Bao1991:86).

The nature of classroom interaction in teacher-centred education is also clearly described by Van Harmelen (2002:15) when she said that “in most schools, the teacher usually stands up in front of the class while learners’ sit passively at their desks. The learners are not actively involved, but merely ‘receive’ the knowledge that the teacher deposits in their minds and they are regarded as ‘blank slates’ “. In the colonial education system, pedagogical strategies were not only teacher-centred and regime centred but they were also tailored to silence and oppress learners by denying them active participation and involvement in deciding what was to be learnt and how it was to be learnt. This socialisation into silence was sought to perpetuate the colonial regime. Once socialised, learners would become less troublesome citizens and in turn transmit the values of

obedience among their future learners, as was believed by the coloniser. Thus, the pedagogical strategy called the “banking mode of education” was dominating.

As already referred to, the banking mode of education, was characterised by repressive and oppressive strategies where teachers “deposited” or transmitted knowledge into the “empty minds” of their learners. In order to suppress the critical thinking abilities of learners, knowledge in the apartheid system was treated as an object or commodity which was already prepared and could be handed over to learners, instead of something which the learners themselves could actively create through personal or group inquiry. Learners were not given the opportunities to create or discover for themselves. The process of learning took place through rote memorization, without understanding or a poor quality textbook, reinforced by a rigid examination system and used to indoctrinate learners about “norms” of a discriminatory apartheid education system. A one-way communication system was the model used for classroom interaction, and, corporal punishment served as the most powerful instrument to administer the authoritarian and hierarchical classroom interaction (Salia-Bao 1991:34-41).

At independence, Namibian schools were still haunted by a repressive system which fostered memorisation and rote repetition or disconnected bits of information. Too often, learning was concerned with describing, labelling and categorising. Learners spent much time memorising what things are called and how their textbooks and their teachers organised those names (Ministry of Education (1) 1993:2-10). Languages skills were taught in compartmentalised fashion, and allocated independently in the timetable and not as a separate subject.

3.2.2 THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM FOR NAMIBIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE

The Namibian people, having been subjected to the horrendous experiences and evil intentions of the curricula of Bantu Education found relief in its constitution when Namibia became independent in 1990. These desired changes were brought about by the demands of the Namibian people to be liberated from apartheid and Bantu Education. The Bantu or apartheid education system emphasised the education of the “elite” but the people wanted education for all

as this promised developments of opportunities in various fields of human endeavour. It would also allow the country and its people to be link up regionally and internationally as far as education and culture were concerned.

The starting point was the reform process, where article 20 of the Namibian Constitution, Ministry of Education and Culture (1) (1993:3) states that: “All persons shall have the right to education. Primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining State Schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge.”

In addition to this, Namibia is a signatory to the World Declaration on Education for All Ministry of Education and Culture (1) (1993:4) which states that “therefore, we the participants in the World Conference on Education for All ...recall that education is a fundamental right for all people, women and men of all ages, throughout our world...know that education is an indispensable key to, though not a sufficient condition for personal and social improvement recognize . . . that sound basic education is fundamental to self reliant development”. The intentions of the constitution and of the World Conference on Education for All are translated into a policy for educational reform and development by Ministry of Education and Culture (1) (1993:4).

The key aspects for Education are summarised in Ministry Education and Culture (1) (1993:60) and include:

- **That education will be built on the foundation of Learner Centred Education, describe thus:**
- **The starting point is the learner’s existing knowledge, skills, interest and understanding, derived from previous experiences in and out of school;**

- **The natural curiosity and eagerness of all young people to learn to investigate and to make sense of widening world must be nourished and encouraged by challenging and meaningful tasks.**
 - **The learner’s perspective needs to be appreciated and considered in the work of the institution.**
 - **Learners should be empowered to be as critical thinkers and take responsibility not only for their own, but also for one another’s learning and total development; and**
 - **Learners should be involved as partners rather than receivers of educational growth.**
- **That education will employ a holistic view of learning, valuing life experiences.**
 - **That education will harness democracy and responsibility in lifelong learning.**
 - **That learning is an active process with participation from the learners in developing, organizing, implementing and managing learning.**

Curriculum, as the policy document suggested, is the co-responsibility of various providers of education and training services. The government plays multiple roles of leadership, co-ordination, catalyst and partner. Other stakeholders such as learners, teachers the parents (the community), business, private and public sectors are expected to give their input.

Ministry of Education and Culture (1) (1993:32) describes what education for all Namibians means “by expanding access, the elimination of inequalities and fair treatment throughout the education system, improved quality of instruction and learning about democracy by practicing it”.

In light of the above statement, the Ministry of Education has assigned the highest priority over the next decade to four major goals and those activities essential to reaching them: access, equity, quality and democracy.

After Namibia gained independence, the Ministry of Education updated the curriculum for Teacher Training Education programmes. They introduced the Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD) to meet the real demands of universal education. This new course was offered by four state colleges of education for example: Caprivi College of Education, Ongwediva College of Education, Rundu College of Education and Windhoek College of Education, but, not by the University of Namibia. The university still only offers teachers bachelor degree studies, to enable them to teach senior secondary school education Grade 11 and 12. While the BETD, is only for the Diploma level courses catering for teachers to teach in Grades 1 to 10.

The Ministry of Education has also introduced mechanisms to improve the education system. These include:

1. In-service training for unqualified and under-qualified teachers of specific phases such as Grades 1 to 4 and 5 to 7 are required to attend the respective courses: Lower Primary Education, Integrated Natural Science, Social Science and Mathematics. This is to update their knowledge in bringing changes in classrooms.
2. Workshops, conferences and seminars do also take place from time to time. This is to exchange and update ideas.
3. Exchange programmes for teachers and learners locally, regionally and internationally are taking place for more and wider exploration of knowledge and experiences as a way to cope with the needs of modern education.

3.3 THE SCHOOL LANGUAGE POLICY IN NAMIBIAN EDUCATION

Education in Namibia, including the language policy, is governed by the education policies of the Ministry of Education. This ministry of Education published a policy document called “Towards Education For All” Ministry of Education and Culture (1) (1993:63-64) which contains a development brief for education and training purposes. This document, also stipulates the language policy guidelines which were issued in the two separate documents namely: Education Transition, July 1990 and Change with continuity, issued November 1990. These

documents are included as part of Towards Education for All, Ministry of Education and Culture (1) (1993:63-66). These statements give broad directives for language choices as medium of instruction and subjects at school levels. Ministry of Education and Culture (1) (1993:63) states that schools are expected to play their roles in establishing the use of English as the official language. Since English is not yet a lingua franca in Namibia, teaching English is to have a high priority.

As from 1992, the new language policy was implemented for over five years, and then, it has to be revised until it reaches all the levels. During the same period, the Basic Education Reform initiatives were also implemented. The language policy stated that, the home language or a local language or English must be the medium of instruction in Grades 1 to 3, with English as a subject (Swarts 2000:4).

Ideally, all children should study two languages, as subjects from Grade 1 onwards and one of them must be English. “Grade 4, is a transitional year, in which home language plays a supportive role in teaching English in all the subjects, except the mother tongue that has to be taught as a subject and used as a medium of instruction. It is further stated that “English should be the medium of instruction for all the subjects at secondary level, vocational-technical institutions, teacher training colleges, as well as at tertiary level” (Ministry of Education and Culture (1) 1993:66).

One of the criteria for language policy formulation as provided in Ministry of Education and Culture (1) (1993:64) stated that “the Ministry of Education has sought a national consensus in considering carefully the views expressed by various groups.” In connection to this, the ministry is also guided by several fundamental understandings such as:

- **Language policy should promote national unity.**
- **All language policies must regard language as a medium of cultural transmission.**

- **For pedagogical reasons, it is an ideal for children to study through their own language during the early years of schooling when basic skills of reading, writing and concept formation are developed.**

In addition to the above-mentioned principles, “the 7-year primary education cycle, should enable learners to acquire reasonable competence in English, the official language and be prepared for English medium instruction throughout the secondary cycle” (Policy guide Lower Primary Phase Grade 1-4, Ministry of Education (5) 2005:42).

Obviously, the national language policy is specifically concerned with language transition and knowledge integration for Grades 3 and 4 teachers. This has the following language implications:

The education policy for lower primary Grades 1 to 4, Ministry of Education (5) (2005:42) recommends using the learner’s mother tongue, as the medium of instruction, in Grades 1 to 3. It prescribes English as the medium of instruction from Grade 4. This implies that learners have to develop competency in English, to the extent that teaching and learning can be done comfortably through the medium of English, as from Grade 4. Therefore, during Grades 3 and 4, but particularly in Grade 4, the transition to English as medium of instruction must take place. Clearly this process is an obligation for all teachers and should be handled with great care and patience throughout the process. While learners in grade 3 are entitled to mother tongue teaching and learning to establish full conceptual growth, much of the groundwork for language transition should be put in place. In Grade 4, the transition has to be completed at such a rapid pace that learners should be confident enough in English to progress in Grade 4 through the medium of English.

Learners, using mother tongue, as the language of instruction, will also take English as a second language, from Grades 1 to 3. Learners should, during the first three school years be exposed to the English language as much as possible and should also learn basic vocabularies for other subjects in English. Meantime, some basics will be done in Grades 1 and 2, they should in Grade 3 be able to count in English, to know the names of different colours, know and say the

names of body parts, the days of the week, the months of the year, and basic words involving daily activities, and so on. Apparently this gradual and incidental transition from Grades 1 and 2, will gain momentum during Grade 3. Learners will learn basic instructions in English incidentally as well as deliberately and be more exposed to English phonics and sight words.

Therefore, it is viewed conclusively clear from the provision of the national language policy of Namibia, that if all these rules are adhered to, properly and wisely implemented in all schools countrywide, this can positively relate to an effective acquisition of basic competencies and reading skills in English as their second language in Grade 3.

For every institutional policy such as the language policy there is always an assessment to be done in order to determine whether the programme is successful or not. If the results are not convincing enough the programme for the assessment of the policy implementation should be revised since the assessment will determine if reading skills development in the Namibian schools is progressing or not.

If not, the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for monitoring Educational Quality Report (SACMEQ) Makuwa (2004) has to do the assessment. Since Grade 6 learners were moulded for basic foundation of Grades 1 to 4 it was deemed correct that evaluation must obviously focus on Grade 6 level not Grade 3.

3.3.1 THE SACMEQ II 2004 REPORT: READING SKILLS COMPETENCE LEVEL OF NAMIBIAN LEARNERS

The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) Makuwa (2004) is a UNESCO initiative to evaluate how effective the teaching of basic English reading as subject is in each school in the country. A national assessment programme for reading among Grade 6 learners was launched by SACMEQ among selected countries Southern and Eastern Africa and that includes Namibia (Makuwa 2004:i-ii).

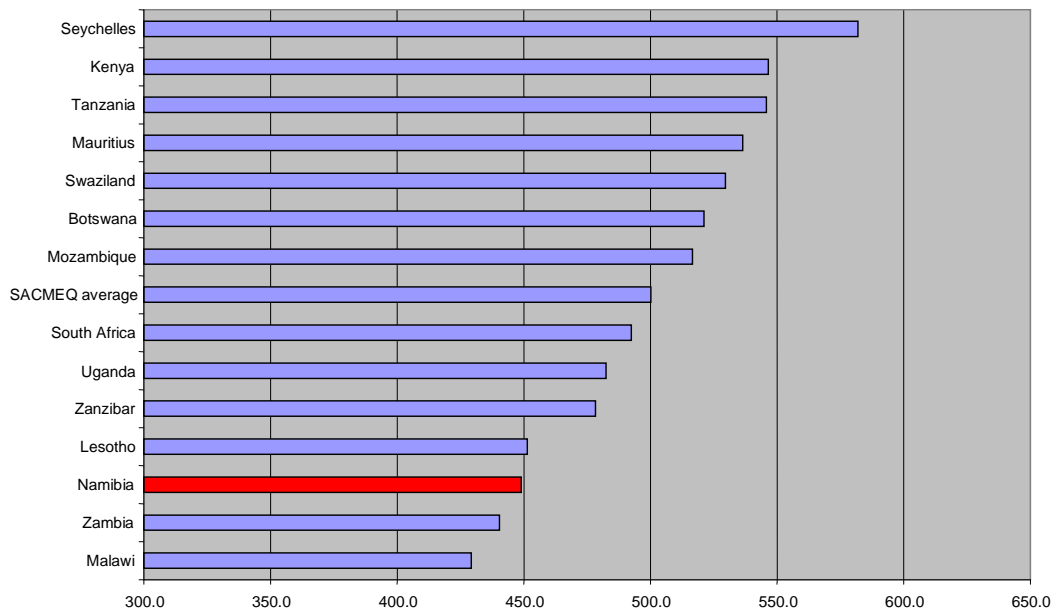


Figure 1: A Report of Learners Reading Scores by Country Based on SACMEQ

The horizontal data in figure1 above is indicates the names of the countries that participated in the survey for English reading skills conducted by Makuwa (2004:145-146). Fourteen countries are included in the Eastern and Southern African states. The vertical data of the same survey as presented in the figure 1 represented the mean average reading skill level of grade 6 learners from the fourteen participant countries.

In the figure 1, Namibian learners are ranked 12th among the participants countries. The learners' scores did not even reach the mean for all countries in SACMEQ II reading skill average of 500 scores. Their scores totaled 450, which is the same mean scores for reading mentioned by Makuwa in his SACMEQ II report (2004:29).

The above graph is used in this study because the researcher is of the opinion that poor English reading results suggest that the learners may not be well trained from early Grades. So, if learners were not trained well in English reading skills development in their early learning years, then, it will create undesirable carry over effects from one grade level to the next.

The Grade 3 level is the basic formal point to build up a strong foundation for elementary education, especially for English reading skills as a second language. The results of SACMEQ II Report clearly mirrored the problems in English reading skills among the researched countries. The SACMEQ findings became an exciting “invitation” for the researcher to dwell on how she could contribute to help to recommend actions and advices to be taken by the government and school authorities especially the English teachers in teaching English reading skills as a second language to primary learners in Namibia.

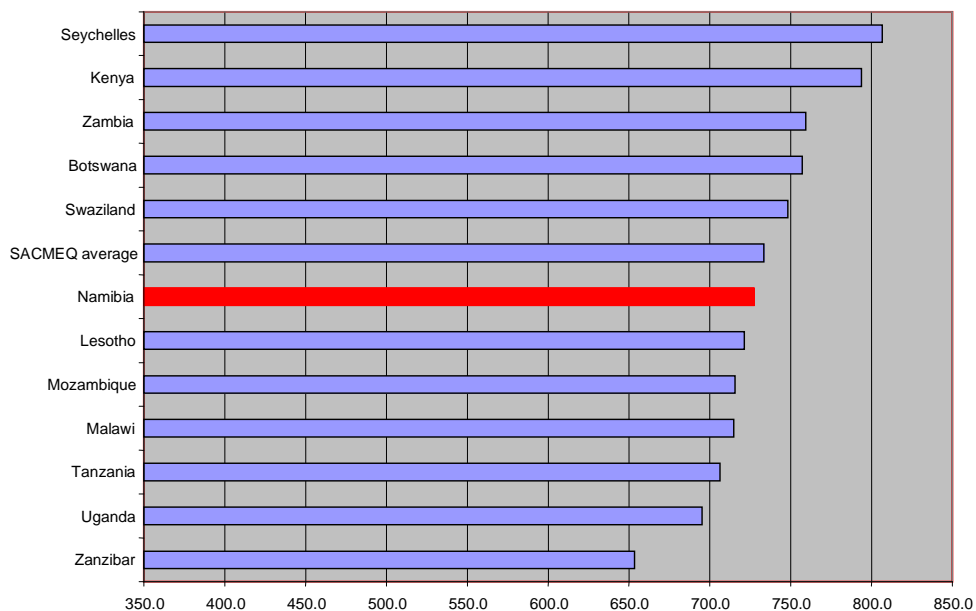


Figure 2: A Report of Teachers Reading Scores by Country Based on SACMEQ Report II 2004

Figure 2 above shows the SACMEQ II Report of teacher’s reading scores among the fourteen countries that comprised the Eastern and Southern African countries. The horizontal data in figure 2 above represent the fourteen participating countries. While, the vertical line shows the average of English reading skills scores calibrated as one line and equivalent to 50 of the teachers represented the fourteen countries that participated in the SACMEQ survey. From the data, it shows that Namibia is ranked sixth out of the fourteen participating countries. It was noted from figure 2 above that the mean of teacher’s reading scores for all SACMEQ countries is 733, while the mean for Namibian teachers achieved fell below the SACMEQ average reading

scores with a result of 728. These results are confirmed by Makuwa (2004:29), namely that Namibian learners as well as teachers scored below the SACMEQ mean.

