Coping with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in Grade Two in the Foundation Phase.

By

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DECLARATION

I, RAMAANO AVHATAKALI declare that 'Coping with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in Grade Two in the foundation phase 'is my own work and that all sources used have been indicated and acknowledge by means of complete references. This dissertation submitted for the degree of masters of Education (as it appears), at The University of Venda, is my own original work and has not previously been submitted to any other institution of higher education.

ARamaano .... 5-08-2014 ....

SIGNATURE DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my late father Wilson Mpfariseni Mutavhatsindi, My late brother David Thinawanga Mutavhatsindi and my late Father in law Pastor Johannes Maanda Ramaano.The three always believed in my capability when it came to educational matters, they were so supportive. My life and achievements will always be attributed to the inspiration they put in me while they were living. Their advice to me continues to resound beyond their deaths. For all my children; this serves as a benchmark beyond which they must achieve.

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ABSTRACT

Reading is a skill which pervades many aspects of modem life and invariably, in our society, it is simply assumed that individuals can read. For children who experience difficulty with reading, the effects can be depilating in terms of their interaction with their environment. Learners with reading problems seem to fall behind in nearly all school subjects, and are likely to develop negative concepts and lose any motivation to succeed academically. There are generally many learners in classes who experience varied reading problems. Such reading problems can hinder learners' cognitive development and prevent them from reaching their full potential while expecting educators to enable them to cope in their learning.

The aim of this study was to investigate how educators cope with learners experiencing reading problems in Grade 2 Tshivenda in the Foundation Phase. The study was quantitative in nature. Foundation Phase educators teaching Grade 2 were selected using purposive sampling procedure. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Results show that at some point in their development, children's reading problems are likely to have a negative impact on their academic achievement. The consequences of this negatively affect their schoolwork and their self-esteem. If not addressed, these difficulties go with the children into their adult lives and impact on the types of positions and roles which they are able to take up as adults. The results suggest that these children not only need, but also deserve, every bit of help possible to improve their reading skills.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

Reading is an everyday, ordinary task for most people living in today's world. According to Inglis, Thomson and Macdonald (2000:57) "reading is one of the most powerful ways of receiving ideas, information and stories". Reading helps us understand our world by enabling us to learn about the past and plan for our future. When learners learn to read, they must read with understanding, because without understanding, reading would serve no purpose. A person, who can read well, can function more effectively in everyday activities and can satisfy his emotional and intellectual needs more effectively (Grove & Hauptfleish, 1982).

According to Mottram, Fakir and Reid (2011), reading is a process of active engagement with a text in the pursuit of meaning. When we live every day, we require reading in our daily tasks, including the simple tasks of banking, following directions, reading road signs and even shopping. Without reading, life becomes more complicated. In order to be able to process and understand information from computers, books, newspapers, magazines, Emails, text messages on cell phones and the internet, one needs to have reading skills. In all these activities, reading as a form of entertainment requires more effort, more imagination and requires longer periods of time. If reading problems exists in our schools today, and no remedies for these problems are taken into consideration, the question arises what the academic performance of these children would look like.

Oberholzer (2005) indicates that reading is a prerequisite skill for effective and efficient functioning in today's modern world. It is taught to children from the earliest stages in their formal schooling and is a fundamental building block for further learning .Christine (1992) states that it is important to understand and acknowledge the main reading problems in the class so that the educator knows how to help those learners.Karel (2009) points out that there are many types of learning problems, of which reading is one, but these fall into two broad categories: developmental and academic learning problems. Karel (2009) explains that developmental learning problems affect the prerequisite skills that a child needs to learn, and academic learning problems, usually not obvious until a child enters school, affect the ability to perform specific skills, for example, reading, spelling, handwriting, arithmetic calculation and arithmetic reasoning. Karel (2009) also states that all learners with reading problems have significant areas where they fail to learn, despite their adequate overall intelligence. Their level of academic achievement gets progressively worse as their grade level increases, unless they get special help.

According to Dean (1996), the first task in dealing with children with reading problems is to observe and to question what they are to do and what they know. Dean (1996) adds that educators need to make some general observations of such things as the kind of activity in which a child works best and is most confident with his or her ability to attend to what is happening, and how well he or she can concentrate, because without observation the educator would not know how to help those learners with reading problems.

Gardener (2007) states that reading problems can be caused by various factors, including birth defects that affect the brain, genetic problems and drug or alcohol use by the mother during pregnancy. Gardener (2007) explains further that reading problems are not caused by factors such as cultural or language differences or poor schooling conditions. Authors such as Derbyshire (1991), distinguish the following factors in this regard: factors which can result in some injury to the central nervous system before, during or after birth, certain biochemical and metabolic factors and environmental factors which may entail an inherent tendency towards slow development and functioning of the central nervous system. Furthermore, Lerner

(1993) states the fact that someone struggles to read, to express ideas in writing, or to remember new facts does not mean that person has reading problems. Some studies indicate that learners who do not learn to read fall substantially behind their classmates in reading skills during the first four years of school (Goodland, 1984). Goodland (1984) indicates that such early reading failure is one of the causes most often cited for referral to special education, later grade retention, academic failure, dropping out and even lack of adult employability. Teachers in the Foundation Phase are responsible for laying a strong academic base which is very critical for future educational developments, as stated in the new curriculum Mottrametal. (2011). Based on the background given above, the problem can now be stated.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Learners experience various difficulties that may hinder their academic development and may even prevent them from reaching their full potential. According to Oberholzer (2005), in the Foundation Phase, a number of learners had been referred to the psychologists for assessment of reading problems. Most of the referrals had taken place during the first, second and third grade. This was done after a number of remediation sessions had been given to those learners, without improvement. Some learners can write and copy things from the chalkboard but forget very easily what is learned. They struggle to write the correct answer from what they have learnt because they cannot read these questions, and such learners end up repeating the same class time and again. Educators struggle in coping with teaching learners who experience reading problems, however, from the search in Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), the level of challenges they experience in coping with learners who have reading problems in Tshivenda have not been established.

1.3 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this study was to investigate how educators cope with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in Grade 2 in the Foundation Phase.

Secondary aims of this study are to:

1.3.1 Investigate how reading problems in Tshivenda affect learners' academic performance in the Foundation Phase.

1.3.2 Establish the relationship between reading problems in Tshivenda and learners' academic performance.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided this study.

1.4.1. How do educators cope with Grade 2 learners who experience reading problems in Tshivenda in the Foundation Phase?

1.4.2. How does reading problems experienced by learners in Tshivenda in the Foundation Phase classes affect their academic performance?