To the researcher, although the difference is minimal, it is still statistically significant as far as reading proficiency is concerned, considering teachers' educational background and experiences. So, using the data as a gauge to measure teachers reading capabilities, the teachers' average score reflects the negative reading achievements of Namibian learners as shown in figure 1.

From the above findings, teachers' English reading score may affect the teaching of English reading skills to the learners. With the above data, one can speculate already that teachers are also having reading difficulties in English. The researcher is of the opinion that, if teachers are poor readers it can also produce poor reading results among their learners.

3.4 TEACHER TRAINING FOR LANGUAGES IN NAMIBIA

3.4.1 BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

The history of education in Namibia shows that before Namibia's independence in 1990, teacher training was mandated to the Academy, now called the University of Namibia (UNAM). The Academy put up a satellite teacher training in Ongwediva, which was called Ongwediva Training Centre (at present called Ongwediva College of Education) and the course that was offered was Primary Teaching Certificate (PTC).

This course was later changed to the Elementary Certificate Primary (ECP) (Salia-Bao 1991:28). In 1989 the teaching certificate was again renamed to National Education Certificate (NEC) and later changed to National Higher Education Certificate (NHEC). The course duration was for 2 years.

The medium of instruction was Afrikaans, English was taught as a subject. There were no major fields of studies or any subject; everybody was just trained to be class teachers. They studied didactics of teaching in every subject. No lesson planning was taught, no teaching practice was done in the field, no teaching methods were taught also using contents, but, rather in isolation.

Demonstrations of teaching were done in classes, but, for short period, without any explanation by the teacher.

To improve the literacy problems in the country, after independence, specialist language teachers are needed to be trained.

Research has shown that, there is a strong connection between the level of formal education and professional training of the teaching force and the quality of teaching. This was due to the unsatisfactory quality of teaching, insufficient training, lack of knowledge of subjects and the poor language competencies of teachers (Katzao 2001:86). Hence, a teacher's training programme was organised and implemented haphazardly.

3.4.2 AFTER INDEPENDENCE

The language policy for schools started its implementation in 1992, following the reform programme that involved some changes in language teaching in Namibian schools. According to Ministry of Education and Culture (6) (1992-1996:10), it stated that "teachers' would only benefit from these changes if the necessary planning, syllabus and materials development and teacher training were carried out".

Accordingly, the National Institute for Education and Development (NIED) is engaged in projects and activities. Among others is the upgrading of teachers through implementation of In-Service Teacher Training programme that was established and became operational in 1996. It offered courses in major fields of interest for language teachers and teachers in other major subjects. It has been an ongoing programme conducted by the Ministry of Education and

supported by various organisations such as the United Nations (UN). This programme is for the upgrading of teachers as well as for proper accreditations. The ministry has prepared modules in English Communication Skills and the teaching approach called Learner Centred Education.

Another project, sponsored by the Namibian government targeting teachers with basic needs for English upgrading, involves a series of radio programmes such as “Let’s speak English”, supported by two workbooks. There is also a TV programme called Sesame Street, Institute for Open Learning (IOL) and TIPPI programmes televised on specific day of the week. These are aimed to improve teacher’s preparations, intervention and presentations of the lessons.

A major project of English specialists from the British government working within an English language teacher’s upgrading project is provided. This is called English Language Education training development programme (ELETDP). This project was developed and carried up to the new Basic Education Teaching Diploma (BETD) in teacher training colleges.

The colleges are training teachers specialising both on L₁ and L₂ for teaching Grade 5 to 7 and 8 to 10. Teachers who specialise to teach Grades 1 to 4 are class teachers expected to teach all the subjects in those Grades including L₁ and L₂. School Based Studies (SBS) is given a year as practicum required Basic Education Teachers Diploma (BETD) curriculum. This programme is for those with major and minor in English to prepare for Grade 5 to 7 teaching. This is done for 13 weeks for the majors and 6 weeks for the minors courses are also for English minors in Grades 5 to 7. Pre-service teachers are required to do practicum for English teaching.

Upon completion training course, teachers are expected to teach by using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in all the subjects from Grades 1 to 3.

The mother tongue is also taught as the first language, while English is to be taught as a subject and regarded as a second language. Grade 4 it is a transition phase. From Grade 5 up to tertiary level English is to be used as the medium of instruction (Ministry of Education and Culture (1)

1993:66). The University of Namibia (UNAM) is responsible to train teachers for Senior Secondary School Grades 11 to 12.

3.5 THE LANGUAGE CURRICULUM FOR LOWER PRIMARY EDUCATION GRADES 1 TO 4

The focus in the lower primary phase that embraces English reading skills in Grade 3 is crystal clear in its target area: literacy, numeracy and broad knowledge of the learner.

As indicated in the curriculum for lower primary phase Grade 1 to 4, Ministry of Education (7) (2005 – 2006:15) the line up of basic competencies that learners have to achieve in the second language starting from Grade 1 and finishing in Grade 4 for reading, writing, listening and speaking as well as language structure and language use – are all the same in scope. The only difference that can be noted out from the starting point or Grade 1 going to Grade 2, then to Grade 3 and terminating in Grade 4 is only scope and sequence in the total number of sentences and vocabularies to be achieved per Grade. In other words there is an increase from simple to complex in the progression from one level to another, for example in reading for Grade 1, the learners must read word and sentences of 4 to 5 words from various types of texts, in Grade 2 they should read short prepared texts of 3 to 5 sentences, Grade 3s are to read short prepared and unprepared texts of about 50 words and Grade 4s should be able to read fluently prepared and unprepared factual and fictional texts of about 150 words.

The revised structure of the lower primary curriculum as a whole consists of five main areas of learning, inter-connected by the three content themes of Environment Studies and four cross-curricular issues. The three themes are social environment, natural environment and health, safety and nutrition. While the four cross-curricular issues are such as: HIV and AIDS Education, environmental learning, population education, democracy and human rights education.

Ministry of Education (8) (2006:14) indicates that the curriculum has separate subject syllabuses focusing on subject-specific issues, teaching and learning are integrated through central themes in all subjects. In simple terms, it means that all knowledge is gained in a holistic manner and are not isolated and separated from other areas. It also means that one subject can reinforce the knowledge or skills required for another, and so on. For example: by learning to read and write in English, the content of the lesson may use materials from environmental studies or arts or mathematics. Language learning may also mean mathematics learning and vice versa. Similarly, while doing arts, learners can learn how to use the English language in that context. They could work with forms such as circles, triangles and other symbols that simultaneously can express artistic feelings, experiment with colours, and forms.

This implies that in Grades 1 to 4, the curriculum is organised in a spiral type curriculum, where the learning objectives in English are the same from Grade 1 to 4, in a progressive manner.

In conclusion, to effectively realise the primary goals of elementary education, the teaching of language should be integrated across the curriculum, skills, concept and components of the subject. This is even emphasised in the National Policy Guide for lower primary phase, Grades 1 to 4, Ministry of Education (5) (2005).

3.6 NATIONAL ASSESSMENT POLICY IN NAMIBIA, LOWER PRIMARY EDUCATION PHASE GRADES 1 TO 4

Assessment in formal education in Namibia is governed by the provisions as embodied in the development brief for education culture and training known as “Education for All” by the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education and Culture (1) 1993:123). The discussion of policy assessment in Namibia as outlined in this paper focuses only on Grades 1 to 4 and is divided into two parts. The first part is the background of the national assessment policy for Grades 1 to 4 and the second one is assessment for languages that include English as a second language and specifically reading, which is the focus of this study.

In the Lower Primary Phase Policy Guide, Ministry of Education (5) (2005:10) teachers should assess learners to get a reliable profile of the learners in terms of achieving the basic competencies embodied in the syllabus for Grades 1 to 4 and general life skills. It says that assessment can tell whether learning has taken place or not. Namibian primary schools Grades 1 to 4 are presently using continuous assessment (CA).

In the policy guide, Ministry of Education (5) (2005:10-11) continuous assessment is defined as a process of gathering information about how learners are progressing in their learning. There are two types of continuous assessment, formal and informal assessment. But, in lower primary phase Grades 1 to 4 in Namibia, teachers only use the informal continuous assessment. The informal assessment is also divided into two, namely: less structured and more structured assessment. In Namibia, the informal assessment is usually done during classroom activities, while formal assessment is done through examination, at the upper primary and secondary levels. In less structured assessment, teachers have to observe learners' performance for assessment purposes as they teach and record what they see learners do. In a more structured assessment, it means that teachers have to set up assessment situations that can be small tests or quizzes. In the marking and grading of learners' work, this is done according to the 5 point-scale using the criterion referenced, for example:

- 5 = Grade A – Achieved Basic Competencies exceptionally well. This is for outstanding achievement in all main areas of competency.**
- 4 = Grade B – Achieved Basic Competencies very well. The learner is above average in the class, and is more proficient than average in several areas, e.g. showing quicker mastery of some competencies, or being able to apply competencies to unknown situations or contexts, or showing new insight.**
- 3 = Grade C – Achieved Basic Competencies. The learner has mastered all the competencies satisfactorily in known situations and contexts. The large majority of learners should reach this level.**

2 = Grade D – Partly Achieved Basic Competencies. The learner may not have achieved all the competencies, but with extra help and guidance from the teacher may have sufficient competency to go on to the next Grade.

1 = Grade E – Not achieved the majority of Basic Competencies. The learner has not been able to reach a minimum level of competency for the year Grade, even with extensive help from the teacher and is in need of compensatory teaching.

3.6.1 ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES FOR LANGUAGE GRADES 1 TO 4 IN NAMIBIA

The policy guide for lower primary phase Grades 1 to 4 in Namibia, Ministry of Education (5) (2005:12) explained that in the language subject, teachers do teach skills. In each weekly lesson plan, provision should be made to assess all different language skills as follows:

- **Listening and speaking skills are combined both in the syllabus and in the record forms. However, specific activities should be taught on each of the skills and therefore also separately recorded on the class list.**
- **In the reading skills, both prepared reading (everyday reading lesson) and unprepared reading (unknown text on the same level should be assessed).**
- **In writing skills, both creative and formal writing should be assessed.**
- **Handwriting is not being assessed as a separate component in language teaching. However, it should be regarded as one of the assessment criteria in all written work in all lower primary subjects.**

3.7 THE NATURE OF THE SCHOOLS IN NAMIBIA

The formal school system in Namibian government schools consist of 12 years of schooling, namely:

- ❖ 4 years of lower primary, using the mother tongue as medium of instruction

- ❖ 3 years of upper primary, (English as a medium of instruction starts in Grade 5 at the upper primary, up to Grade 12, the senior secondary school);
- ❖ 3 years of junior secondary; and 2 years of senior secondary.

However, the formal school system may also be divided into the following phases, some of which are combined phases (Makuwa 2004:4-5):

Pre-primary phase

This phase was transferred from the Ministry of Education to local communities under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Regional, Local Government and Housing in 1995. With the creation of the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare in the year 2000, pre-primary education and broader aspects of early childhood development catering for the under 6 year old age group were assigned to the new ministry. From the year 2008 it was transferred back the Ministry of Education.

Primary phase

This is consists of the lower primary (Grades 1 to 4) and upper primary (Grades 5-7).

Secondary phase

The secondary phase consists of junior secondary, catering for Grades 8 to 10 and the senior secondary school, which caters for Grades 11 to 12.

Combined schools

These are schools “offering both primary and secondary Grades.” Very few of the combined schools offer all primary and secondary Grades.

Table 1 below shows the structure of the Namibian formal basic education system. In the structure, it is indicated that the education ladder is divided into three phases, namely: the lower primary phase, upper primary phase and junior secondary phase. The lower primary of the educational phase comprises from Grade 1 to Grade 4, starting from age six to ten.

The upper primary phase consists of Grade 5 to Grade 7, with age from 10 to 13 years-old learners. The last stage is the junior secondary phase, which is composed of Grade 8 to Grade 10, from the age of 13 to 16 year-old learners. This structure excludes Grade 11 to Grade 12, which is a senior secondary phase. In the formal education system of Namibia Grade 1 to 10 is compulsory and they enjoy the free formal basic education from the government.

Table 1: The Structure of Formal Basic Education

Ages	EXAMINATION FOR THE JUNIOR SECONDARY CERTIFICATE (JCS)	Junior Secondary	FORMAL BASIC EDUCATION
15-16	Grade 10		
14-16	Grade 9		
13-16	Grade 8		
12-13	EXAMINATION FOR THE CERTIFICATE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION (CPE)	Upper Primary	
	Grade 7		
11-12	Grade 6		
10-11	Grade 5		
9-10	Grade 4	Lower Primary	
8-9	Grade 3		
7-8	Grade 2		
6-7	Grade 1 (incorporation School Readiness Education)		

Pre school experience

After independence in 1990, the Ministry of Education fully recognised the values of preschool and kindergarten as part of a child's early childhood education. To this end, and for purposes of its significance to the learners, the education ministry further believe that early childhood education can be developed in partnership, but should be under the auspices of the community assisted by the Ministry of Local Government and Housing. This is considered vital to basic education foundation and the key to literacy development.

In the current situation, learners are admitted to Grade 1, irrespective of whether or not they have any experience in pre-primary schooling. In other words majority, new in the school learning situation, are far from being school ready. They have no background of the ABC and have not followed a school readiness programme at all. This is because private pre-schools are expensive and not all parents can afford to pay the school fees. This is especially true in rural areas. But, the good news is that in 2008 the Ministry of Education reinstated the public schools programme for pre-schooling.

The researcher's opinion as to presumption why the Ministry of Education has again adopted the pre-schools which they previously transferred to other ministries as mentioned above is bases on the following reasons:

- 1 The continuous raise in the number of failures in the upper grades could not have happened, if learners had solid foundation knowledge in the basics.
- 2 They may be afraid that Vision 2030 (eradication of illiteracy and poverty) of which Namibia is a signatory may not be achieved.
- 3 Increasing complaints by parents.
- 4 High financial constraints to government budget in education.

In the 2008 survey, however, pre-schools mushroomed in the country government report and spread out to all Namibian corners, as a strong response to the ideals of vision 2030, as well as to strengthen the foothold of Formal Basic Education System in Namibia.

3.8 THE CONTROL OF SCHOOLS IN NAMIBIA

Article 20, section 2, of the Namibian constitution stipulates that “primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every residence within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining state schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge” (Ministry of Education and Culture (1) 1993:3).

From the above provisions of the constitution, it is therefore incumbent upon the Namibian government to construct and establish schools to be financed, controlled and administered by the Namibian government. A few private schools are exempted from tight regulations and government administration.

Meanwhile, there are four state colleges of education (Caprivi College of Education, Ongwediva College of Education, Rundu College of Education and Windhoek College of Education) in Namibia plus one university called the University of Namibia (UNAM) and the Polytechnic of Namibia respectively. They are all government owned and provide tertiary education.

It can also be mentioned here that agricultural, vocational and technical colleges are scattered all over the various regions of the country. They are established and controlled by the government. These colleges will not be considered in this study since they are not within the scope of this research.

Section 4, of Article 2, of the constitution, Republic of Namibia (10) (1991:13) also provides that, “all persons shall have the right at their own expense, to establish and to maintain private schools, or colleges and other institutions or tertiary education, provided that they are registered

with the government in accordance with the regulations for the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Namibia”.

All the schools, and tertiary education institutions, not funded by the government are all considered as private institutions. However, maintenance of the schools standard shall be under the control and restriction of the government, including the accreditation of all the courses offered by the private schools, which are governed by the National Qualification Authority (NQA).

Under the provision of the partnership for National Development for education in Ministry of Education and Culture (1) (1993:179) stated that “in Namibia all education (including technical Education) at the primary, secondary and higher education level, is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Culture”.