1.4.3. What is the relationship between learners' reading problems in Tshivenda and their academic performance?

1.5. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The following concepts are defined for the purpose of this study.

1.5.1. Foundation Phase.

The foundation phase is the first stage or level in the South African National Department of Education (NDoE: 1997).The foundation phase is a new approach to learning for children from 3-7 years of age. It combines grade O to grade 3.In my opinion, the foundation phase provides the support system for all learning.

1.5.2. Academic performance

Oberholzer (2005) refers to the term 'academic performance' within the school environment to the intellectual and scholarly aspects of learning, were traditionally, requires that the children meet the promotional requirements of the particular institution at which they are learning (for example, passing examinations, tests, projects, assignments) and at the end of the academic year being promoted to the next grade level.

According to Bannatyne, (1973), academic performance refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to themby their educators.Academic performance is the ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate your knowledge verbally or down on paper.
For the purpose of this study, I define academic performance as the requirements that learner's meet the promotional requirements of the particular institution at which they are learning (for example, passing examinations, tests, projects, assignments) and at the end of the academic year, being promoted to the next grade level.

1.5.3. Reading

Reber, (1995:638) defines reading as "the process by which information is extracted from written or printed text". He continues to say that this process is extremely complex and is dependent on two critical aspects, firstly, the written format of the word and the reader's ability to decode the phonetic relationships between the letters on the page and the sounds of the spoken language and secondly, a semantic/syntactic process that has to do with the meaning of the words which are being pronounced.According to Christine (1992), states that reading involves skills that the learners must learn for themselves and that the measure of the educator's success is how far the learner learn to do without his help.

1.5.4. Reading problems

According to Oberholzer (2005), the term 'reading problems' refers to problems associated with reading, whether it is with the mechanical skill of the reading process or the comprehension of what is read. Within the context of this study, 'reading disabilities' were identified by the child's teacher who found that the child was experiencing difficulty with reading accuracy, speed and comprehension. In each case it was felt that the children were not reading at a level expected of their respective chronological ages, given that there was no evidence of either significant cognitive retardation or obvious neurological pathology. Their difficulty with reading was causing them to fall behind in terms of reading requirements within the classroom.

1.5.5. Learner

For the purpose of this study, I define 'learner' as a child registered at the school to attend classes in order to learn something.

1.6. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section describes the research design and methodology that was followed in this study. Rodolo (2008) in her recent study defines research methodology as a study of a research process in all its broadness and complexity. The various methods and techniques that are employed, the rationale that underlines the use of such methods, the limitations of each technique, the role of assumptions and presumptions in selecting methods and techniques, the influence of methodological preference of the type of data analysis employed and the subsequent interpretation of findings. According to Punch (2005), research methodology of a study denotes the value of selected measurement instruments and reasoning behind the selection.

1.6.1 Research design

According to Creswell (1994), research design refer's to the plan according to which relevant data is to be collected. This study was quantitative in nature. Questionnaires were used to collect data from the educators of the sampled schools.

1.6.2 Methodology

The following methodology was followed in collecting data for this study:

1.6.2.1. Population

According to Graziano and Raulin (1993) a population is a group of subjects from which a sample is drawn. Bless and Smith (1995) define a population as the entire set of objects and events or group of people, which is the objects of research and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics. The population of this study consisted of educators teaching Tshivenda in foundation phase Grade 2 in schools in the Dzondo Circuit of the Limpopo Province.

1.6.2.2. Sample.

Goddard and Melville (1996) define a sample as a number of individuals selected from a population of a study to represent a large group from which it will be drawn. Bless and Smith (1995) describes a sample as the subset of the whole portion which is the actually investigated by a researcher and whose characteristics will be generalized to the entire population. The purpose of selecting a sample is to present a population from which we seek information (Gay &Airasian, 2000). Sampling is the basis of all research (Gorard, 2001). A sample consists of individuals selected from a larger group and should be representative of the larger group or wider population (Wellington, 2000; Lankshear and Knobel, 2004). In this study, purposive sampling was used to select 156 educators who teach Tshivenda in the foundation phase in Grade 2.

1.6.2.3. Instrument

The instrument that was used to collect quantitative data from respondents in this study was a questionnaire which consists of two sections: Section A was biographical information and Section B consists of twenty five (25) statements regarding academic performance in relation toreading problemsindicated by making a mark in the appropriate block. The questionnaire was in the form of multiple choice answers. The questionnaire was pre-tested with five educators in foundation phase, who were requested to give their comment on the clarity of the items before delivered to the majority of respondents.

1.6.2.4. Data collecting procedure

According to Grinnell (1993), the data collection method is a procedure which specifies the techniques to be employed, or instruments to be utilized and activities to be conducted in the implementation of research. The collection of data was through a self-administered questionnaire. A letter was written to the district senior manager to request for permission to conduct research from sampling schools.

1.7. DATA ANALYSIS

Kerlinger (1973) defines data analysis as the categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarizing of data to obtain answers to research question, while Reid &Smith (1981) indicate that data analysis is a means of finding and explaining meaning of data presented. Henning (2004), states that analysis is the ability to present the understanding contained in the data. The data collected was analysed through a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme. The results were presented with the help of tables showing frequencies and frequency percentages. The results of the questionnaire serve as a tool that supports the process by reminding educators of reading problems learners experienced.

1.8. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study provides information about how educators cope with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in grade 2 in the foundation phase. These studies hopefully also serve to stimulate research into the learning processes which can help children with reading problems in Tshivenda in the foundation phase. Department of education, educators and learners themselves are the one who will benefit from this study.

1.9. DELIMITATION

This study was conducted in the Dzondo circuit of the Vuwani area in the Limpopo Province with educators who teach Tshivenda in the foundation phase in public primary schools.

1.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I requested permission to collect data from the district senior manager and school managers. I wrote a letter to the school managers to request permission to distribute the questionnaires to educators in grade 2. I pre-test five questionnaires to educators in the circuit to check whether respondents understand and complete the questionnaires. After pre-testing, I distribute questionnaires to schools, and request educators who teach Tshivenda in the foundation phase grade 2 to complete them within a week and hand them over to the school managers from whom I collect them. The respondents were not expected to identify themselves in any manner when completing the questionnaire. They were informed about their rights to withdraw if they do not want to participate.

1.11. STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH CHAPTERS

The structure of this thesis consists of five chapters. These are given below.

Chapter one , provides an introduction, a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, explain the research question, the hypothesis, the definition of concepts, as well as the sample, the instrument, the data collecting procedure, data analysis, and the delimitation, ethical considerations and significance of the study.

Chapter two presents a review of the relevant literature. This covers the reading problems, types, normal developmental stages, means of dealing with reading disabilities and causes.

Chapter three focus on the empirical research, which includes the research, hypothesis, discussions on the method of research, the questionnaire as a research tool, its administration and the sampling method.

Chapter four presents the data collected, which will be analysed and interpreted through a computer, using frequencies and percentages with the help of tables.

Chapter five presents conclusions and outline limitations of the study and make recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides the literature reviewed for this study.

2.1 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Reading problems have been noted to be the most important single cause of school failure (Strang, 1996).Difficulties in reading actually serves as a common denominator for the lack of success in many other areas of the curriculum. Wallace (1979) indicates that in dealing with this big area of study, a number of developmental reading skills and stages that serve as a focus for understanding children and youth with specific reading problems disabilities need to be outlined.

Oberholzer (2005) indicates that in our current education system, much emphasis is placed on the skills of reading and writing. As a result, academic success is largely dependent on literacy skills. Oberholzer (2005) adds that children who experience difficulty with reading and writing are likely to find it harder to reach their academic potential at school. It may be assumed by teachers that the child arriving in grade 1 has the requisite language and literacy skills needed to cope in an academic setting. For many children, however, this may not be the case.

According to Dockrell and Macshane (1992), reading involves two fundamental processes: the recognition of words, which is usually called decoding, and the comprehension of what is recognized. They explain that this process of reading operates on many different levels of representation, such as letters, words, phrases, sentences and larger units of texts. Reading difficulties typically involve a failure either to recognize or to comprehend written materials. Reading difficulties hamper educational progress in a wide variety of areas because reading is the access route to a wide range of information (Oakhill & Garnham, 1988). Oakhill and Garnham (1988) also indicate that failure to read in the early school years effectively locks the child out of much of the remainder of the school curriculum.

If the child has reading problems, it will hamper the child's arithmetical progress. Rutter, Tizard and Whitmore (1970) explain that reading difficulties will also adversely affect the acquisition of knowledge beyond the curriculum. Dockrell and Macshane (1992) state that during the development of reading, learners read both by eye and by ear. When they read by eye alone, they recognize words directly, and when they read by ear, they transform the visual input into a phonological representation.

Lerner (1993) claims that learners with reading problems find it difficult to recognize letters and words and to interpret information that is presented visually or auditorily.He adds that many people with dyslexia are intelligent in other ways, for example, they may have very strong mathematical skills.

Richeck, Caldwell, Jennings and Lerner (2002) state that, society suffers when citizens cannot read adequately. People with low reading levels comprise many of the unemployed, high school dropouts, the poor, and those convicted of crimes. They also state that the problems of our schools, the growth of poverty and the loss of family values all show some association with poor reading. These authors add that although people of a few generations ago could cope well in business and society without the ability to read adequately, nowadays it is almost impossible. People need an education and must be able to read at a certain level in order to obtain jobs and to fulfil a number of daily tasks.

Landsberg (2005) states that to support a learner who experiences problems in reading, it is useful to determine his reading level as it enables the teacher to choose suitable reading material. Landsberg (2005) adds that learners with oral reading problems read word-by-word, with incorrect phrasing and poor pronunciation. Such readers omit words in sentences or even paragraphs. They may invert (for example, they read 'me' as 'we'), and reverse letters visually (for example, they read 'dog' as 'bog'), and insert substitute words or guess at words, move their lips, point with a finger and move their heads while reading.

Shanker and Ekwall (1998) outline reading problems in pre-reading skills; that is from preschool to grade 2, where in phonemic awareness; children show little interest in the reading process. They cannot remember the phonemes and do not even try to do any school writing. In letter-sound relations, learners are not interested in the letter-sound relations as they do not know or understand the letters or the sounds. These authors also outline word identification, decoding of words and understanding words and ideas in Grade 1 to 4.

According to Goldstein and Goldstein (1998), difficulties in learning could also result in lowered performance on intelligence or aptitude measures. Learners' poor performances in reading are due to limitations in speed and fluency, rather than poor word identification skills. Furthermore, those children with neuropsychological impairments that may affect their daily classroom performance, such as a low speed of processing would not qualify for special services.

Ross (1977) writes that in every classroom in the land or within the school environment, there sits at least one child who is obviously demonstrably bright, but who fails to keep up with the class in one or more subjects. Ross also indicates that these children differ from one another in many ways. Some are restless, some fight with other children, some are easily distracted from what they are doing and some have trouble paying attention. However, they have one thing in common: they show a discrepancy between the school performance expected of them on the basis of their potential and their actual performance.

2.2. DEVELOPMENTAL READING SKILLS.

In recent years, the dominant approach to reading instruction has been that of teaching a set of specific reading skills (Lerner, 1979).The complex behaviour called reading has been viewed as consisting of a number of separate and identifiable behaviours, or skills, which teachers can describe and around which they can organize instruction.

According to Barrett (1972) most reading skills can be classified as either word analysis skills or comprehension skills. He indicates that word analysis skills are sually grouped into the categories of configuration, structural analysis, context clues, and phonic analysis. The three levels of comprehension skills are most often classified as literal, interpretive and critical. Kaluger and Kolson (1978) suggest that children gradually learn to read as they learn sequential skills and complete one stage of development and move into another. They add that each succeeding stage of development then builds on preceding stages.

2.2.1. Stage. 1. Development of readiness for beginning reading.

According to Carrillo (1976), this stage serves as a foundational phase for subsequent growth in reading and it usually occurs from birth to age 6. Carrillo (1976) also points out that maturation and learning from experience contribute to the development of the readiness skills required for reading success. Material and teaching approaches tend to be informal at this stage, but gradually become more formalized as the child progresses.

Kaluger and Kolson (1978) indicate that this stage begins when children are 4 or 5 years old and start to learn their letters. They indicate further that it is completed when children achieve fluency in 'Easy Readers'; that is, books written with a controlled vocabulary and simple sentences. Furthermore, most students achieve the goals of Stage 1 at some point during second grade, although a few children complete this stage as early as mid-first grade or as late as mid-third grade.