At present, the management of the Ministry of Education and culture are coordinated by the office of the permanent secretary and his deputy. Those responsibilities are organised in six departments, but, for the purpose of this study, I have to include one department only, that is Formal Education.

The supervisory, control and some implementing functions of the departments are vested in departmental directorates, divisions, sub – divisions, sections, sub-sections and units. Mostly, however, the implementing function is decentralised. For this purpose, the ministry has established a structure of regional administration.

According to the Guidelines for the School Principals, Ministry of Education (4) (2005:8 – 9) it is mandated that “the principal is the accountable manager of the academic programme of the school, the learners, the teaching staff and workers. He or she regulates the school board and the day to day administration of the school development fund. The principal guides and assists the school board to execute their functions. Additionally, the school principal should know what is going on in and around the school during regular class visits to monitor the standard of teaching

and learning. His or her administrative duty as the guideline provided should only be done after-school hours. The principal takes accountability for the continuous development of the teaching staff alike and non-teaching staff by planning and organising the necessary development activities”.

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the Namibian education system, past and present. This discussion was pursued to provide insight in the on going educational problems that are besetting the country.

The discussion centres on providing a background to the education system in Namibia, the school language policy, teacher training, the language curriculum, assessment policy for languages, the nature of the school in Namibia and the control of the schools in Namibia.

The information gathered in this chapter will guide the researcher in conducting the empirical research that follows in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The foregoing chapter discussed the background to the Namibian education system and served to provide the context of the situation under investigation and the fieldwork that will be researched. The information will be used to answer the research question on what factors can influence the teaching of reading in English as a second language of Grade 3 learners in the research area.

In this chapter, the research methodology will be explained. Together with how the sample or population will be selected. It will outline the techniques for data collection and the process of how the research results will be analysed. The ethical considerations in the collection of the data will also be discussed as well as the measures that are needed to promote the validity of the research.

4.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Mouton (2003:56) “research methodology focuses on the process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used by the researcher. The point of departure is on specific tasks (data collection or sampling) at hand. Methodology also focuses on the individual (not linear) steps in the research process and the most “objective” (unbiased) procedures to be employed”. The qualitative method is regarded as the most suitable method to realise the aim of this study mainly to investigate factors that influence the teaching of reading in English as a second language of Grade 3 learners in the research area.

4.2.1 *QUALITATIVE METHODS*

In the opinion of De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delpont (2003:271) the qualitative method of a research is important as the whole research process enables a researcher to conceptualise a problem to write in the narrative approach. Its main goal is to study a certain phenomenon according to a certain "formula" suitable for a specific research goal, and for the purpose of this study, it focuses on finding factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills to Grade 3 learners.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:16) maintain that in qualitative studies there is a greater flexibility in both strategies and research processes. They emphasized that a qualitative researcher uses emergent design and revises decision about the data collection strategies during the study.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003:2-3) describes qualitative research as "a circumstantial activity that places the observer in the area that are composed of a set of definitive material practices that makes the world clear enough. They further explained that qualitative research has a distinctive character aimed at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about their social and mental circumstances, their experiences, perspectives and histories".

In support of this, Elliott (2005:26-27) states that "the strength of qualitative approach is that it allows the researcher to create a deeper and richer picture of what is going on in a particular setting. Qualitative research adopts a common sensical view of generalisability, so that the reader is left to make up his or her own mind on how far the evidence collected in a specific study can be used to offer information about the same topic in a similar setting".

Neil (2006:1) mentioned that "qualitative research means any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification".

According to Boyd (2007:1) “qualitative research is the systematic process of collecting information on what people say and do and create in their natural settings to discover the world as the people themselves see and experience it”.

Guion and Flower (2005:2) consider “qualitative research to be a tool for programme planning that is often more interested in eliciting stories from particularly individuals or groups. The information obtained from qualitative research methods do not only help to identify the needs of the target audience but also helps to get a more complete understanding of those needs”.

The researcher will use qualitative research since she believes it is fitting and applicable to this social study research and will answers the research question.

Taylor and Francis (2008: 1-2) stated that “qualitative research is also concerned with non-school settings such as ethnographic records, observations, life history, case studies, curriculum criticism, policy studies and narrative interviews. In this type of research provocative or innovative approaches are encouragingly used”.

This study deals with social groups composed of Grade 3 learners as well as their teachers and therefore the qualitative method will be the best to use. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:36) “qualitative research builds a complex, holistic picture with detailed narrative descriptions of informant’s perspectives, analysis and interpretation of phenomena”.

4.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

4.3.1 POPULATION

Tobias (2006:25) defined population as the target group one intends to study. In the same manner Muvirimi (2002:44) explained that “in research one can study a small group to unveil

something about a large group of individuals”. The large group is referred to as a population. The population in this research consist of six government schools in the town of Ongwediva in the Oshakati circuit. These schools cater for learners from a poor learning environment. From this population, three schools that are typically poor will be selected as a sample (16 participants). They are as follows: one circuit inspector, three principals, three teachers and nine learners of the three selected schools).

4.3.2 SAMPLE

De Vos et al (2003:199) explained that “a sample consist of the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study...or it is a small portion of the total set of objects, events or persons that together comprise the subject of a study”. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:169-176) there are two types of sampling called probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is classified into four groups, namely: simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling and cluster sampling. The non-probability sampling is differentiated into three, namely- convenience sampling, purposeful sampling and quota sampling. In this research, the researcher will use only two types of samplings, specifically, simple random sampling and purposeful sampling.

4.3.3 SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Kumar (2005:165) defined sampling as “the process of selecting a few (a sample) from a bigger group (the sampling population) to become the basis for estimating a prediction of the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, or situation as outcome regarding the bigger group. In other words it is a sub-group of the population that one is interested in. He further explained that in qualitative research the issue of sampling has little significance for the main aim of most qualitative inquiries. It is either to explore or describe the diversity in a situation, phenomenon, or issue. He ultimately stated that qualitative research does not attempt to either quantify or determine the extent of the diversity; one can select even an individual as a sample and describe

whatever the aim of the inquiry is". He also explained that the process of selecting a sample from the total population has advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are that it saves time, financial and human resources. However, the disadvantages are that you do not find out the information about the population's characteristics that is of interest to you but only an estimate or predict the actual situation prevalent in the total population from which the sample is drawn.

Creswel and Plano-Clark (2007:112) explained that "the research question or hypothesis must be dealt with in the sampling procedure. Hence, the researcher decides which people and research site can best provide information, put a sampling procedure in place and determine the number of individuals that will be needed to provide data".

In selecting schools randomly, the researcher will do it in her own way, following Wikipedia (2008:3) that suggests that one of the methods of randomisation sampling is to use physical randomisation devices such as coins, playing cards, sophisticated devices such as ERNE.

The schools that will be selected for this study are all typical schools located in Ongwediva town within Oshakati circuit of Oshana Educational Region. In Ongwediva town there are six government primary schools that are offering Grade 3 levels. Three out of the six schools three schools will be selected as targeted schools for this study. This will be done as follows: The researcher will do it by taking six coins, representing the six schools with reading problems, as found in Ongwediva town, in Oshana Educational Region where the researcher lives. The name of the school will be written on a coin. Then, she will place the coins with the names on the table where she will circularly distribute the coins on equally distances from each other. At the centre of all the coins on the table, she will put a ball pen where she will turn it clockwise. To whichever name the point of the ball pen will point and stop, it will mean that, that school is selected.

4.3.4 SAMPLING CRITERIA

In sampling criteria, Creswel and Plano-Clark (2007:112) mentioned that “the guidelines depend on the study, which might be race, gender, level of schooling, or any number of factors that would differentiate participants. The central idea is that if participants are purposefully chosen to be different in the first place, then, their views will reflect this difference and provide a good qualitative study. Another approach is to use an extreme case of sampling of individuals who provide unusual, troublesome or enlightened cases. In terms of numbers, rather than selecting a large number of people or site, the qualitative research identifies a small number that will provide in-depth information about each person or site. The larger the number of people, the less the amount of detail typically emerging from any one individual . . . to provide detailed views of individuals and the specific context in which they hold these views”. The site and the participants of this study will be selected based on the following criteria:

One educational region

- One of the most disadvantaged regions of the country.
- Purposely preferred as the researcher lives in the same region.
- Should have schools that cater for Grade 3 levels.

One circuit

- In this study attention will be drawn to one circuit in one of the regions that experiences typical problems as researched.

Three schools

- Should be three government schools as that could be a manageable sample size for the researcher.
- Should be in the lower primary phase.
- Should offer Grade 3 levels.

- Should be around Ongwediva town for easy accessibility to the researcher in terms of distance, transport and communication.
- Three classes of Grade 3, one class of Grade 3 per school will be purposely selected by the researcher.

One subject

- Should be English as a second language, because this is one of the subjects giving problems in the education sector in Namibia.
- Should be focused on reading skills.

One inspector

- Purposefully selected, because he is the supervisor of all the three schools where the study is to be conducted.

Three principals

- Purposely chosen because they are the immediate managers to the 3 schools selected where nine Grade 3 learners, as well as three Grade 3 teachers are found and that is where the study is conducted.

Three teachers

- Three Grade 3 teachers are purposely chosen, that means one Grade 3 teacher per school selected. This is because they are the right sample to give the researcher the necessary information needed as they are teaching the right Grade 3, right subject of English as a second language where the study is taking place.
- Should be lower primary teachers.

Nine learners

- Should be Grade 3 learners,

- should be three learners in numbers irrespective of their sex status or gender from each school random decided by the investigator as they are the suitable target group of the study to demonstrate the evidence the researcher is looking for.
- Should be selected by their class teachers of Grade 3 according to the criteria they will use that the investigator is unaware of.

4.3.5 *RANDOM SAMPLING*

Kumar (2005:169) explained “random sampling as a probability sample. He stated that it is imperative for each element in the population to have an equal independent chance of selection in the sample. Equally, it implies that the probability of selection of each element in the population is the same and the choice of an element in the sample is not influenced by other considerations such as personal preference”.

Best and Kahn (2006:4) as well as Bradley (2005:175) with regard to random sampling said that “individuals are chosen in such a way that each has an equal and independent chance of being selected objectively and randomly. Selected individuals represent the whole population rather than the subjective decision of the researcher.”

4.3.6 *PURPOSEFUL SAMPLING*

Galloway (2005:1) defined a purposive sample as “a sample selected in a deliberative and non-random fashion to achieve a certain goal. This sampling is based on the judgement of the researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample. It is chosen on the basis of what the researcher considers to be typical units” (Bless & Smith 2000:92); This is also confirmed by Nardi (2003:107).

Macmillan and Schumacher (2001:404) state that “purposeful sampling strategies employed in a study are identified from prior information and are reported in the study to enhance data quality”.

Henning, Rensburg and Smit (2004:71) explained that purposeful sampling has elements of theoretical sampling which look for people who fit the criteria of desirable participants. The criteria depend on the researcher's knowledge of the topic and also on how the theorising on the ground develops during the research.

According to Tobias (2006:25), using this approach will enable the researcher to get comprehensive in-depth information.

In this study, random sampling will be used in conjunction with purposeful sampling in order to select the three schools from the circuit that were selected purposefully. The participants will also be purposefully selected to represent the entire population since they are regarded as typical.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

According to Walliman (2005:270) data collection is “a process of capturing facts, information and figures based on the characteristics and the nature of the research problem”.

In qualitative research, according to Ritchie and Lewis (2003:3) data collection has been identified as observational method, in-depth interview, group discussion, narratives and the analysis of documentary evidence.

The instruments that will be used in this study are: observation, interview and focus group which are commonly applied as data collection techniques in qualitative investigation. These techniques will enable the researcher to experience the thrill of knowing the unknown. In this study the data collection techniques will not only be used to generate as much information, but also as a basis of triangulation. This study will use methodological triangulation technique to confirm the data observed with the interview results.

In the (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia n.d.'[http://.org/wiki/Triangulation-\(social-science\)](http://.org/wiki/Triangulation-(social-science))) “triangulation is a powerful technique that facilitates validation from more than two sources. In the same vein De Vos et al (2003:341) stressed that “by using triangulation method the researcher seeks out different types of sources that provide insights about the same events or relationships. De vos et al further explained that the purpose of triangulation in qualitative research is to increase the credibility and validity of results.

4.5 OBSERVATION

Kumar (2005:118) viewed observation as one way to collect primary data. It is a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place. He insisted that observation is the most appropriate way of collecting data, say in case, you need to learn about group interaction, for verification purposes (in my case the learners) to get accurate information.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003:108-109) explained that observation in natural settings can be rendered as descriptions, either through open-ended narrative or through the use of published checklists or field guides. This is supported by Kumar (2005:121). He further stated that it has been generally assumed that naturalistic observation does not interfere with the people or activities under observation. Most social scientists have long recognised the possibility of the observer’s affecting what he or she observes, but careful researchers are nonetheless supposed to adhere to rigorous standards of objective reporting to overcome that potential bias. This is also in line with the views of Mckernan (2000:60) namely that it is like professional eavesdropping, as in the case of the child psychologist, observing behaviours from behind a hidden mirror or camera.

Mckernan (2000:59) explained that “observation is not only a fundamental activity associated with research but it is a requisite tool for scientific inquiry. Observation may be obtrusive and interactive, as in the case of “participant observation” or unobtrusive and non-creative, as in the case of “non participant observation”.

Kumar (2005:118) further says there are two types of observations. These are participant and non-participant observation. For the purpose of this study, the researcher has selected non-participant observation because the researcher will not be involved in the activities of the group but will be a passive observer, watching and listening to their activities in order to draw a conclusion from the observation.

4.5.1 Non-participant observation

To Best and Kahn (2006:204), “non-participant observation is a research assistant sitting quietly in the back of auditorium”.

With the observation data, the researcher will carefully study the notes with items focused on the observation of the classroom environment.

The researcher will present the data by using the main heading and items observed as sub-headings in the three observations to be done in all the three selected schools then, the discussion and analysis will follow. The three selected schools will be coded as school A, B and C.

The researcher has selected observation techniques to observe the following:

- To look at the learning classroom environment to see whether there are reading corners.
- To survey whether the available materials are displayed including learners’ work on classroom wall if they are sufficient or not as learning aids to the above-stated Grade 3 levels of the three preferred schools.
- This is to determine whether or not the school materials are fitting and appropriate for the targeted Grade 3 levels.
- To see how the teachers are managing the number of learners’ size in the classroom set up. This is to find out whether or not the teacher-learner ratio is used correctly in the classroom as prescribed officially by the Ministry of Education.
- To monitor how the techniques and approaches are used by teachers in developing teaching English reading skills to learners in three different classrooms representing Grade 3 of the three selected schools in Ongwediva town, within Oshakati circuit of

- Oshana educational region. This is to find out whether or not the strategies and approaches that the teachers are using are effective enough to develop the reading skills.
- To observe the teachers' and the learners' interactions during the reading lessons. This is to see whether or not the learner's needs are met.

4.6 INTERVIEWS

Denzin and Lincoln (2003: 69-70) defined 'interviewing' as one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow human beings. Interviewing includes a wide variety of forms and a multiplicity of uses. The most common form of interviewing can also take place between individuals, face to face through verbal interchange. Interviewing can also take the form of face to face group interchange, mailed or self administered questionnaires and telephone surveys. It can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. Interviewing can be used for the purpose of measuring the falsity and truism of a given facts and information. Its duration can be a one time, brief-event-say, five minutes over the telephone or it can take place over multiple, lengthy sessions at times spanning days as in life history interviews

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:445) pointed out that by using the interview method one can gain first hand experiences, opinions and feelings, values, knowledge and sensory perceptions about the problems.

De Vos et al (2003:297) and Best and Kahn (2006:268) classified the types of interviews as informal conversational interview, interview guide approach, standardised open-ended interview and close and fixed response interview.

De Vos et al (2003:305) further mentioned that the focus group is an interview method.

In this research, the author will use the open-ended interview with the learners and to the principals. However, with the circuit inspector the investigator will use informal conversational

interviewing. While with the teachers, the researcher will opt to use the interview guide approach in the form of the individual and focus group.