For most of Stage 1, children's central focus is learning to decode. This means learning the alphabet and the sounds that letters make, learning to distinguish sounds in speech, and learning to sound out words (Kaluger & Kolson, 1978). As this process gets underway, children also have to focus on reading connected text; that is, reading Easy Readers at the right level of difficulty in order to develop the facility and automat city that leads to fluency. As fluency develops, children's attention starts to shift toward meaning, or comprehension of the stories they are reading.

Carrillo (1976) suggests that underlying and supporting the entire stage is the regular experience of hearing stories read aloud. He states that reading aloud to children provides them with the experience of absorption in a story and identification with characters, something they will not be able to do on their own until they attain a high level of fluency, several years later. The result is that the foundation for a lifelong relationship with books is established before a child can read a single word. Furthermore, he adds that developing a strong and positive relationship with books is its own reward; it also provides the motivation for tackling the challenging task of learning to read.

2.2.2. Stage 2. Initial stage in learning to read.

Lerner (1976) states that, this stage is usually characterized by instruction in sound, symbol relationships and in decoding words. He explains that the emphases at this stage is most often on building a basic sight vocabulary, developing confidence in the reading situation, and beginning instruction in word analysis skills. Lerner (1976) suggests that the greatest number of reading innovations and changes have occurred at this stage.

2.2.3. Stage 3. Rapid developmental of reading skills.

A thorough grounding in basic reading habits and skills is usually provided at this stage. Carrillo (1976) places major emphasis on the extension of a sight vocabulary, improvement of reading comprehension, building competency in independent word analysis, building interest in reading and encouraging the beginnings of wider reading in a variety of materials. According to Morris (2003), this stage begins when children achieve fluency in Easy Readers, usually at some point during second grade. By the time children enter Stage 2, some have already made the transition from oral to silent reading, and the rest will make that transition in the upcoming year. Stage3 is completed when children achieve fluency in children's novels, usually in third or fourth grade, although some students complete this stage as early as second grade or as late as fifth.Talan (2003) explains that as fluency continues to develop in this stage, primarily as a result of reading practice, comprehension becomes both an instructional and a developmental focus. Talan (2003) adds that as children achieve fluency in chapter books, both the level of reading skill and the story substance are sufficient to support the experience of identification and absorption that until now was only available when being read to.

2.2.4. Stage 4.Wide reading stage.

The emphasis in this stage, which typically occurs during the intermediate grades, is, according to Barrett (1972), on independent reading with continuing expansion of vocabulary, building further comprehension skills, and constant review of word analysis skills. This period is also marked by the usage of a wider range of reading methods and materials.

Morris (2003) states that, this stage begins when children achieve fluency in children's novels, usually in third or fourth grade. Morris (2003) explains that the focus of this stage of reading development is to do a great deal of reading in children's novels at gradually increasing levels of difficulty, a process which enables a child to develop the levels of fluency and comprehension required to support identification and absorption. Furthermore the achievement of identification and absorption at the core of the reading process; in other words, at a level of automatist, is the capstone of all of the early stages and sub stages of reading development. It is also the foundation of all subsequent reading development.

When students read with identification and absorption, the process is both transparent for the author's vision and intrinsically pleasurable (Talan, 2003). It is transparent in the sense that the text evokes in the reader's mind an accurate representation of the story. Talan (2003) continues to explain that no skill deficit or process flaw interferes with the accuracy of the reader's experience. The process is intrinsically pleasurable because it is an effortless experience of participation. No sense of labour or struggle interferes with the flow of experience.

The development of high levels of fluency and comprehension does more than provide the basis for the habit of reading for pleasure. This achievement is also the basis for all subsequent reading development, including reading for concepts and information. The same capabilities of fluency and comprehension that result in absorption in literature also enable the relatively automatic and accurate flow of understanding while reading for information in non-fiction

2.2.5. Stage 5.Refinement of reading.

According to Lerner (1976) this stage mostly occurs in junior and senior high school, and is characterized by advanced comprehension and study skills, along with increased proficiency in reading for different purposes at varying rates. Morris (2003) indicates that children undergo transformational physical, emotional, and cognitive changes starting in middle school and continuing through high school and into adulthood. Morris (2003) indicates further that these changes bring in their wake a new cognitive capability that first appears in middle school and that continues to grow throughout the secondary and postsecondary years. Talan (2003) states that, this capability is critical consciousness, the ability to stand back and reflect on one's own experience, to think abstractly and analytically. Furthermore when brought to bear on the process of reading, this capability allows students to enter a new stage of reading development in which a new, critical dimension of experience is added to the basic substrata of experiences that are already present as a result of previous developments in reading ability.

2.3. FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE READING

According to Oberholzer (2005), when investigating reading and its role in academic achievement, it is pertinent to consider the various factors which could influence reading. She indicates further that the reader does not exist within a vacuum and the process of reading consists of more than just a reader reading a written text. Consideration will now be given to other role players.

2.3.1. Language

Oberholzer (2005) indicates that a child uses language to express himself and he acquires knowledge and information through language, be it written or spoken. She explains that his level of language proficiency will, therefore, strongly influence his potential to learn because it is a prerequisite for his ability to read. Furthermore, she indicates that in a multilingual country such as South Africa, this has obvious ramifications. Many of the children in our schools are being taught in a language which is not their mother tongue. If the language of instruction is not the child's mother tongue then the child is less able to use the richness and depth of mother-tongue knowledge to enhance the reading experience.

Pretorius (2000) points out that there are many black pupils in our schools who have the necessary decoding skills to read an English text, but whose reading comprehension skills are poorly developed. Unfortunately, this has negative implications for learning, because a reader's vocabulary needs to have been developed to the point where he or she will be able to understand what is being read.

2.3.2. Physical and intellectual development

Grove and Hauptfleish (1982:4) state that the child "... should be physically capable of making progress at school". In other words, his hearing and sight should be such that he is able to discriminate between different sounds and letters and words. Similarly, his speech needs to be sufficiently developed to reproduce the sounds in the language to formulate the words. Intellectually, the child needs to be capable of both auditory and visual perception. Grove and Hauptfleish (1982) note that, visually, the child needs to be able to compare, classify and identify similarities and differences. On the auditory level he needs to be able to hear differences and similarities of sounds, letters and words.

2.3.3. Emotional development

Grove and Hauptfleish (1982:5) state that "... for reading readiness, self-confidence and emotional adaptability are essential". If forced to read prematurely, the child may well develop a negative attitude towards reading. They will start to associate feelings of anxiety and fear with reading as well as feelings of inability and inadequacy. These authors also indicate that the challenge for teachers and parents alike is to generate a love and enjoyment of reading in children so that it becomes an activity associated with pleasure and emotional security. The role of attitude and motivation cannot be undermined.