In the words of Best and Kahn (2006:268); McMillan and Schumacher (2001:443-444) and De Vos et al (2003:297) described the four types of interviewing as follow:

4.6.1 Informal conversational interview

In this interview, the interview questions emerge from the immediate context and are asked in the natural course of things. There is no predetermination question, topic or wording.

4.6.1.1 Interviews with the Circuit Inspector

For the purpose of this study, one circuit inspector will be interviewed telephonically using the informal conversational interview. This is to find out the primary schools that are having reading problems in English as a second language in Ongwediva town. The researcher will write down the responses in the note book. The following is the interview question that will be asked to the circuit inspector:

1. Do you have primary schools in your circuit that are experiencing problems in reading English in grade three? If yes, what are the causes?

Telephone interview based from Walliman (2005:285) is utilised by researchers to avoid travelling to respondents all the time and problems associated with contacting people personally.

By telephonic technique, as in developed countries, it is always possible to contact suitable sample of the target population.

4.6.2 Open-ended interview

In this interview, the exact wording and sequence of questions are determined in advance. All the interviewees are asked the same basic questions in the same order. Questions are worded in a completely open-ended format.

4.6.2.1 Interview with learners

Individual nine Grade 3 learners; aged between nine and ten will be interviewed using the open-ended interview. This is to establish whether the learners like reading or not and to hear from them what problems they encounter in reading. Their responses will be taped-recorded and transcribed (see appendix 10 about their questions and appendix 15 for their responses). The following are the interview questions that will be asked to learners:

1. Do you have any reading problems?
2. What kinds of problems do you experience in reading?
3. Are you a fast or slow reader?
4. Do you often do well or badly in your comprehension tests?
5. What makes you succeed in oral reading?
6. Besides your English reader, what other books or materials do you read?

4.6.2.2 Interview with principals

Each targeted school is administered by one specific principal; each of them is to be interviewed individually, face to face, to establish what support teachers are given to teach English reading. In this case, the total numbers of principals who will be interviewed are three. Open-ended interviewing will be used and their responses will be tape-recorded and transcribed (see appendix 7 about their questions and appendix 12 for their transcriptions). The following are the interview questions that will be asked to the principals:

1. How do your teachers cope with the teaching of English reading in Grade 3?
2. What problems are experienced in the teaching of reading?
3. What are the preferred methods of teaching English as a second language in the school?
4. What resources does the school have in order to support teachers in teaching English reading skills?
5. What training is given to Grade 3 English teachers to teach English reading skills?
6. Do you have anything to add?

4.6.3 Individual interview

Referring to De Vos et al (2003:298) individual interview is “one to one interview, which determine individuals’ perceptions, opinions, facts and forecasts as well as their reactions to initial findings and potential solutions. It is focused, discursive and allows the researcher and participant to explore an issue”.

4.6.3.1 Individual interview with teachers

With regard to teachers, one Grade 3 teachers from each targeted school is to be selected for the Individual interview. This to hear from them how they teach reading skills in English as a second language and the interview guide approach will be used (see appendix 8 for the questions and appendix 13 for their transcriptions). The total number of teachers to be interviewed individually will consist of three. The following are the interview questions that will be asked to the teachers:

1. Do you experience problems when you teach English reading in your Grade 3 class?
2. What problems do you encounter when teaching reading?
3. What kind of training or support was provided to you in teaching English reading?
4. What methods do you use to teach English reading?

5. Apart from the prescribed English reader for your class, what other reading materials do you use in the reading lesson?
6. Do you have anything to add?

4.6.4 Focus group interview

Shank (2006:48) defined “a focus group as a group of people who are interviewed together. Additionally, he explained that a focus group is most helpful in coming to the complex underlying impressions in a setting where the sharing of experiences can help to guide the other participants to greater awareness and participation”.

In the words of Rabiee (2004:655) “focus group interviewing uses participants who are chosen with a certain intention in mind to clear up a given topic, although they may not be necessarily representative or sampling of a specific population”. This is also attested by Patrick (2007:3) and Rick (2006:2).

Bless and Smith (2000:110) described the advantages of using focus groups. The participants in the group are to discuss the issues in questions with each other. The participants can give the researcher a deep insight into a topic. It can provide an opportunity for participants to learn from each other and to resolve important dilemmas with which they are confronted. It can enrich, enlighten and supplement ideas to make it more valuable and useful to the investigator.

4.6.4.1 Focus group interview with teachers

The three Grade 3 teachers from the three selected schools will be interviewed at the same time during the focus group using the same questions that will be used in individual interviews. This is to confirm whether what they will utter during the individual interviews is the same as what they will say during the focus group interview. Their responses will be tape-recorded and

transcribed (see appendix 14 for their transcriptions). The following are the interview questions that will be asked to the focus group:

1. Do you experience problems when you teach English reading in your Grade 3 class?
2. What problems do you encounter when teaching reading?
3. What kind of training or support was provided to you in teaching English reading?
4. What methods do you use to teach English reading?
5. Apart from the prescribed English reader for your class, what other reading materials do you use in the reading lesson?
6. Do you have anything to add?

The significance of verbatim transcription is confirmed by Margot, Anzul, Friedman, Garner and Steinmetz (2003:82-83) saying that “transcribing interviews helps to recall the experience, expands the details and often provides fresh perspectives materials”.

4.7 THE DATA ANALYSIS

According to Henning, et al (2004:102) there are many different ways of analysing qualitative study results, for example, content analysis, grounded theory analysis discourse analysis, narrative analysis, global analysis, conversation and ethno methodological analysis and computer aided qualitative data analysis. They further explained that in working with qualitative data a researcher has many options on how to convert the “raw” data to final patterns meaning. This depends on methodological structure of the inquiry and corresponding aim of the analysis procedures.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003:219) describe analysis as “a challenging and exciting stage of the qualitative research. It requires a mix of creativity and systematic searching, a blend of inspiration and diligent detection. Analysis is a continuous and interactive process. It requires managing the data and involves making sense of the evidence through descriptive or explanatory accounts”. They further explained that making sense of the data relies, in part, on the method or

tool that is used to order and categorise data, but is more dependent on the analyst and the rigour, clarity and creativity of her or his conceptual thinking.

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2004:409-410) explained that “qualitative data analysis involves extracting meaning from collecting textual materials. The process is actually performed like: coding usually consisting of describing “theme” or “ideas” in “chunks” or “segment” of text in the data and labelling them with a short name or sometimes even a number. Coding is the analytic strategy that many qualitative researchers employ in order to locate key themes, patterns, ideas and concepts within their data”.

Walliman (2005:301) explains that it is important to analyse data to measure, make comparisons, examine relationships, forecast, test hypotheses, construct concepts and theories, explore, control and explain.

For the observation data analysis, the researcher will study carefully all the notes that will be taken during the classroom observation. The main headings observed and items noted will be identified and become the subject of interpretation, discussion and analysis. For the interviews data analysis, the researcher will present all the findings by writing each question followed by answers as per question from all the participating groups of all the selected three schools A, B and C. Then, the interpretation, discussion and analysis will follow.

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When conducting research in an academic or professional setting, one needs to be aware of the ethics behind the research activity (Driscoll 2006:1).

According to Awori (2003:58) ethical considerations “are paramount in any type of research”. Apart from protecting the informants, following research ethics also enables the researcher to retain a good relationship with the informants and increases the credibility of the study as quoted: “Educational researchers conducting research within a broad array of settings and

institution, including schools, colleges, universities, hospitals and prisons. It is of foremost importance that educational researchers respect the right, privacy, dignity and sensitivities of their research populations and also the integrity of the institutions within which the research occurs”.

4.8.1 GAINING ACCESS TO THE SITE

Robson (2003:168) reminds researchers the need to get the necessary permission from relevant authorities before a study begins.

To recognise the ethics in this study, the researcher will apply for permission to the relevant top authority in the Ministry of Education in order to conduct research at the selected institutions for an application for the permission to the site from the researcher to the Ministry of Education (see appendix 2, including the positive responses to the request from the permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and the Director of Oshana Educational Region. (See appendix 1).

4.8.2 INFORMED CONSENT (INDIVIDUAL PERMISSION)

Macmillan and Schumacher (2001:197) explained that informed consent is achieved by providing participants with an explanation of the research as well as giving them a form to be signed as an indication of understanding and willingness to participate in the research.

Heaton (2004:77) also support the fact that the participants need to be handed the consent forms prior to participation for them to decide whether they will participate. The participants will also be asked for their permission to be tape-recorded during interviews.

In this study, the investigator will design the consent letters for teachers, principals and learners, but parents will sign for their children who will be chosen to participate in the study as they are

minors and need to be permitted. The researcher will also talk each individual learner in advance to inform them about the interview. This is to find out whether or not they will be willing to participate. If they will accept the researcher will encourage and motivate them not to fear but to be free during interviews (see appendix 3, 4 and 5 for the consent letters for principals, teachers and learners).

4.8.3 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

Ethical considerations in research (2002:50) stated that coding of the data to protect the participants' identity is intended to alleviate concerns about privacy and confidentiality. This is affirmed by Heaton (2004:81) and Shank (2006:118 – 120).

In this investigation, the researcher will guarantee assurance of the confidentiality of all the participants. The pseudo-names will be used in the transcriptions of interviews and codes will be used in the presentations of findings from interviews, for example principal of school A,B and C, teacher of school A, B and C and learner 1, 2 and 3 of school A, B and C to safeguard their identities (see appendix 12,13,14 and 15). The researcher will also explain to the participants that their responses will be taped-recorded and the information will be kept confidentially for the purpose of the study and will not be disclosed to anyone.

4.8.4 PLAGIARISM

Walliman (2005:437) defined plagiarism as “the taking of other peoples' thoughts or writing and presenting it as your own”. This is sometimes done by students who copy out chunks of text from publications or the internet and include them in their writing without any acknowledgement to its source. According to Walliman, plagiarism is the worst offence against honesty. Borrowing the thoughts, ideas and work of others with no acknowledgement made on the source is considered unethical. He further explained that a claim for authorship of a work which is in

fact the results of collaboration or amanuensis is also a serious offence, unethically and immorally driven.

In order to be free from being accused of plagiarism, Walliman (2005:336-337) indicated that researchers should acknowledge the originator of the work. This is called citation. He believes that in doing a research one cannot entirely rely on one's own ideas, concepts and theories. One needs to provide direct quotations from the work of others and references from the wide variety of sources for example, books, journals, conferences, talks, interviews, newspapers and TV programs. The researcher should also acknowledge assistance of others in any collaboration with them. He further expressed that the significance of acknowledging intellectual ownerships revolves on the principles of developing and promoting mental honesty among writers.

In this inquiry, the researcher will use extensively citation of ideas, concepts, principles, theories and laws of learning that enriches the writing of this research. The investigator will also acknowledge the roles played by persons and individuals who contributed immensely to the success of this undertaking.

4.9 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH

To establish and enhance the truthfulness and worthiness or credibility of the findings, steps, measures and considerations will be taken into account during the course of the study, as explained below:

4.9.1 VALIDITY

De Vos et al (2003:166) describe that valid instruments should measure what they are suppose to measure and as yielding scores whose differences reflect the true differences of the variable being measured rather than random or constant errors.

The validity and trustworthiness of this study will be enhanced by means of using multi-methods in collecting data, for example observation and interviewing. The researcher is of the opinion that these two techniques are an interwoven web of all the interactive techniques. According to Singleton and Straits (2005:381) and endorsed by Punch (2005:85) the use of multiple methods that do not share the same inherent weaknesses, enhances the chances of solving the problem.

Punch (2005:86) said that” the strength of qualitative research relies in validity (closeness to truth) that touches the core of what is going on rather than just skimming the surface. This validity of qualitative methods can be improved much by using multi-methods strategies of collecting data, for example by applying mechanically recording data”.

Bell (2001:103), explained that validity is altogether a more complex concept and it tells one whether an item measures or describes what it is supposed to measure or describe. Furthermore, he explained that if an item is unreliable, then, it must also lack validity, but a reliable item is not necessarily also valid. It could produce the same or similar responses on all occasions, but not be measuring what it is supposed to measure.

To determine the validity in this study, the researcher will use a tape-recorder to capture all the responses and do a data analysis of one or more research. The researcher will also use participant language verbatim accounts. To this strategy, the researcher will take literal statements of participants. Lastly, the researcher will use member checking strategy to check the veracity of whatever statements and the like that the participants will tell during the interviews and data collection. Furthermore, the observation results and interviews will be matched with each other in order to establish the degree to which the child has acquired reading skills.

4.9.2 RELIABILITY

De Vos et al (2003:168-169) defined reliability as “the accuracy or precision of an instrument, as the degree of consistency or agreement between two independently derived sets of scores or the extent to which independent administration of the same instruments yield the same or similar results under comparable conditions”

According to Bradley (2005:64) reliability means that “if we were to repeat the study we should get the same results. Each time we come across a new study we should ask ourselves how valid and reliable that study is. This constant criticism is essential to the researcher. Questions about validity and reliability need to be asked about every part of study procedures; the questionnaire; the sample; the data capture method; the interviewer and others. Researchers know that anything and everything they do can affect the outcomes of their studies. The different elements of research, such as sampling, the wording of questions, the methods used and hundreds of other things can change the results”.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:244-245) reliability in qualitative research, is “refers to the consistency of measurement: the extent to which the results are similar over different forms of the same instrument or occasions of data collection. Another way to conceptualise reliability is to determine the extent to which measures are free from error. If an instrument has little error it is reliable, and if it has a great amount of error it is unreliable. We can measure error by estimating how consistently a trait is assessed. In addition, reliability in qualitative research alludes to the consistent manner in which the researcher records analyse and interprets the meaning obtained from the participants. Moreover, reliability in qualitative research is difficult as the process is ... personal, no investigator, observers, interviews, or studies documents exactly like another”. They further mention the types of reliability as stability (test and retest); equivalence and stability; internal consistency (split-half; K-R Cronbach Alpha) and agreement”.

In this research, agreement reliability will be used. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:245) agreement reliability is described as consistency of ratings or observations. To determine the reliability of this research, the procedure must involve two or more persons to be rated or observed for examples, observation and interviews. The researcher will use both the interview and the focus group discussion to solicit the same information. The similarity of the outcome of these two processes will be an indication of the reliability of the research results.

To promote the reliability in this study, there will be a link between the participant's responses and the way the researcher will describe or picture them out. Remarks made by respondents during interviews will be used and the information received from observations and interviews will be reported in a proper and accurate manner. Since these data are derived from the purposeful sample of the total population, the results may not be completely generalisable, but the information rather be used to understand the phenomenon studied. So, further research will be needed.

4.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher discussed the research methodology and explained how fieldwork would be approached. The chapter elaborated on the qualitative method and different techniques used in this method together with how to promote the validity and trustworthiness of this method. It explained how data would be gathered to answer the research question about what factors affect the teaching of reading skills in English as a second language. Details on how the research sample would be obtained and what ethical matters would be considered in the fieldwork were discussed. The outcomes of this fieldwork will be recorded in the next chapter. It will also include a data analysis, summary, limitations, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: THE RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter dealt with the methodology and research techniques for this investigation in order to realise the aim of this research namely, to establish what factors influence the teaching of English reading skills in a second language of Grade three learners at some schools in the research area. The chapter explained how the research sample would be obtained and what ethical matters would be considered in data gathering during fieldwork.

This chapter presents the results of research findings obtained from fieldwork. In order to answer the research question about what factors in the school can influence the teaching of reading in English in the Grade three classes of the research area. The research results will be presented, discussed analyzed and interpreted. The researcher will also discuss the limitations of the study and draw conclusions. From these findings, recommendations will be made on how to address those factors that may influence the teaching of English reading skills.

5.2 INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH SCHOOLS

All the three schools A, B and C that were involved in this study are government primary schools that offer two phase levels namely, Lower Primary Phase from grade one to four and Upper Primary Phase from Grade five to seven. School A is located in an urban area, while school B and C are in semi – urban areas. All the three schools A, B and C cater for multicultural ethnic groups of learners from different backgrounds in terms of socio-economic class, educational status and religious affiliations.

School A has two Grade 3 classes; one with 47 learners and the other with 48. This school uses English as a medium of instruction from Grade one up to seven in all the subjects, except for

Oshikwanyama which is the first language (mother tongue). The period allocation for teaching English as a whole subject is 40 minutes. The curriculum requirement for teaching English at all three schools is a total of nine periods per week (see appendix 11). School B has three Grade 3 classes, one Grade with 33 learners, and the other two classes with 32 learners each. This school uses the mother tongue Oshikwanyama as a medium of instruction from Grade one to three. From Grade four to seven, English is used as a medium of instruction, while Oshikwanyama (mother tongue) is taught as a subject. School C only has one Grade 3 class of 37 learners. The teaching of English is similar to that of school B above.

Generally, the performance of these three schools A, B and C, is at an average level. This was confirmed by the circuit inspector, through the researcher's telephone interview with him when he said that "all the three schools A, B and C were also among the other schools in his domain that are having English reading problems.

5.3 THE FINDINGS OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

5.3.1 THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Reading corner: In all the three schools A, B and C, it was so sad to note that there were no reading corners. A classroom without a reading corner does not encourage learners to read on their own and therefore they do not acquire reading skills as expected. This does not promote the much desired culture of reading.

English reading books: It was noticed that school A and B except school C experienced acute shortages of reading books, for example readers. Books were shared and rotated among the learners when reading, usually one reader per six learners. Learners are not allowed to take the books home and can therefore not practice reading after school hours. After reading periods, because learners were not allowed to borrow reader books to read at home, they are deprived to read books both at home and school. This creates negative results. Learners lose reading interest

and fail to develop a reading habit. Ultimately with less reading opportunity, not much learning takes place.

Display of learners' work on the classroom walls: It was observed that displays on classroom walls done by learners in all the three schools A, B and C, were outdated, yellowing and falling away. Learners' work has a manifold satisfying effect on learners themselves, teachers and parents. It fosters appreciation, ownership, and creativity as well as encouragement among the learners. It also arouses desires for incidental as well as perceptual reading. Depriving learners to display their achievements affects their emotional, social, psychological, moral as well as cognitive development especially their self-esteem and reading sight.

Learners' number per class: Overcrowded classes were discovered in school A, and C but not in school B. School A had 47 learners, school C had 37 while school B 33. With overcrowding, combined with reading book shortages, the development of reading in English becomes nearly impossible. Through experiences, overcrowding in a class, such as school A and C, obviously results in poor reading achievement, disciplinary problems, poor classroom control and management. Individual learners' needs are also compromised, ultimately frustrating effective teaching.

Approaches to teaching English reading: As per observation made, teachers of school A, B and C were one in using whole word method, sentence method and phonics method in their teaching reading English lessons. But, the teacher of school C went further in exploring more on the language experience approach. Teaching styles have an immense significance on developmental learning. The whole word method can empower children to identify and recognize regular and irregular words for reading and spelling strategies. But, unfortunately, the intended goal seemed to happen partially to school A and B. Teaching appeared to be concentrated only to word decoding and much questioning on the texts read. However school C teacher demonstrated much better system on decoding, word identification and recognition as well as vocabulary development.

Although all the schools A, B and C tried utilizing the sentence method that aimed to build up phrases and sentences, the teachers used it in oral reading and writing activities related hand in hand with the texts read. But, the teacher in school C used it further in building or forming sentences. Having availed of phonic method that aimed to involve in the recognition of actual letters, sounds in letters, in words, building the words, as well as in blending and introducing syllables, the three teachers of school A, B and C failed to implement phonic method fully in their instruction. Instead they used it only to correct pronunciation when learners were reading aloud, that meant oral spelling rather than letter sounds. On the language experience approach, learners were required by the teacher of school C to construct sentences in reading activities using the familiar words related to the text read in the lesson. This was one of the expectations in using this approach. Had the approaches been completely executed, then, effective teaching of reading could have taken place.

Teachers' and learners' verbal interactions: Noticeable in the classroom interactions employed by the three teachers in their commencement of reading lessons was the absence of exploring the pre-knowledge by the teachers of school B and C, with the exception of school A. All the three teaches used the free reading aloud, pronunciation and directed inquiries to teachers from learners. It was also observed that the application of comparing and contrasting relationship of phenomena by teachers of school A and C took place, again excepting the teacher of school B. The teacher of school A was seen utilizing picture word matching but not the teachers of school B and C. The researcher was impressed by the learners of school C who were asked to re-tell the story read by their teacher which was not done by the teachers of school A and B. In code switching activities, only the teacher of school C used it.

The teacher of school A used the pre-knowledge of learners to connect the present lesson to the experiences of the learners. This way, the teacher could determine what the learners already knew and did not know. With that the teacher could help build up a strong and meaningful learning. When learners read aloud, the purpose of teachers was to diagnose the reading difficulties in word identification and word recognition that could slip up by their learners. The two teachers of school A and B intervened in learners' reading by correcting only the

pronunciation of words read wrongly by some of their learners. The teacher of school C did it much better. To the researcher, that could be done to the individual learners and at the same time to the whole class to let learners pronounce every letter in the words, then, which could help learners to improve their reading, spelling as well as to prevent committing the same mistakes again. The oral matching of the pictures and words done by learners could demonstrate vocabulary development, comprehension and coordination between visual and mental cues as a way to measure reading awareness. The use of code switching by the teacher of school C enabled learners to clear up difficulties and to facilitate understanding of learning expected of them.

5.4 THE FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS

The following are the findings from interviews of different participants namely: one circuit inspector, three principals, three grade three teachers and nine grade three learners of the three selected schools A, B and C.

5.4.1 TELEPHONICAL INTERVIEW WITH THE CIRCUIT INSPECTOR

The circuit inspector of schools in the research area was interviewed to establish whether he was aware of any problems experienced by teachers when English reading was taught. The following is the question and the inspector's response.

Question 1: Do you have primary schools in your circuit that are experiencing problems in reading English in grade three? If yes, what are the causes?

The Inspector said that most of the schools in Ongwediva were having reading problems in English. In addition, he also said that there were insufficient reading books for each learner in schools; teachers were also experiencing difficulties in teaching English due to their poor background. It was thus noted from the Circuit Inspector's response that there were reading

problems in English existing in schools such as lack of reading books and the poor background of teachers in teaching English. So, if such is the scenario in today's schools, then, surely the results of the learners' academic progress in all aspects of their learning will be poor.

The confirmation by the circuit inspector of the problems of English reading skills among schools in his circuit as a result of insufficient reading books ineffective teaching methods of English reading skills development used by teachers reinforces the reality of the English reading problem in primary schools.

5.4.2 INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW WITH THE THREE PRINCIPALS

The responses to the research questions are as follow:

Question 1: How do your teachers cope with the teaching of English reading in Grade 3?

The principal of school A said that her teachers were trying to do their best in helping learners to read. The principal of school B said that her teachers were teaching well, while the principal in school C stated that teaching was a tough job to do. Based on these responses the three principals implied that their teachers were doing their utmost in the uphill battle of teaching English reading skills and that from their responses, their teachers must face courageously the challenges of teaching English reading development.

Question 2: What problems are experienced in the teaching of reading?

School A principal stated that there were shortcomings in the teachers training in the 1980's such as the use of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction. This became a problem because teachers after independence had to use English in most of their class activities. Pronunciation was another difficulty but with the help of other teachers, the head of Department and the Principal somehow succeeded in overcoming this problem. The principal in school B indicated that reading books were insufficient and even posters were not available. The principal of school C admitted that

learners in grades 1 to 3 were taught in the vernacular and only learned English as a subject. With many learners unable to read even in the vernacular, learning English as a second language was doubly difficult. Also, teachers were trained in Afrikaans and not in English, so, pronunciation became a problem for them.

The feeling that the shift in the medium of instruction from Afrikaans to English was abrupt because little or no training at all in the use of English as a classroom medium of instruction was given to teachers does not solve anything. The learners will always be at the losing end. Likewise, putting the blame of the reading problem on the shortages of reading books will not help the learners at all. True, reading books should be available but shortage can be solved through initiatives. Finally, the lack of reading skills in the vernacular should not be used as an excuse why reading in English becomes more difficult. Reading skills can be developed in many ways depending on the teacher's patience, commitment, diligence and planning. In conclusion, the researcher believed that the shift from the mother tongue medium of instruction to English is only a simple transfer of learning which teachers should not be afraid to tackle. Many miracles can take place in the classroom through innovations, creativity and flexibility to benefit the young learners.

Question 3: What are the preferred methods of teaching English as a second language in the school?

The principal of school A stated that the preferred method to teach reading is through readers which contained stories, passages and poems. Sight words, phonics exercises, picture words could be found in the readers which could be used by the teachers to develop and enhance reading skills. The principal of school B declared that the common word method was the most effective as the learners had the opportunity to practice letters one by one. He also mentioned the phonic method by which young children became used to the sound of letters and learn letter names. The principal of school C said that reading skills could be developed easily through look and say, repeat after me (drilling), pictures and cards, play letter cards and word card methods.

The researcher observed all three teachers used the same teaching approaches stated by their principals. Then if they all used similar approaches of teaching there is no reason why reading difficulties should exist. The problems may lie however on how to make teaching English reading an effectively be transformed into a successful endeavor. Another problem was caused by the shortages of reading books as stated above. But in order to develop reading skills, the commitment of teachers is essential. Teaching to be more an effective and children-friendly, in the face of shortages of reading books requires the resourcefulness, creativity and patience. Nowhere in the world will magic and instant results take place if teachers simply watch the daily classroom scenario in helplessness. What is needed most in those trying times is more effective planning, more productive activities, by applying various proven approaches. According to Ankama (2008) there is no best effective method of teaching English. By trying various methods, one may discover something that is best for one's learners and their contexts.

Question 4: What resources does the school have in order to support teachers in teaching English reading skills?

The principal of school A stated that they had readers, flash cards, reading corners set aside by teachers, a photocopier and a library from which learners could borrow story books. The principal of school B admitted that reading books and readers were insufficient, but they sometimes bought reading aids from bookshops such as readers, teacher's guide and posters. The principal of school C said that the school did not have specific resources but had flipchart for teachers to write useful words for learners. He added that the school also bought picture charts.

The school resources that support the teacher's effort to develop English reading skills were noted. The three principal claimed that they were buying school reading materials from shops but that they were not in big quantities which actually meant more materials were needed. This also meant that schools, particularly the three schools in this research, do not get enough material support from the Ministry of Education. If the Ministry neglect its role of providing reading materials to schools, or if it fails to distribute equally and fairly teaching and learning aids specifically those that facilitate the teaching of reading as a second language, then, the standard of learners reading skills will definitely be affected. Unequal and unbalanced distribution of

reading materials can really affect the reading potentialities of learners. It can also affect the efficiency of teachers as far as teaching English reading is concerned.

Question 5: What training is given to Grade 3 English teachers to teach English reading skills?

The principal of school A revealed that teachers were given in-service training by advisory teachers at the Teachers' Resource Center. He also added that the cluster center organized a get-together of English teacher per term to help one another with their different problems. The principal of school B stated that two teachers attended various workshops at the Teachers' Resource Center on the use of teacher's guide, the syllabus, the method of teaching reading and the use of learners' books. The principal of school C claimed that teachers in the lower primary phase in his school received school-level training not merely on reading English but in English as a whole to develop all the language skills.

Reference was made on the teacher's workshop and training in English. It was noted, however, that not all teachers were required to attend upgrading courses on the same level. Workshops at the regional level give teachers a wider and broader opportunity to learn modern approaches and use the latest trends in teaching reading skills. Compulsory attendance of teachers giving English at regional workshops can be the answer to the national literacy needs of every young learner. If this is not done, both teachers and learners will be left behind – with teachers embedded in continuing with the old and ineffective methods of developing English reading skills and with the learners as the ultimate losers.

Question 6: Do you have anything to add?

Principal of school A declared that parents also somehow played a role in helping their children acquire reading skills through library books borrowed by learners to take home. He, however, admitted that the government through the Ministry of Education did not provide enough reading books due to the lower budget for the primary level, which should not be the case as learners at lower primary level needed to be catered for better in order to ensure strong foundation for them.

Principal of school B stated that enough reading materials were needed because the government subsidy for readers, game, flashcards, teachers guide and activity learners book were insufficient. Principal of school C affirmed that the Ministry of education needed to train teachers on the method of teaching in the English medium as most of the teachers lacked this. He concluded that this was the main cause for higher failure rate on account of the learners' lack of basic reading skills.

From the principals' interview, it is clear that factors affecting the development of English reading skills in Grade 3 boil down to these four: lack of reading books, inadequate training workshops on English reading skill development for teachers, lower budget allocation for primary schools and lack of parental involvement.

In-service training, workshops, seminars and conferences of teachers are bridges to educational growth. Through them the past, present and future are linked up. They strengthen teachers' knowledge and broaden their horizon. They should therefore be a "must" for teachers not only for personal growth but also for professional development. Without the opportunity afforded by those trainings, the teaching of English reading skills will be at a standstill or in the doldrums.

As learners spend more time at home than at school they can be guided more by their parents by strengthening the foundation of reading skills. Parents should be actively involved in developing those skills through guided reading at home after school. Their assistance is valuable in adding up to the knowledge gained at school.

The more money allocated to readers' procurement and various reading aids the more interest and motivations will be generated in learners to read books accessible to them. Thus, adequate budgetary allocation can spur the development of reading interest and natural curiosity of the children.

The three principals listed several reasons for the poor development of English reading skills in schools. These are: shortages of reading books, little training teachers on English reading skills

development, mother tongue as medium of instruction used in Grade 1 to 3, low budget allocation to Lower Primary Education and sudden shifting of Afrikaans language to English language. All these aggravate the problems of English reading skills development. These factors summed up by school principals added to the gravity of the problem of teaching English reading skills in schools. (Appendix 12 is an example of verbatim interview responses).

5.4.3 INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW WITH THE THREE GRADE 3 TEACHERS

Question 1: Do you experience problems when you teach English reading in your Grade 3 class?

The teacher of school A and B said that they experienced problems in teaching reading English, while the teacher of school C claimed that she was better for not having them. The individual interview of teachers from the three schools A, B and C however revealed that they experienced problems in teaching reading English to their classes. This had been admitted earlier both by the circuit inspector and by principals of the three schools interviewed and which they blamed on the lack of reading books. They expressed their views possibly in an attempt to lay the cause of the schools English reading problems on external factors.

Question 2: What problems do you encounter when teaching reading?

The teacher of the school A stated that the learners did not know how to read, while the teacher of the school B said that her learners did not learn English on account of the influence of the mother tongue. The teacher of the school C declared that her children experienced problems in letter sounds, letter names, consonant and vowels or pronunciation. The answers show that the reading problems in English are mainly caused by the learners' lack of reading ability even in the vernacular. Learners have shown difficulties in phonics and in pronunciation of consonants and vowels. This fact was also confirmed from the results of the interviews with the circuit inspector as well as with the school principals. This strengthens the views that there are real factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills as a second-language.

Question 3: What kind of training or support was provided to you in teaching English reading?

The teacher of school A said that he had not attended any workshop and that he depended only on the feedback given to him by a colleague who had participated in the training on the improvement of reading skills. The teacher of school B stated that she had indeed attended a workshop not on reading skills development but on the revision of the syllabus and teacher's guide. The teacher of school C admitted that she had taken part in a workshop at the Teachers Resource Center and had been given a handout on how to teach reading. From time to time these workshops are given by the Ministry of Education to improve the teaching of reading skills. The teachers' answers however showed that they did take part in workshop not on reading skills advancement but for other purposes such as syllabi revision. Attendance to workshops with no link to teaching reading skills provides no solution to the reading English problem. Besides, the teachers' official absence from schools reduces the time they are supposed to spend on their English lessons.

Question 4: What methods do you use to teach English reading?

The teacher of school A answered that he used the whole word approach. He added that he sometimes did supplementary or compensatory teaching on reading. The teachers of school B and C claimed that they used the language experience approach.

The interview revealed that in all the three schools there is no inadequate method, the methods complement one another, but it seemed that teachers were confused on the difference between teaching approaches and reading activities, as proven by what was observed and what was said. It is obvious that to develop English reading skills, a variety of correct techniques should be used. This is what Ankama (2008) noted and stressing that the quality of language teaching will improve if teachers use all the available approaches. Given that most of the approaches used by the three teachers were inadequate and inappropriate improving the English reading skills would remain a big problem.