2.3.4. Socio-cultural background

Oberholzer (2005) states that, the home environment of the reader, is likely to have an influence on his reading ability as well as on his attitude towards reading. The attitude of parents towards reading can play a significant role. Oberholzer (2005) adds that if parents themselves read, if they make age-appropriate reading material available to their children and if they are actively involved in and supportive of their child's reading, it is likely that the child will develop a positive attitude toward reading. Trelease (1990) indicates that parents who read aloud to their children on a daily basis, help improve the child's reading abilities as well as his imagination. In a similar vein, a home environment that is stable, secure and supportive makes it easier for the child to invest energy into an activity such as reading. Trelease (1990) points out that a child from an emotionally deprived disintegrated and possibly abusive home environment, on the other hand, is going to be more concerned with survival and emotional security. Furthermore, investing attention and energy into reading may well seem foreign to such a child, if not impossible. In her research on early literacy skills in African-American children, Washington (2001) notes that children from homes characterised by poverty, lack of stability, inadequate nutrition and medical care and inconsistency in care, are subject to levels of environmental stress that can affect their functioning. As a result, they enter school with decreased world knowledge, which in turn can affect their language skills and influence their experience with books.

The child's cultural experience can also influence his reading behaviour. For example, many of the black children in our schools have a largely oral cultural heritage, as opposed to a reading cultural heritage. Pretorius (2000) notes that these children are very seldom exposed to storybook reading and have very little experience of the printed word before starting their formal schooling. Books are not an integral part of their lives and this can make learning to read a difficult task. Nel (1995) notes that cultural factors can also influence gender expectations with regards to reading. In some cultures, boys are expected to engage in non-academicactivities, to be active and less attentive. The result is that less focus is placed on reading and reading difficulties than would possibly be the case with girls.

2.3.5. Educational factors.

According to Oberholzer (2005), even though school is usually the place where most children learn to read, it needs to be acknowledged that the school environment itself can also hinder a child's reading development. Oberholzer (2005) also indicates that teachers who are critical, judgmental, sarcastic and rejecting can have a strong negative influence on the motivation of the children in their classes. If a struggling reader is criticised for slow pace or inaccuracy or in articulation, that child will be less likely to keep trying for fear of further ridicule. Oberholzer (2005) adds that under these circumstances it is much easier for the child to simply give up and take on the label of unable to read. The path of least resistance may well be the one which feels safer and less traumatic. Sadly, the label often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy and these children then come to expect their reading behaviour to be a 'failure'. It can also happen that the teacher provides the child with reading material which is too difficult or too advanced or, in some cases, too easy. In both cases, the reader ends up frustrated and/or bored.

French (1986) points out that the interest of the reader in the reading material and his motivation to complete a task, are important factors in the reading process. If the material is interesting and age- and contextually-appropriate, it is more likely that the reader will engage with it and be encouraged to read further. Given the pressures in many of the classrooms in our country today, it does happen that a reader experiencing difficulty simply does not receive the extra individual help, which he or she may need. Oberholzer (2005) also adds that with high teacher to pupil ratios in some classrooms and with under qualified teachers in others, it is very often physically impossible for the teacher to render the assistance which is needed. Consequently, the struggling reader continues to struggle.

2.3.6. A modern, technology-driven world

Oberholzer (2005) notes that today's children live in a world of instant information and seemingly limitless entertainment. Much of the entertainment is in the form of television, television games, computer games, handheld arcade-type games and so on. Although there is nothing intrinsically 'wrong' with any of these, they all require very little effort on the part of the individual. Oberholzer (2005) also indicates that any effort entailed is usually the simple pushing of buttons. In contrast to this, reading as a form of entertainment requires more effort, more imagination and requires longer periods of time. Oberholzer (2005)pointsoutthat for these reasons, it will not be appealing to many members of this 'instant generation'. It will not be the first choice of many young people and for many, reading becomes an activity that one does only under duress and only for school purposes. Research has also shown that from a physiological viewpoint, watching television can have a negative effect on reading because the two activities make demands on differing brain functions). The skill needed to watch television (namely, the formation of global visual representations) is more effortless than the more complex visual and cognitive processes involved in reading.

2.3.7. Identifying the Causes of Reading Disability

According to Goldsworthy (1996), reading disabilities are diagnosed up to five times more frequently in boys than girls, although some sources claim that this figure is misleading because boys are more likely to be screened for learning disabilities due to their higher incidence of disruptive behaviour, which draws the attention of educators and other professionals. Goldsworthy (1996) also indicates that most reading disabilities were formerly grouped together under the term 'dyslexia', which has largely fallen out of favour with educators and psychologists because of confusion over widespread and inconsistent use of the term in both broader and narrower contexts. Lipson and Wixson (1991) state that, a developmental reading disorder is distinct from alexia, which is the term for reading difficulties that arecaused by brain damage from injury or disease. However, neurological studies of alexia have helped researchers better understand reading disabilities.

Manzo (1993) states that reading disabilities have been classified as either dyskinetic, dysponetic or mixed. He also indicates that children with the dyskinetic type are able to sound out individual letters phonetically but have trouble identifying patterns of letters when they are grouped together. Furthermore, by comparison, dysphonic readers have difficulty relating letters to sounds, so their spelling is totally chaotic. Children with mixed reading disabilities have both the dyskinetic and dysphonic types of reading disorder.

Lipson and Wixson (1991) indicate that a developmental reading disorder is often identified in the first grade, when reading instruction begins. Children with reading disabilities lag behind their peers in reading progress and have serious spelling problems. These authors add that such children tend to have trouble writing (many have poor handwriting), have an unusually small vocabulary and favour activities that do not require verbal skills. Also, like children with other learning disabilities, those with a developmental reading disorder often earn poor grades and dislike reading, homework and school in general. Manzo (1993) adds that even at the preschool stage, there are certain problems, such as trouble sounding out words and difficulty understanding words or concepts, which may foreshadow a reading disability.

Manzo (1993) identifies factors that have been found to contribute to the success of treatment; these include early intervention (elementary rather than secondary school), an IQ over 90, instruction by qualified reading specialists and a total of over 50 hours of instruction. Goldsworthy (1996) states that, the outcome of treatment for reading disabilities varies, depending on the quality of the remedial reading program, the severity of the disorder and the motivation andintelligence of the child. He claims that when given the proper remedial help, some children with reading disabilities have been able to successfully complete high school, college and even graduate school, while others have been forced to limit their vocational choices to fields that do not demand strong literacy skills.