Question 5: Apart from the prescribed English reader for your class, what other reading materials do you use in the reading lesson?

The teacher of school A answered that he used readers for reading aloud. He said that he alternated the readers with storybooks donated by parents. The teacher of school B said that he usually used newspapers like “The Namibian” from which learners choose the topic to read aloud and to ask questions about. She stated that she also made use of storybooks from the library. The teacher of school C declared that she used newspaper for unprepared reading and other English books.

It was noted that the teachers used storybooks and newspapers as additional reading materials. This is commendable as the learners are exposed to different types of reading materials from which to choose items to read. This can develop the learners reading culture and habits.

Question 6: Do you have anything to add?

The teacher of school A, B and C answered that since reading books are insufficient, the government and the parents had to provide readers. The teacher of school A added that parents should be encouraged to attend meetings to know their children’s progress as well as their problems. And lastly, the teacher of school B recommended that remedial teaching be done to learners with reading difficulties. The three teachers are unanimous about the urgent need for reading books in their schools in order to solve the reading problems. But parents are also expected to do their part in improving the reading skills through advice given to the children while reading with them in their free time at home, because the school and its teachers cannot do it alone. Remedial teaching as part and parcel of the successful teaching career should also be considered seriously as one of the solutions to the problems of reading skills development.

All the three teachers from school A, B and C honestly admitted that they have insufficient English reading books in their schools that are causing problems in reading English. This is a

clear indication that schools have a big problem to solve in order to improve English reading skills. (Appendix 13 is an example of the interviews).

5.4.4 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW WITH THE THREE GRADE 3 TEACHERS

When the researcher brought all the same three teachers from school A, B and C together to a group interview, they maintained the same answers to the same questions one to six there was nothing new from what they have said during the individual interviews.

Based from the focus group discussion, all the three teachers of school A, B and C had attested that they experienced that some learners demonstrated reading difficulties in English specifically in phonics as well as pronunciation, consonant and vowels. They have also encountered the problem of insufficient reading books and inadequate teachers' workshops on reading skills development in their schools. Their interview also revealed that the approaches of teaching English reading skills used were inadequate and ineffective. This shows therefore that teaching English reading skills will continue to be a big challenge in the schools if all the problems mentioned above are not given ample solution. (Appendix 14 is an example of the interview).

5.4.5 INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW WITH LEARNERS

The following are the questions, responses, discussions and analysis of the nine Grade 3 learners' interview, three learners from each of the three selected schools A, B and C.

Question 1: Do you have any reading problems?

Learner 1 and 3 of school A said that they had no problems, while learner 2 of school A answered in the negative. Learner 1 of school B declared that sometime he had problems. Learner 2 of school B said that she had problem while learner 3 of school B answered that he had

no problems at all. Learner 1 and 2 of school C stated that they had none. While learner 3 of school C admitted that she had problems.

From the learners' interview it becomes evident that learners have reading problems, especially in comprehension. Learners probably think that once they are through with reading a given passage they have understood it. They therefore have the mistaken belief that speed reading is the same as comprehension.

Question 2: What kinds of problems do you experience in reading?

Learner 1 of school A stated that she had no problem in reading. Learner 2 and 3 affirmed that they did but never specified the problem. Learner 1 of school B admitted that he had a problem of understanding the passage. Learner 2 of school B declared that she had speaking problem only but did not know why. While learner 3 of school B said that he had no problem. Learner 1 of school C stated that he had none because he read and studied. Learner 2 of school C said that he was reading Day by Day English which helped him pass English. While learner 3 of school C said that she was studying Kwanyama (mother tongue) and so she had problem in punctuations and pronunciation.

It appears that the kinds of reading problems experienced by the learners in reading were attributed to lack of understanding the passage, inability to express ideas and incapability to distinguish diacritical marks for example punctuations. These problems seemed to be present due to little interactions between teachers and learners.

Questions 3: Are you a fast or slow reader?

Learner 1 and 3 of school A admitted proudly that they read fast, while learner 2 of school A declared that he was a slow reader but he did not know why. Learner 1 of school B admitted that he was a slow reader because of some problems. Learner 2 of school B said that she was a fast reader while learner 3 of school B declared that he was neither slow nor fast. Learner 1 and 2 of

school C declared that they were fast readers, while learner 3 of school C admitted she was slow at reading. To be a fast reader means that the reader can finish reading the passage within a short time and understand what he or she had read. The eye and memory coordination is well-developed, especially in letter blending to produce and pronounce the word. It also demonstrates that the learner has achieved a good level of reading efficiency. Among slow readers, the opposite is true. They always misunderstand the question and so fail to give relevant answers. They could be classified as poor readers.

Question 4: Do you often do well or badly in your comprehension tests?

All the three learners of school A declared that they scored well. Learner 1 of school B admitted that he sometimes did well and badly at other times, while learner 2 and 3 of school B stated that they did score well. Learner 1 of school C declared that he scored well. Learner 2 of school C said that he always got good results while learner 3 of school C admitted that she did well in some and badly in others. This question was asked to establish reading comprehension which is an example of good reading skills.

Good results in comprehension test are a reflection on the effective approaches to the development of teaching reading skills. At the same time good results motivate the learners to continue doing well and the teacher to do even better at the use of effective teaching techniques. This will also inspire the teachers to give compensatory assistance to mediocre learners.

Question 5: what makes you succeed in oral reading?

Learner 1 of school A said that her sister helped her with reading. She added that she listened carefully to her teacher and wrote down everything the teacher asked them to copy. Learner 2 of school A stated that he studied and did the homework given by the teacher. While learner 3 of school A said that he always listened to the teacher. Learner 1 of school B declared that he had a problem because he missed what the teacher said when he (the learner) had to go to the toilet. Learner 2 of school B said that she wrote words without misspelling them. While learner 3 of

school B stated that he read, wrote and answered questions on the lessons. Learner 1 of school C said that he listened to the teacher and copied what he had been asked to copy. Learner 2 of school C proudly admitted that he read and passed. While, learner 3 of school C admitted that she did not know when there was going to be a test.

From the responses of the learners from the three schools, it is clear that listening, copying, studying; reading and doing their homework are their key to understanding the lessons and getting good results. The two learners who admitted failing to get good marks need to develop a reading habit. And if they missed part of the lesson in their absence or by necessity, they should ask their friends what the lesson was.

Question 6: Besides your English reader, what other books or materials do you read?

Learner 1 of school A said that she read story books, newspaper, magazine and the internet. Learner 2 of school A stated that he read the story books about new friends, my father's village. Learner 3 of school A said that he read story books and mathematics books. Learner 1 of school B answered that he read English, Oshikwanyama, Ependuko and Environmental book. Learner 2 of school B declared that she read English and Oshikwanyama books, while learner 3 of school B said he read English. Learner 1 of school C said that he read Day by Day reader books and other readers. Learner 2 of school C admitted that he did not remember the titles of the books; while learner 3 of school C answered that she read those that were used in the class.

From the answers given by the learners on whether they read books and what those books were, it is clear that there is a tendency to make use of newspapers, magazines, books written in local language and even the internet. Resorting to different reading materials is a sign that learners want to develop reading habits which will surely improve their comprehension ability. It can widen their vocabulary and make them good readers, speakers and writers.

All four learners except five have English reading problems. These problems are attributable to reading comprehension, expression of ideas and diacritical blindness. The results seem to point out that learners need a big help from their teachers in the development of English reading skills. (Appendix 15 is an example of verbatim interview responses).

5.5 LIMITATIONS

The results of this study may not be 100% accurate due to the following:

The sample size on area used in this study is small and may not be representative of the whole population. The presence of the researcher in the classrooms to observe could have affected the participation of the learners and the teachers' teaching. This could give superficial, cosmetic and artificial results. During the interviews of learners, the interviewees may not have felt free to respond as the researcher was a stranger to them. This is shown by some of irrelevant or indirect answers, and by apparently unbelievable truth.

During the interviews with the teachers and their principals they could have been nervous because the session was being tape-recorded. They could have given doubtful truths to impress, half truths out of fear of exposure or lack of confidentiality, or entirely false answers.

5.6 CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the factors that influence the teaching of reading skills in a second language of Grade 3 learners in the research area. As a secondary aim it needed to establish what methods of teaching reading in English as a second language are used in the research schools and the linguistic environment of the classroom in which the teaching of reading occurs. It also answered the research question: What are the factors that influence the teaching of reading in English as a second language of Grade 3 learners?

In order to achieve this aim, the researcher undertook field observations in the classrooms of the research schools. From the observation of the classroom environment, it appears that the

problems noted are the following: poor classroom environment such as lack of reading corners in classrooms, inadequate showcasing of learners' achievements on the bulletin board inside the classroom, insufficient reading books in classrooms, ineffective teaching approaches to English reading, insufficient teachers' and learners' interactions and overcrowded classrooms.

The researcher also interviewed the circuit inspector, the principals, the teachers and the learners. This was to find out the factors that are affecting the teaching of English reading skills among the Grade 3 learners.

From the interviews, it is noted that the schools are having problems in reading English. These are attributed to insufficient reading books and poor background of teachers in teaching English. These were both stated as problems by the Circuit inspector, principals and teachers.

In the interview of the principals, the researcher found out that there are inadequate teacher training workshops for the development of English reading skills, inadequate training in English language teaching, lack of parental involvement in learners' English development at home and low budget allocation to primary Education

Likewise, from the teachers' interviews it seems the problems are: obvious lack of reading capacity both in vernacular and English among the learners, ineffective teaching approaches, for example phonemic awareness among the learners and insufficient reading books.

Finally, from the learners' side, it emerged that the problems are: lack of comprehension of English language, inability to express themselves and difficulties with punctuations.

Based from the findings of the researcher in the classroom observation of the teacher's and learners interactions made, what transpired in the three Grade 3 Namibian schools A, B and C observed did not meet some of the required benchmarks of reading in English lessons on the specific days observed. For example, unprepared reading texts from fictional and factual texts did not take place at all. Questions were answered without comprehension of the level Grade.

Good reading habit by learners was not demonstrated adequately as they only read for decoding. Reading for understanding information and enjoyment as well as fluency were done only by few fast readers and most read at slow pace.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following are recommended:

The government should maintain the desirable teacher and learner ratio of 1:25 – 30 for effective manageability because the 37 to 47 learner ratio observed in schools are too high for conducive learning. The successful teaching of reading depends on few numbers of learners for example, 20 to 30 learners, so that teachers can easily meet learners' needs in reading development.

The government should build more schools and classrooms to prevent the overcrowdings of classrooms which is observed in school A and C having 37 and 47 learners per class. This will help maintain the correct teacher learner ratio to facilitate effective reading progress.

Schools should convince parents through teacher-parents' meeting to buy reading books for their children as suggested during the teachers' interview. This will minimise the problem of lack of materials in the development of reading habit that must start at an early age.

Readers should be distributed equally for each learner, not following the Education and Training Sector for Improvements Programs (ETSIP) recommendation of 1 reader book per four or five learners which is not effective (Republic of Namibia (12) 2008: 5 – 9). This was also observed by the researcher where 47 learners in class were rotating 6 readers in the whole class to read. With more books available, reading skills and literacy development among learners will improve at a faster pace.

Every classroom should have a reading corner as all the observed classrooms of all the three schools showed no reading corners. This corner is an irresistible gateway to stimulate interests in reading. It provides an environment by which the learners can immediately feel enchanted to

the magic of the reading world. It can supplement the thirst for knowledge that may not be present in learners reading texts. Every corner must contain reading materials adapted for young learners like fascinating story books, colorful magazines, illustrative comic books, newspapers, jokers, cartoons, picture books and captivating children materials that they like to read. These help learners develop the habit of reading needed to increase knowledge, for their extensive discussions with other children as well as their enjoyment for social and emotional empowerment. Teachers in this regards are expected to be artistic and imaginative. If the room is drab and unattractive, the children will be put off and avoid going into the room.

More teachers' workshops on methods of teaching English reading skills should be held every term at the regional level. This is recommended by both teachers and principals during interviews. This is to reactivate teachers' interests on teaching basic reading techniques that incorporate modern teaching methods.

More and varied teaching approaches should be applied to teach English reading skills such as; whole word approach, sentence approach (look and say approach), phonics approach, language experience approach, eclectic (combined) approach as most of all the lessons observed were concentrating more only to word decoding and questioning on the texts read. By doing so, teachers then, will be able to determine which of the approaches can work best in teaching reading in their environmental contexts.

Since this study only investigated the factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills among the Grade three learners, further studies can look at various other factors that may have some bearing on the teaching of English reading skills in the whole Lower Primary Phase (Grade one to four).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION: OSHANA REGION

Tel: (065) 229800
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Email—immanuelaipanda@hotmail.com

Private Bag 5518
Oshakati
NAMIBIA

Enq: Immanuel S. Aipanda
Ref 12/2/6/1

09 September 2008

Ms Rebecca Junias
Ongwediva College of Education
Private Bag X5507
Oshakati

Dear Ms Junias

Permission to undertake M Ed research studies :

We are pleased to inform that Ms Rebecca Junias has been granted permission to conduct her research studies at the above-mentioned schools. The findings of her studies will be of interest to many of us in education as it explores factors affecting the teaching of English reading in grade three. The only proviso is that her research activities should in no way interfere with the normal school programmes.

Kindly accord to her your usual assistance and support she may require.

Yours sincerely


.....
**Mrs Dutte N Shinyemba -
Regional Director**



APPENDIX 2



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

PROGRAMMES and QUALITY ASSURANCE
Research and Information Publication

Tel.: 061-293-3200
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4 September 2008

File: 11/1/1

Rebecca Junias
Teacher Educator
Ongwediva College of Education
Private Bag X5507
Oshakati

Dear Madam

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO DO EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Your letter requesting permission to do research as part of the post-graduate studies for a Masters of Education, through the University of South Africa (UNISA), has reference.

Kindly be informed that the Ministry of Education recognises your effort and the possible contribution your research initiative can have for the successful curriculum implementation for education in a broader sense.

This letter grants you official permission you to do the required work in terms of consultations, interviews and other related interactions at school- or regional office levels.

Kindly note that the Ministry of Education would expect from you to deposit copies of you published work in the respective libraries and resource centres. Also ensure that your research activities do not interfere with normal school programmes.

Best wishes for success in your academic endeavour.

Yours faithfully

I. V. Ankama
PERMANENT SECRETARY



5/9/08
Date

TOTAL P.01

APPENDIX 3

CONSENT LETTER

I.....a school principal, fully agreed to support R. Junias a Master Degree student at UNISA in her investigation of factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills as a second language of grade 3 learners.

.....
Signature

APPENDIX 4

CONSENT LETTER

I.....a teacher, fully agreed to support R. Junias a Master Degree student at UNISA in her investigation of factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills as a second language of grade 3 learners.

.....
Signature

APPENDIX 5

CONSENT LETTER

I..... a guardian/parents of fully agreed to let my child to support R. Junias a Master Degree student at UNISA in her investigation of factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills as a second language of grade 3 learners.

.....
Signature

APPENDIX 6

A QUESTION FOR TELEPHONICAL INTERVIEW WITH THE CIRCUIT INSPECTOR

1. Do you have primary schools in your circuit that are experiencing problems in reading English in Grade three? If yes, what are the causes?

APPENDIX 7

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS WITH THE PRINCIPALS

1. How do your teachers cope with the teaching of English reading in Grade 3?
2. What kinds of problems are experienced in the teaching of reading?
3. What are the preferred methods of teaching English as a second language in the school?
4. What resources does the school have in order to support teachers in teaching English reading skills?
5. What training is given to Grade 3 English teachers to teach English reading skills?
6. Do you have anything to add?

APPENDIX 8

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW WITH THE GRADE 3 TEACHERS

1. Do you experience problems when you teach English reading in your Grade 3 class?
2. What kinds of problems do you encounter when teaching reading?
3. What kind of training or support was provided to you in teaching English reading?
4. What methods do you use to teach English reading?
5. Apart from the prescribed English reader for your class, what other reading materials do you use in the reading lesson?
6. Do you have anything to add?

APPENDIX 9

QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW WITH THE GRADE 3 TEACHERS

1. Do you experience problems when you teach English reading in your Grade 3 class?
2. What kinds of problems do you encounter when teaching reading?
3. What kind of training or support was provided to you in teaching English reading?
4. What methods do you use to teach English reading?
5. Apart from the prescribed English reader for your class, what other reading materials do you use in the reading lesson?
6. Do you have anything to add?

APPENDIX 10

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS WITH GRADE 3 LEARNERS

1. Do you have any reading problems?
2. What kinds of problems do you experience in reading?
3. Are you a fast or slow reader?
4. Do you often do well or badly in your comprehension tests?
5. What makes you succeed in oral reading?
6. Besides your English reader, what other books or materials do you read?

APPENDIX 11

ent types of basic competency. A few learners will excel in many of them, and similarly a few learners may not be able to demonstrate many basic competencies, or a sure level of competence. The Learning Outcomes are stated in general terms in order to sum up what the overall outcome will be, at the same time allowing for the wide range of individual variations in competency profiles.

The Basic Competencies identified for this phase are important, and if not achieved by the end of Grade 4, the learner will have considerable difficulties in going on through the next phase of education. Every learner develops in his/her own way and pace, and therefore each learner's development in these basic competencies must be followed especially closely throughout the four years. If learners are not progressing in the basic competency areas during each year, more time must be given in class to reinforcing their learning through greater individual attention, using a variety of approaches, methods and materials.

During Grade 4, with the transition to English as a medium of instruction, concepts, explanations and instructions should be repeated in the first language wherever necessary to ensure that all the learners understand the concepts, and what they are to do in class and as homework. If a learner has not achieved the Basic Competencies by the end of Grade 4, s/he should be allowed to repeat Grade 4 once and be given extra attention, before going on to Grade 5.

Learning Outcomes

• Language

First Language: On completing Grade 4, the learners can express themselves well orally, read appropriate texts, and write reasonably correctly for their everyday purposes, in their mother tongue (or where mother tongue is not possible, in their locally most spoken language).

English Second Language: on completing Grade 4, the learners can understand, speak, read and write English as a Second Language well enough within a limited range to continue learning through the medium of English in the next phase.

• Mathematics

On completing Grade 4, the learners can solve simple problems in everyday contexts by adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, estimating and measuring, within a limited number range.

• Environmental Studies

On completing Grade 4, the learners can look after their own basic health and nutrition, interact positively in the social environment, and act responsibly towards the natural environment.

• Arts

On completing Grade 4, the learners can participate freely in creative activities, express themselves through art forms, and appreciate what others communicate through the arts.

• Physical Education

On completing Grade 4, the learners can participate to the best of their ability in a variety of games, sports, and physical

• Religious and Moral Education

On completing Grade 4, the learners have a basic understanding of their own beliefs, are tolerant of others', and share common positive values.

2. THE STRUCTURE OF THE LOWER PRIMARY PHASE

The table at the top of the next page provides an overview of the structure of the Lower Primary Phase.

Organisation of Learning in terms of Time Allocation

The period allocation is an indication of the overall time in a five-day timetable which the various subject areas will need under optimal circumstances. It does not imply that subjects should be rigidly timetabled or that timetabling should be done on a period-by-period basis. Rather, time should be used flexibly according to the nature of the intended learning and the tasks involved, as well as the learners' absorption in what they are doing. Also, in a more integrated thematic web approach, it is not productive to divide up time allocation between the various subjects drawn in around the theme. The important thing is that sufficient time is given for the learners to achieve the competencies in each subject area, over a term or year.

Period Allocation for the Lower Primary Phase

Subject	Grade			
	1	2	3	4
First Language	10	10	9	9
English Second Language	5	5	9	9
Mathematics	8	8	9	9
Environmental Studies	3	3	5	5
Arts	2	2	3	3
Religious and Moral Education	2	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	2	2	2
Total	32	32	39	39

The Organisation of Knowledge in the Lower Primary Phase

The revised curriculum is more streamlined than before, in order to make it more manageable. Topics and basic competencies in smaller subjects which support learning in general or in subject-specific skills, have been integrated where they logically belong in the five main areas of learning. This will ensure both that they are taught and that they occur in an appropriate context. Where there was unnecessary duplication between subjects previously, themes or topics have been placed where they primarily belong, given the rationale and

APPENDIX12

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW OF 3 PRINCIPALS FROM 3 SCHOOLS A, B AND C WITH THEIR CORRESPONDING ANSWERS

SCHOOL A: (PRINCIPAL)

Name:Edith

Interviewer: How do your teachers cope with the teaching of English reading in Grade 3?

Interviewee: Hmm I know my teachers are trying by all means hmm letting learners acquire the reading skills but there are shortcomings eeh because some of the teachers were trained long time in the 80'sand during their training they used Afrikaans Language. So by this time they are teaching in English they have to learn the English now and is a problem to them.

Interviewer: So, the problem is that the language they learn at their training is a problem?

Interviewee: Yaah because now to transfer from Afrikaans to English the pronunciation is no more the same in English.

Interviewer: If they are struggling with those problems how are they doing it?

Interviewee: Well they have a problem but as I have said they are trying by all means to get help by ask whether from the principal or the head of department or their colleagues the teachers .Yaah is just to find out to know how to eeh pronounce some of that the words that they can't so they have to ask so that they can try to help the learners.

Interviewer: What are the preferred methods of teaching English as a second language in the school?

Interviewee: Hmm yes there four of them like a textbook method is on mostly preferred because a teacher might teach a reading through a story from the textbook. Another method that we preferred is look and say method the sight words yaah eehm and the third one is a phonic. This has to do with aah reading through letters sounds for example letter “pe” from the word “pot”The teacher has to teach the phonics sounds. Then the final one method that we preferred is that all the objects in the classroom they have to be written in words next to the objects.

Interviewer: What resources does the school have in order to support the teachers in teaching English reading skills?

Interviewee: Yes, we do have first of all the textbooks itself hmm some flashcards with words, reading corners at the teacher create in the classroom; hmm photocopier is also another source because we need to prepare the teaching and learning activities so that they can be enough for all learners in the classrooms. Another one is the library where the learners may borrow books like story books and teachers can also read to prepare their own teaching materials.

Interviewer: So, you have a library in this school?

Interviewee: Yes we do have.

Interviewer: So, learners are all welcome to borrow books in the library?

Interviewee: All of them from Grade 1 they can

Interviewer: very good.

Interviewer: What training is given to Grade three teachers to teach English reading skills?

Interviewee: Yes, they do receive in-service training given and prepared by the advisory teachers at the teacher Resource Centre. And eeh these teachers are also empowered with the training at cluster level and facilitators they also given training. Given training by means of coming together with colleagues at school level they meet once per term to help each other and how to teach reading.

Interviewer: Mrs Edith! Do you have anything to add?

Interviewee: Aaah not really to ask but just to tell you about this that the parents are also playing a major role to help their children to acquire the reading skills because like learners borrow books from the library and eehm come with the books at home their parents also helping them to read and help to develop their reading skills. To the ministry I would like to tell you that the government and the ministry itself do not provide enough materials to the school because of the few budgets they allocate to the primary schools. They don't consider much the primary level , a lot of money is being provided to the secondary schools only , and the basic of learners at foundation is need to be up lifted with enough materials. If the government can provide the primary schools with enough materials for example textbooks then the teachers may be can teach effectively and uplifting their language teaching, Mathematics and other subjects.

Interviewer: Oh! That means the ministry or government is also a contributing factor to the problem that the schools have to look for their own materials? So, they don't consider the lower primary education as a foundation that need to be uplifted?

Interviewee: Yes

Interviewer: Thank you very much Mrs Edith for your time to answer my questions.

Interviewee: Thank you very much also madam.

SCHOOL B: (PRINCIPAL)

Name: Mrs Pomwene

Interviewer: How well do your teachers cope with the teaching of English reading in Grade three?

Interviewee; Yaah they teach well but the problem is the materials are not enough. Sometimes they experience many problems even posters are not there.

Interviewer: Who is to provide the materials? Is it the government or who?

Interviewee: Yes, the government, if they give something is always not enough they only give small.

Interviewer: So, the school has to try by itself?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: What is the preferred method of teaching English as a second language in the school?

Interviewee: Yaah eehm themselves they preferred the common words. From there they practice letters one by one. They teach what words learners understand, from there, teacher can determine word list with high frequenting, words for reading, for writing and for use. They teach the for example ta-te (fa-ther) that make tate (father).

Interviewer; So, they are using the syllables to teach them reading?

Interviewee: Yes, the sounds of the letters and names .From there they read and write exact words they read. That is a phonic method.

Interviewer: What resources does the school have in order to support teachers in teaching English reading skills?

Interviewee: Yaah there are no enough materials, textbooks are not enough. We have to buy some materials in bookshops like in Edumeds there we buy textbooks, teacher's guides and posters.

Interviewer: What training is given to grade three English teachers to teach reading skills?

Interviewee: Yaah different training that I know at the Teacher Resource Centre. There they have to attend a workshop on how to use teachers guide, syllabus, how to teach reading, methodology, how to use learners' book.

Interviewer: Mrs Pomwene! Do you have anything to add or say?

Interviewee: Ye, What I want to say is that the government or ministry should provide enough materials, there are no material, they should pay attention to learners' activities, textbooks, game cards flashcards, teachers' guides.

Interviewer: Thank you very much Mrs Pomwene for you time and answering my questions.

Interviewee; Thank you.

SCHOOL: C: (PRINCIPAL)

Name: Mr Eddy

Interviewer: How well do your teachers cope with the teaching of English reading in Grade three?

Interviewee: Yaah actually teaching is tough due to the fact that our learners learn in vernacular from grade one to three and they learn English as a subject. Now some of the learners they don't even know how to read in vernacular language that's why is difficult for them to know how to read in English second language. If they can know how to read their vernacular language, they can also know to read in English. That's why some teachers find it difficult to train their learners to read in English because they were also not trained in English it was in Afrikaans even the pronunciation is a problem.

Interviewer: So, the training of the language in the teaching profession of teachers and the pronunciation are the problems?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: How are they doing if there are problems?

Interviewee: Actually at the school, we have to put them together as a team for subject teaching, in that way they can help one another by planning together.

Interviewer: What is the preferred method of teaching English as a second language in the school?

Interviewee: Actually we know that the young learners they learn effectively through touching, through seeing, tasting and hearing. At least we prefer to read while observing when they have something to be touched whereby the teacher has something prepared like some pictures and cards to be read. And also preferred the games they can play letter cards or word cards so that they can learn how to read.

Interviewer: What resources does the school have in order to support teachers in teaching English reading skills?

Interviewee: Yaah any how we don't have specific resources but as a school we buy some flipcharts where teachers can write the words for the learners. Sometimes we buy eehmmmm how do you call it eehmm hard papers designed with pictures.

Interviewer: Ahaa posters with pictures or picture cards.

Interviewee: Yaah those posters with pictures the school can buy them so that teachers can display them in their classrooms to help the learners to learn.

Interviewer: What training is given to Grade three English teachers to teach English reading skills?

Interviewee: Actually some training we have them at school , some like as I say we also organize some of the workshops for the teachers but not specific for grade three but for all the lower primary phase , whereby not only looking at reading but the English as a whole in all the skills. But I found out that most of the teachers are trying.

Interviewer: That's' great.

Interviewer: Mr Eddy Do you have anything to add or to say?

Interviewee: So, actually I don't have really anything to add but what I want to say is this as a teacher, may be what the ministry should do is that they should try to train the teachers *to teach* English because most of our teachers honestly speaking they don't know how to teach English. Yeah! That's' why we have failure rate in our country is very higher. And our foundation block is not strong enough and the methodology needs to be up lifted.

Interviewer: Thank you very much Mr Eddy for your time and answering my questions.

Interviewee: Thank you very much madam.

APPENDIX 13

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS OF 3 TEACHERS FROM 3 SCHOOLS: A, B AND C WITH THEIR CORRESPONDING ANSWERS

Interviewer: Do you experience problems when you teach English reading in your Grade three class?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A; (TEACHER)

Name: (Mr Denis) Yaah I do experience some problems that some learners don't know how to read when they come to grade three because where they come from they didn't attend the kindergarten.

Interviewer: Anyone else? Yes, Mrs Rejoice

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

Name: (Mrs Rejoice) Yes I also do experience the problem which is the mother tongue because some learners do not understand English because mother tongue is the medium of instruction and English is taught as a subject and they don't understand English.

Interviewer: Yes what about you Mrs Piipawa?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

Name: (Mrs Piipawa) The learners have a problem with letter sounds, letter names, consonants and vowels.

Interviewer: Then yourself as a teacher what problems do you have Mrs Piipawa?

Interviewee:

(Mrs Piipawa): That me when a teacher I am better.

Interviewer: Do you have anything to add about problems?

Interviewee:

(All): No

Interviewer: What kind of training or support was provided to you in teaching English reading skills?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): Yes I got it at the Teacher Resource Centre for a workshop and I am given a handout on how to teach reading.

Interviewer: Yes Denis

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): Yes my colleague teaching Grade three at our school attended and highlighted the things done on the workshop on how to teach reading because some of the kids don't know how to put the letters together for example two letters to make a word.

Interviewer: What about yourself Denis? You didn't attend any training?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): No

Interviewer: Yes Mrs Rejoice

Interviewee:

(Mrs Rejoice): Yes I did attend when the syllabus and the teachers' guide were revised so that to help us to teach well.

Interviewer: What methods do you use to teach English reading?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs piipawa): Hmm I can use some words with different meaning.

Interviewer: Yes Mrs Rejoice

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): The method that I used is a narrative method was I used a story and I asked Learners questions from the story. Another method I used is a picture method. Where I put a picture and ask learners to talk what they see and match the picture with the words or sentences that give the meaning of the picture

Interviewer: Yes Denis which methods you use to teach reading?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Denis): I don't want to repeat what my colleagues have said.

Interviewer: No, it is ok you can just repeat.

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): I used word method that learners don't understand and they have to read them. I also use other learners who know how to read to teach others who do not know how to read. But at home they are also not well taken care of. I use compensatory teaching

Interviewer: You mean parents are not teaching their children to read?

Interviewee

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): Yes.

Interviewer: Anything you want to add about the methods?

Interviewee:

(All): No

Interviewer: Apart from the prescribed English reader for your class, what other reading materials do you use in the teaching of reading?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): Ok I use hmmm oifonghudaneki (newspapers) and other English books.

Interviewer: What else?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): Yaah I also use the newspapers like the Namibian, I used also different stories books, I also use our library there are different books.

Interviewer: So, you have a library at your school?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): Yes a small one.

Interviewer: How do you use the newspaper Mrs Rejoice?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): They can read and I have to ask everyone to choose his/her topic and they read to the class aloud and I ask them questions.

Interviewer: Yes Denis!

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): Yaah we can use textbooks I can go through, ask them to read aloud. At our school we also write letters to parents to contribute story books to learners to use in school, when they bring them I have to go through to check and select which ones are for their level and they have to read them in the class.

Interviewer: Yes Mrs Piipawa! You said you also use the newspaper in your class; tell us how you use it.

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): Yes when they use aah unprepared reading.

Interviewer: Is there anything to add about the materials that you use in teaching reading?

Interviewer: Yes Mrs Piipawa!

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa)'' Yes we have no enough materials in our school so that learners can learn.

Interviewer: Hmm who provide you with the materials? Is it the government or the school itself?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): Is the ministry but is not enough, the school can but is also not enough.

Interviewer: Anyone would like to add? Yes Denis

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): Yes, I think this is a problem to our school also, we don't have enough materials but this is not only the government has to provide but everyone who can afford, like the parents can also provide especially the textbooks.

Interviewer: Mrs Rejoice you have enough materials at your school?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): No we don't have enough only few. I also want the government to provide enough material for all learners.

Interviewer: So, do you have anything to say or to add? Yes, Mrs Piipawa!

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): I have a question where I want to help learners who do not know how to read because if I tell them to stay after school for remedial classes they cry. How can I help them?

Interviewer: That's a question to all of us, how can we help her? Yes Denis!