2.4. CAUSES OF CHILD READING PROBLEMS

The following causes of child reading problems have been identified in literature:

2.4.1. Analysis

According to Brown, Aylward, and Keogh (1992), causes of child reading problems stem from a variety of issues, many of which are not easily diagnosed or understood. This site indicates that effective reading instruction is built on a foundation which recognizes that reading ability is determined by multiple factors that may not all be explained adequately, but they all contribute to the overall success of the reader. Brown et. al.also states that adequate initial reading instruction requires that children use reading to obtain meaning from print, have frequent and intensive opportunities to read, are exposed to frequent, regular spelling-sound relationships, learn about the nature of the alphabetic writing system, and understand the structure of spoken words.

2.4.2. Processing

Causes of child reading problems include the difficulty that children have in processing language beyond the initial levels of comprehension (Brown et. al.1992). Factors include having a working understanding of how sounds are represented alphabetically, sufficient practice in reading to achieve fluency with different kinds of texts, sufficient background knowledge and vocabulary to render written texts meaningful and interesting, control over procedures for monitoring comprehension and repairing misunderstandings, and continued interest and motivation to read for a variety of purposes. Goldsworthy (1996) states that reading skills are acquired in a relatively predictable way by children who have normal or above average language skills if they have had experiences in early childhood that fostered motivation and provided exposure to literacy in use. They also need to have information about the nature of print through opportunities to learn letters and to recognize the internal structure of spoken words, as well as explanations about the contrasting nature of spoken and written language.

2.4.3. Remedial action

Manzo (1993) states that causes of child reading problems include three potential stumbling blocks that are known to throw children off course on the journey to skilled reading. The first obstacle, which arises at the outset of reading acquisition, is difficulty understanding and using the alphabetic principle. This is the idea that written spellings systematically represent spoken words. According to Brown et. al. 1992, it is hard to comprehend connected text if word recognition is inaccurate orburdensome. The second obstacle is a failure to transfer the comprehension skills of spoken language to reading and to acquire new strategies that may be specifically needed for reading. The third obstacle to reading magnifies the first two. It is the absence or loss of an initial motivation to read or failure to develop a mature appreciation of the rewards of reading.

2.5. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING PROBLEMS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Oberholzer (2005) states that, our current education system places much emphasis on the skills of reading and writing. As a result, academic success is largely dependent on literacy skills. Children who experience difficulty with reading are likely to find it harder to reach their academic potential at school. She indicates further that it may be assumed by teachers that the child arriving in grade 1 has the requisite language and literacy skills needed to cope in an academic setting. For many children, however, this may not be the case. Children who read effectively have access to numerous sources of written material which, in turn, enables them to increase their general knowledge, their vocabulary and their language skills (Elley, 1991). Research has shown that students with low reading ability are generally low academic achievers (Daneman, 1991; Gardner, 1991; Stanovich, 2000).

2.5.1. Reading comprehension and academic performance

According to Oberholzer (2005) comprehension has to do with the meaning that is gained from reading. It is through this process that the reader learns. Mache and Pretorius (2003), describe the different skills and knowledge that a reader needs in order to develop reading comprehension. These include the ability to link information in a text, the ability to read between the lines and make connections between things described in the text, the ability to use background knowledge about the world and people in order to understand and contextualise the text, the ability to distinguish between the main ideas and those which are of secondary importance, the ability to draw conclusions about what has been read and the ability to make predictions about what is being read.

Pretorius (2000) states that reading and, more specifically, reading comprehension, is a complex task. A good reader will master this process with ease and with little conscious effort. This is not the case for children who experience difficulty reading. For them, comprehension will be problematic and this will negatively impact on their ability to learn from what they are reading. Pretorius (2000:35) states that, "Students need to be good readers in order to be able to 'read to learn'". She states that reading is important for learning because it gives readers independent access to information in an information-driven society and that it is also a means of constructing meaning and acquiring new knowledge. In her research amongst undergraduate students at Unisa, Pretorius (2000) found that these students had distressingly low reading levels and slow reading speeds and that the better the students were at making inferences while reading, the better they performed academically. Her findings show evidence for differences in reading ability in relation to academic performance.

In their research amongst a group of studentsenrolled for a mathematics bridging course, Buhrmann and Pretorius (2002:204), found that, "Weak readers are only achieving reading comprehension levels of 50"/0 or less, which effectively means that half of what they read they don't properly understand, with dire consequences for their academic performance."

2.5.2. Reading skills and achievement in mathematics

Pretorius (2002) notes that while the importance of reading in the language, social and human science disciplines seems undisputed, it is generally assumed that success in mathematics and science is more reliant on logical-deductive and numerical skills. As a result, the role of reading in solving mathematical problems and understanding mathematical concepts tends to be neglected. Pretorius (2002) undertook research amongst a group of medical students and occupational therapy students at Medunsa and in a separate study Buhlmann& Pretorius (2002) undertook research amongst a group of students enrolled for a mathematics bridging course. Results showed that reading ability was a strong indicator of academic performance for both groups of students. Although reading ability does not guarantee success, lack of reading ability serves as a barrier to effective mathematics performance.

2.5.3. Language skills, reading and academic performance

Washington (2001) notes that strong oral vocabulary skills, (both expressive andreceptive), are critical to reading and to general academic success. Vocabularysupports reading development and both vocabulary breadth and vocabulary depth are significant. Vocabulary breadth has to do with the number of words which a child knows. This can be easily targeted at the pre-school age and intervention at this early stage can be effective in helping children acquire words.

Pretorius (2002) found that children who experience difficulty with the structural aspects or form of language often have delayed language milestones. These children have difficulty understanding the grammar of language and when they reach school level, will generally struggle with the mechanics of reading and spelling. Their processing speed may be slower as well as their reading speed. They also tend to find it difficult to retain in their short-term memory what they have read. This has obvious negative implications for their ability to learn and achieve academically. According to Pretorius (2002), these are the children who are at risk of suffering from dyslexia. Vocabulary depth has to do with knowledge of multiple word meanings, contextual constraints and relational vocabulary knowledge (Carlisle, Fleming & Gudbransen, 2000).Carlisle et al. (2000) found that acquiring deep knowledge of word meanings will influence a child's academic success.