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): Like in our school, we have to write letters to parents to tell them and they have also to encourage their children the important of learning to read and when they stay we teachers should not tell them that they don't know how to read because they feel shy, low that they don't know.

Interviewer: Yes Mrs Rejoice what are you saying about that?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): I also experience the same problem but I let learners who do not know how to read to stay together with the learners who know how to read at the beginning. Then I release them one by one until they get use to.

Interviewer: So, that is a very good idea. We need to encourage learners to read not to tell them that they don't know how to read because that can discourage them. We also can motivate them by giving them educational gifts like pencils, erasers, books etc in order to give them courage.

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): Yes, thank you for the idea.

Interviewer: Anything again to add before we close? Yes Denis!

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): I also want to encourage parents to attend the parents meeting to see the books of their children's' progress especially at the beginning of the year so that we can help them.

Interviewer: I would like to thank everyone for your time and answering my questions, that was very educative.

Interviewee:

(All teachers): Thank you also.

APPENDIX 14

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW OF 3 TEACHERS FROM 3 SCHOOLS: A, B AND C WITH THEIR CORRESPONDING ANSWERS

Interviewer: Do you experience problems when you teach English reading in your Grade 3 class?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A; (TEACHER)

Name: (Mr Denis) Yaah I do experience some problems that some learners don't know how to read when they come to Grade three because where they come from they didn't attend the kindergarten.

Interviewer: Anyone else? Yes, Mrs Rejoice

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

Name: (Mrs Rejoice) Yes I also do experience the problem which is the mother tongue because some learners do not understand English because mother tongue is the medium of instruction and English is taught as a subject and they don't understand English.

Interviewer: Yes what about you Mrs Piipawa?

Interviewee: What kinds of problems do you encounter when teaching reading?

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

Name: (Mrs Piipawa) The learners have a problem with letter sounds, letter names, consonants and vowels.

Interviewer: Then yourself as a teacher what problems do you have Mrs Piipawa?

Interviewee:

(Mrs Piipawa): That me when a teacher I am better.

Interviewer: Do you have anything to add about problems?

Interviewee:

(All): No

Interviewer: What kind of training or support was provided to you in teaching English reading?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): Yes I got it at the Teacher Resource Centre for a workshop and I am given a handout on how to teach reading.

Interviewer: Yes Denis

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): Yes, my colleague teaching grade three at our school attended and highlighted the things done on the workshop on how to teach reading because some of the kids don't know how to put the letters together for example two letters to make a word.

Interviewer: What about yourself Denis? You didn't attend any training?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): No

Interviewer: Yes Mrs Rejoice

Interviewee:

(Mrs Rejoice): Yes, I did attend when the syllabus and the teachers' guide were revised so that to help us to teach well.

Interviewer: What methods do you use to teach English reading?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs piipawa): Hmm I can use some words with different meaning.

Interviewer: Yes Mrs Rejoice

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): The method that I used is a narrative method where I used a story and I asked Learners questions from the story. Another method I used is a picture method. Where I put a picture and ask learners to talk what they see and match the picture with the words or sentences that give the meaning of the picture

Interviewer: Yes Denis which methods you use to teach reading?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(MR Denis): I don't want to repeat what my colleagues have said.

Interviewer: No, it is ok you can just repeat.

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): I used word method that learners don't understand and they have to read them. I also use other learners who know how to read to teach others who do not know how to read. But at home they are also not well taken care of. I use compensatory teaching

Interviewer: You mean parents are not teaching their children to read?

Interviewee

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): Yes.

Interviewer: Anything you want to add about the methods?

Interviewee:

(All): No

Interviewer: Apart from the prescribed English reader for your class, what other reading materials do you use in the teaching of reading?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): Ok I use hmmm oifonghudaneki (newspapers) and other English books.

Interviewer: What else?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): Yaah I also use the newspapers like the Namibian, I used also different stories books, I also use our library there are different books.

Interviewer: So, you have a library at your school?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): Yes a small one.

Interviewer: How do you use the newspaper Mrs Rejoice?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): They can read and I have to ask everyone to choose his/her topic and they read to the class aloud and I ask them questions.

Interviewer: Yes Denis!

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): Yaah we can use textbooks I can go through, ask them to read aloud. At our school we also write letters to parents to contribute story books to learners to use in school, when they bring them I have to go through to check and select which ones are for their level and they have to read them in the class.

Interviewer: Yes Mrs Piipawa! You said you also use the newspaper in your class; tell us how you use it.

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): Yes when they use aah unprepared reading.

Interviewer: Is there anything to add about the materials that you use in teaching reading?

Interviewer: Yes Mrs Piipawa!

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa)'' Yes we have no enough materials in our school so that learners can learn.

Interviewer: Hmm who provide you with the materials? Is it the government or the school itself?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): Is the ministry but is not enough, the school can but is also not enough.

Interviewer: Anyone would like to add? Yes Denis

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): Yes, I think this is a problem to our school also, we don't have enough materials but this is not only the government has to provide but everyone who can afford, like the parents can also provide especially the textbooks.

Interviewer: Mrs Rejoice you have enough materials at your school?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): No we don't have enough only few. I also want the government to provide enough material for all learners.

Interviewer: So, do you have anything to say or to add? Yes, Mrs Piipawa!

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): I have a question where I want to help learners who do not know how to read because if I tell them to stay after school for remedial classes they cry. How can I help them?

Interviewer: That's a question to all of us, how can we help her? Yes Denis!

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): Like in our school, we have to write letters to parents to tell them and they have also to encourage their children the important of learning to read and when they stay we teachers should not tell them that they don't know how to read because they feel shy, low that they don't know.

Interviewer: Yes Mrs Rejoice what are you saying about that?

Interviewee:

SCHOOL B: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Rejoice): I also experience the same problem but I let learners who do not know how to read to stay together with the learners who know how to read at the beginning. Then I release them one by one until they get use to.

Interviewer: So, that is a very good idea. We need to encourage learners to read not to tell them that they don't know how to read because that can discourage them. We also can motivate them by giving them educational gifts like pencils, erasers, books etc in order to give them courage.

Interviewee:

SCHOOL C: (TEACHER)

(Mrs Piipawa): Yes, thank you for the idea.

Interviewer: Anything again to add before we close? Yes Denis!

Interviewee:

SCHOOL A: (TEACHER)

(Mr Denis): I also want to encourage parents to attend the parents meeting to see the books of their children's' progress especially at the beginning of the year so that we can help them.

Interviewer: I would like to thank everyone for your time and answering my questions, that was very educative.

Interviewee:

(All teachers): Thank you also.

APPENDIX 15

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS OF 9 LEARNERS FROM THREE SCHOOLS: A, B AND C WITH THEIR CORRESPONDING ANSWERS

SCHOOL A:

Name: Tuna

Interviewer: Do you have any reading problem in English?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: What kinds of problems do you experience in reading?

Interviewee: like when I do my studies hmm like even I am reading and I am writing a story in my English Environment book.

Interviewer: So, when you read a story sometimes you write what you read in your writing book so when you write it what will happen to what you have written?

Interviewee: Hmm the teacher marks the books; sometimes I get all the marks.

Interviewer: Are you fast or slow reader?

Interviewee: I read fast.

Interviewer: Do you often do well or badly in your comprehension test?

Interviewee: yaah yes I score well

Interviewer: What makes you succeed in oral reading?

Interviewee: Because my sister teaches me how to read.

Interviewer: When the test come what do you do so that you can pass well your test?

Interviewee: I listen to the teacher what he tell us the-the for example he told us the story then he gonna asked us the questions I hmm I listen very well. I am copying in my book what he tell us and fast write it and I do what the teacher told us

Interviewer: Beside your English reader, what other books or materials do you read?

Interviewee: I read story books, newspaper, magazines, and sometimes I go to internet and read

Interviewer: Tuna I thank you very much for answering my questions.

Interviewee: alright.

SCHOOL B:

Name: Paavo

Interviewer: Do you have any problems in Reading English?

Interviewee: Sometimes

Interviewer: Why? And what makes you have problems sometimes?

Interviewee: I don't know why?

Interviewer: But you said sometimes you have problems what are those problems

Interviewee: Sometimes you want to read so fast and when you read and you can get reading problems that you can't read so fast.

Interviewer: Is it because some words you don't know them or what?

Interviewee: Yaah sometimes you have to make sure that you understand

Interviewer: Are you a fast reader or a slow/ reader?

Interviewee: slow

Interviewer: Why?

Interviewee: Because of some problems

Interviewer: Do you often do well or badly in your comprehension test or not?

Interviewee: Sometimes.

Interviewer: Why?

Interviewee: Because sometime you go to the toilet when you come back you didn't listen more than others you don't know what the teacher said then you come in the class and you don't know what to write.

Interviewer: Besides your English reader, what other books or materials do you read?

Interviewee: Yes, English, Oshikwanyama, ependuko, Environment.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for answering my questions Tangi.

Interviewee: Ok thank you.

SCHOOL C:

Name: Niels

Interviewer: Do you have any reading problems in English?

Interviewee: No

Interviewer: How do you succeed?

Interviewee: I read and study.

Interviewer: Are you a fast reader or a slow/ reader?

Interviewee: fast.

Interviewer: Do you often do well or badly in your comprehension test?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: What makes you succeed in oral reading?

Interviewee: I hmm I listen to the teacher

Interviewer: What else?

Interviewee: Because I copy from the teacher, because the -the- the teacher gives me a rubber and write nicely my things.

Interviewer: Besides your English reader, what other books or materials do you read?

Interviewee: Day by day, story books.

Interviewer: Thank you very much Niels for answering my questions.

Interviewee: Ok.

SCHOOL A:

Name: Ben

Interviewer: Do you have any reading problems in English?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: How did you succeed in your oral reading? (Oho ningi nawa ngeyipi mokulesha Oshiingilisa?)

Interviewee: Eeh (Yes). I have no problems

Interviewer: So, you have no problems you used to do well?

Interviewee: yes

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewer: Are you a fast reader, slow/ reader?

Interviewee: slow.

Interviewer: Why do you read slow?

Interviewee: I don't know.

Interviewer: Do you often do well or badly in your comprehension test?

Interviewer: Ben! When your teacher gives you activities then you have to answer the questions to write do you pass well?

Interviewee: Yes, I do well

Interviewer: Even if I go and check your books?

Interviewee: Yes

Interviewer: What makes you to do well?

Interviewee: I used .to learn if teacher gives us a homework I used to do it.

Interviewer: Besides your English reader, what other English books or material do you read?
(kakele kembo lyoye lyo kulesha lyoshiingilisa, omambo elipipo ho lesa?)

Interviewee: Aah new friends, my father's village that's all.

Interviewer: Thank you very much Ben for answering my questions.

Interviewee: Ok.

SCHOOL B:

Name: Joyful

Interviewer: Do you have any problems in reading English?

Interviewee: No, only speaking

Interviewer: Why?

Interviewee: I don't know.

Interviewer: How do you succeed in oral reading?

Interviewee: Because I pass.

Interviewer: Are you a fast reader or slow/ reader?

Interviewee: Fast.

Interviewer: Do you often do well or badly in your comprehension test?

Interviewee: Yes I do well.

Interviewer: What makes you do well in your test?

Interviewee: I write words without eating up some letters

Interviewer: Besides your English reader, what other books or materials do you read?

Interviewee: English, Oshikwanyama.

Interviewer: Thank you very much Joyful for answering my questions.

Interviewer: Ok.

SCHOOL C:

Name: Penda

Interviewer: Do you have any reading problems in English?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: How do you succeed? (Oho ningi nawa ngeyipi ?)

Interviewee: I reading day by day English

Interviewer: Then when you read what happened?

Interviewee: I pass English.

Interviewer: Are you a fast reader or slow/reader?

Interviewee: fast.

Interviewer: Do you often do well or badly in comprehension test?

Interviewee: Yes, I do well

Interviewer: What makes you do well?

Interviewee: Because I read and I pass

Interviewer: Besides your English reader, what other books or materials do you read?

Interviewee: I forget.

Interviewer: Thank you very much Penda for answering my questions.

Interviewee: Ok.

SCHOOL A:

Name: Tangi

Interviewer: Do you have any reading problems in reading English?

Interviewee: No

Interviewer: How did you succeeded? (Oho ningi nawa nge yipi?)

Interviewee: Eeh (yes)

Interviewer: Are you a fast reader or a slow/reader?

Interviewee: yes

Interviewer: Do you often score well in comprehension tests or not? (Ohonngi nawa alushe mekonakon ile ahowe?)

Interviewee: Eeh (Yes), I score well

Interviewer: So, you used to pass well even if I go and check your books you used to pass well?

Interviewee: Yes I pass

Interviewer: What makes you succeed well in English oral test?

Interviewee: I used to listen to the teacher.

Interviewer: You listen to the teacher doing what? (Ho pwilikine komulongi shike?)

Interviewee: Eshi ta popi. (When he speaks).

Interviewer: Speaking what? (Ta popi shike?)

interviewee: Eshi tetu longo ngaha ndele tati natu pwilikine shaashi otatu ka shanga.Ame ohandi mu pwilikine (When he teach us like this then tell us to listen well because we are going to write.I listen to him).

Interviewer: Oho pwilikine nawa, nomolwasho ho piti nawa? (So,you used to listen very well and you do well because you listen. well).

Interviewee: Eeh (yes)

Interviewer: Besides your English reader, what other books or materials do you read? (Kakele kokambo kokulesha koshingilisa, omambo elipipo ho lesa?)

Interviewee: Story books, mathematics.

Interviewer: What else?

Interviewee: I forget

Interviewer: Thank you very much Tangi for answering my questions

Interviewee: Ok.

SCHOOL B:

Name: King

Interviewer: Do you have any reading problems in English?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: How do you succeed? (Oho piti nawa ngeyi pi?)

Interviewee: No

Interviewer: Are you a fast reader or slow/reader? (Oho lesa to endelele ile oho lesa kashona, ile oho nyengwa?)

Interviewee: Ondili ngoo. (I am some how)

Interviewer: Do you score well your comprehension test? (Oho piti nawa omakonakono oye ile ahowe?)

Interviewee: Eeh (yes) I score well

Interviewer: You used to pass well your tests even if I go and check you books? (oho piti nawa ngeenge onda tala momambo oye?)

Interviewee: Eeh (yes).

Interviewer: What makes you pass well in your oral reading tests? (Oshike hashi ku pitifa nawa omakonakono?)

Interviewee: Ohandi lihongo (I study).

Interviewer: How do you study? (oho lihongo ngeyipi?)

Interviewee: Ohandi shange ndele handi nyamukula omapulo. (I do write and answer the questions).

Interviewer: Besides your English reader, what other books or materials do you read? (Kakele kokambo koshiingilisha kokulesha, oho lesa omambo woshingilisha elipipo?)

Interviewee: Oshiingilisha (English).

Interviewer: Thank you very much King for answering my questions.

Interviewee: Ok.

SCHOOL C:

Name: Liisa

Interviewer: Do you have any reading problems in English?

Interviewee: Yes

Interviewer: What kind of problems do you experience in reading? (Uudju wu lipipo owo ho mono mokulesha?)

Interviewee: To study, Oshikwanyama.

Interviewer: What problems do you have when reading in English?

Interviewee: Iitwa (punctuations).

Interviewer: Are you a fast reader or slow/ reader? (Oholesha to endelele ile oholesha kashona?)

Interviewee: Kashona (slow).

Interviewer: Do you often do well in your comprehension test? (Oho ningi nawa momakonakono oye ile ahowe?)

Interviewee: Yes I do well

Interviewer: you used to pass all of them?

Interviewee: Odime ike (only some).

Interviewer: Why you don't pass well? (Omolwashike iho piti nawa?)

Interviewee: Ihandikala ndishi kutya okuna okakonakono. (I don't used to know that there is a test).

Interviewer: So, if you don't study you won't pass? (Ngeenge ino lihonga iho piti?)

Interviewee: Aye (no).

Interviewer: Besides your English reader, what other books or materials do you read? (Kakele okambo kokulesha koshiingilisha, oho lesa omambo elipipo Oshiingilisha?)

Interviewee: Okaka hatu lesa mokalasha. (The one we used to read in the class).

Interviewer: Thank you very much Liisa for answering my questions.

Interviewee: Ok.