Without this depth of vocabulary, children may experience difficulty grasping topical academic content.Stanovich (2000), describes a group of children who experience difficulty with the meaning and social use of language. These are children who on the face of it appear to have age-appropriate language, but on closer investigation, it becomes evident that their language lacks richness in terms of meaning. They may use rote language and stereotypical phrases but have difficulty with comprehension and, with reading comprehension. Snowling (2000) found that children who are poor to comprehend also tend to experience a decline in reading accuracy in the later stages of reading development. They were also found to experience difficulty with higher-level text comprehension as they experience difficulty integrating information from different aspects of the text and making inferences.

2.5.4. Cognitive skills. Reading and academic performance

Effective reading can indeed promote learning, whereas difficulty with reading can hamper learning. In this regard, Stanovich (1986) describes the 'Matthew effect', this term describes the phenomenon whereby students who experience difficulty reading, read less than good readers. Because they read less, the above-mentioned cognitive processing mechanisms are exercised less and so become less developed than in good readers. Although the role of language in reading has to be considered, Pretorius (2000: 10) states that, "language is a necessary though not a sufficient condition for skilful reading. She adds that reading also involves massive amounts of cognitive processing, including such skills as inferring, understanding, integrating, evaluating information, recognising inconsistencies, monitoring the comprehension process and using repair strategies when needed, adding new knowledge gained from the text to existing knowledge bases in memory. With such a heavy cognitive loading, it is no real surprise that research, generally, shows a robust relationship between reading and academic success.

Oberholzer (2005) states that, for the struggling readers, reading becomes a task characterised by effort and frustration which leads to lowered motivation to read which, in turn, leads to lesser amounts of reading practise and decreased amounts of exposure to print. The result of this tends to be that parents and teachers have lower expectations of these children. A negative spiral develops whereby the unskilled readers read less and less and so become increasingly unable to cope with the reading demands made of them in the learning context. Their access to information is impaired, their information-processing skills are hindered and their knowledge accumulates more slowly than that of good readers. According to

Pretorius (2000), the Matthew effects in reading may spill over into the realm of academic performance with many students continuing to perform poorly and never fully developing linguistically, cognitively, textually or in terms of subject related knowledge.

2.5.5. Reading instruction and academic performance

Pretorius (2000) notes that in South African schools generally, reading skills are taught and developed in the first four grades - usually with a strong emphasis on the development of decoding skills. Thereafter, reading as a skill tends to be taken for granted. No further formal reading instruction is carried out and it is assumed that now that the children have learnt to read, they will be able to read to learn.

However, Pretorius (2000) points out that the transition from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn', does not automatically take place with all children. The result is that for these children, reading develops at a sub-optimal level. As they progress to higher grades, so the texts to which the children are exposed become expository in nature, rather than narrative, and the content becomes increasingly more removed from their frame of reference. It becomes increasingly difficult for these readers to access, comprehend and integrate what they are expected to be reading, in order to be able to learn. In a school system where much emphasis is placed on written text (generally in the form of text books and worksheets), sub-optimal readers are likely to find it difficult to reach their academic potential.

2.6. READING REMEDIATION AND READING PROGRAMMES

This sub-section discusses the remediation and reading programmes which may assist learners in the problems experienced in reading.

2.6.1. Remedial reading instruction

For many children experiencing difficulty with reading, reading remediation or a reading programme might become an option. Grove and Hauptfleish (1982) note that, in every classroom there will be some children with reading problems. They believe that children with minor reading problems can receive corrective instruction from the class teacher but when the reading problems are of a more serious nature, the child should receive remedial aid outside of the classroom situation. The earlier such intervention takes place, the better.

Gardner (1986) describes remedial teaching as differing from normal teaching in that the emphasis is firstly on the background of the child and on underlying causes of the specific problem. The resulting remedial programme needs to be specific, realistic and attainable. It should concentrate on one or two areas at a time as opposed to many, as this is more likely to ensure success. Foorman and Torgesen (2001) state that children at risk for reading failure acquire reading skills more slowly than other children but they need to acquire the same set of skills in order to become good readers. They describe the difference between remedial instruction and classroom instruction as lying in the manner in which the instruction is given; "specifically, instruction for children who have difficulties learning to read must be more explicit, and comprehensive, more intensive, and more supportive than the instruction required by the majority of children" (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001: 206).

2.6.2. The Element of Reading Instruction.

The element of reading instruction has several strategies of assisting learners with reading problems. These are discussed in this sub-section.

2.6.2.1. Reading one story together in a group.

Heath (2008) states that group reading is a way of developing and improving learners reading skills by giving them supported practice in reading. Heath (2008) adds that the groups may be of mixed ability, which means each group includes strong, average and weaker readers. Alternatively, the groups may be of same ability readers using text at the appropriate reading level. In group reading, the text is first read aloud, with each group member taking a turn to read a page or a paragraph. When the groups have finished reading the text, they discuss the book together and complete some after-reading activities. According to Kramer (1999), reading groups should not be too large, as this creates risks that some learners, such as the quicker ones or shy learners' do not read. For a group to read productively as a team, it must have rules of starting together and ending at the same time. Kramer (1999) adds that this will also promote fast reading. Effective reading should provide learners to build independence, self discipline, self confidence, persistence and other qualities.

According to Heath (2008), group reading allows learners to practice reading regularly, in a structured situation ongoing practice is essential to improving reading skills. Heath (2008) explains that ongoing practice is essential to improving reading as it provides learners with reading practice in which they are supported by their peers. It provides a preferable alternative to reading around the class. It gives a number of learners a chance to read at the same time. It can model good reading strategies and behaviours. Because groups are usually of mixed ability, stronger readers can model reading strategies and provide support for weaker readers. It allows learners to discuss and explore text meanings with their peers.

Heath (2008) indicates that such discussion builds reading comprehension by encouraging learners to vocalize and share their thoughts, questions and opinions about a text. Heath (2008) adds that it develops learner's reading, speaking and listening skills as group members read, discuss and work with texts. The opportunity to do this in a non-threatening, peer supported environment is especially important in additional language classes. It develops learners reading skills through practice (such as, fluency and comprehension). It develops learners' abilities to co-operate and work together in a group.

2.6.2.2. Reading a book aloud.

According to Huck and Kuhn (1961), some books are more appropriate than others for reading aloud. The teacher should not select books that the children in the groups are reading avidly. Learners must choose books that will stretch their imaginations, extend interests and develop appreciation of finger writing, in addition to upgrading their taste in literature. Huck and Kuhn (1961) explain that reading aloud requires skills; it is not just an activity to fill time or give information. In the classroom, children should be seated close to the teacher, so that may see the pictures easily and enjoy the twinkle in the teacher's eye.

Heath (2008) explains that reading aloud is a whole class activity as the teacher reads a text aloud to the learners. The method aims to develop a love and enjoyment of reading as well as develop vocabulary. A range of text types can be used for reading aloud, including stories, poems, and pages from a non-fiction book, a short article, review or a letter in a magazine or newspaper. Heath (2008) explains that texts used for reading aloud should be at a slightly higher level so that learnerscanread independently. Reading aloud is most effective when done regularly throughout the year. Reading aloud can be done in any language.

Heath (2008) explains that if you want your learners to love reading enough to enjoy doing so in their spare time, the best thing you can do is to read to them as often as possible. She adds that reading aloud helps learners become better readers by developing their skills, developing their language skills, increasing their vocabulary, developing skills in reading for meaning, developing their world knowledge as stories are set in different places and are about different sorts of people in different circumstances, introducing them to the style of written language and developing thinking skills, such as prediction and sequencing.

According to Heath (2008), Reading aloud motivates learners to read themselves by demonstrating the pleasure of reading. It develops learner speaking, listening and general language skills. It develops learner's concentration skills. It gives learners practice in thinking skills like sequencing, understanding cause and effect, problem solving and predicting. It allows learners to access and enjoy text that may be slightly above their own reading level.

2.6.2.3. Reading Fluently

Students who struggle with reading, often exhibit difficulty reading accurately and quickly. Adams (1990) states that, students who cannot read fluently have to apply more of their cognitive process to decoding words rather than to read words quickly and comprehensive text. Interventions such as repeated reading, peer tutoring and previewing can be used to improve reading fluency.

2.6.2.4. Comprehension and Vocabulary development

According to Riley (1996), reading comprehension is a complex skill that can be enhanced through the use if strategies before, during and after reading text. Riley (1996)explains that students reading benefits from using strategies to activate their prior knowledge, monitor understanding self questions, distinguish between the main idea and supporting details and summarize what they have read. Vocabulary knowledge is necessary for reading comprehension. Students with limited vocabularies have difficulty with reading and comprehension

2.6.2.5. Independent Reading

Heath (2008) indicates that independent reading takes place when learners read a text by themselves at their reading level. The focus is on reading fluently and reading for meaning. Learners can read slightly by themselves, or read to a parent or reading partner. The key to successful independent reading is providing the right books for the right learner.

According to Heath (2008), learners do not learn to read independently in the first three years at school as it very difficult for them to ever catch up. Since reading underpins all learning, they need to master reading from the beginning of their schooling in order not to be disadvantaged in higher grades at school and beyond. She explains that independent reading is the only way to develop reading fluency and stamina. It encourages reading for meaning. It develops reading skills through practice. Independent reading improves learners' ability in all subjects. It helps to develop language skills. Furthermore, it helps learners become life-long learners. Independent reading is the best way to increase knowledge of the world beyond the learner's immediate environment. It helps teachers cope with the range of reading abilities in a class as each learner can read and progress at his or her own pace.

2.6.2.6. Guided Reading

According to Heath (2008), guided reading is a time when a teacher works with a small group of learners who read at the same level. She explains that the teacher helps learners to read and understand a text, using the reading skills and strategies that they have already learnt. Guided reading takes about 20 minutes; it takes place while the rest of the class is busy with independent reading and writing activities. In foundation phase, the learner should read with a different group of learners every day, so that each group has a guided reading lesson at least once in a two week cycle. Additional times should be found for remedial groups, for example, before or after school.Heath (2008) claims that guided reading is an important method, because it gives the teacher an opportunity to listen to each learner read, helpslearners to read more fluently, helps learners read with better understanding and helps learners learn to read independently. Heath (2008) adds that guided reading helps learners apply reading skills and strategies that they have been taught during shared reading, or in word-and-sentence level work. It checks on learners' reading progress and encourages and praises learners as they learn and apply new reading skills.

2.6.2.7. Shared Reading

According to Heath (2008), reading is a whole class activity, where the teacher and learners share a complete text, such as a story. The focus is on modelling and teaching reading skills, especially reading for meaning and comprehension of the text as a whole. With younger learners, shared reading uses enlarged texts such as 'Big Books'. Heath (2008) adds that the print must be big enough for all the learners to see each word clearly. The teacher introduces the text to the class and then reads at a natural pace, pointing below each line of text as they read. Learners follow and, as they become more confident, they join in.

According to Heath (2008), shared reading is an effective way to introduce learners of all ages to unfamiliar texts, and to focus on reading for meaning and enjoyment. Heath (2008) continues to explain that this method provides many opportunities for the explicit teaching of comprehension, because the teacher can control the reading pace and discuss the meaning of the text as a whole. Shared reading engages the whole class because all the learners can see the print and pictures. It allows one to model how an effective reader reacts, for example, how to use punctuation read with expression and use the correct introduction.

Heath (2008) suggests that shared reading allows one to demonstrate important reading strategies, such as predicting what a text will be about, confirming that what one is teaching is making sense, using picture cues, slightly above the learners' own reading level. It moves learners to higher levels of reading by providing an important bridge between reading aloud to learners and independent reading by learners.

2.7. TYPES OF READING PROBLEMS

Wallace (1979) lists some issues that contribute to some of the reading problems encountered by learners. He explains that it is important to be aware of such problems so that specialist help can be called in when certain problems are diagnosed. Some examples are illustrated below.

2.7.1. Eye-hand co-ordination.

South African Teachers (2011) indicate that learners without good eye-hand co-ordination are not able to do simple activities where the hand has to follow what the eyes see. Eye-hand co-ordination influences reading, as the hand does what the eye sees.

2.7.2. Spatial relationships.

These learners are not able to perceive themselves or other objects, in relation to each other. They do not realise where something is in relation to its surrounding is. This can lead to barriers, such as rotating or reversing letters in reading (South African Teachers, 2011).

2.7.3. Auditory Discrimination.

According to Wallace (1979), one of the major characteristics of children with auditory disturbances in reading, is the inability to differentiate between phonemic sounds. Children with disturbances in this area would be unable to identify the word that began with the" sounds among a list of words read aloud. South African Teachers (2011) adds that this creates difficulties in learning new words and results in inaccuracies in calculations, spelling and spoken language, and incorrect behaviour in general. Wallace (1979) claims that one of the most noteworthy characteristics of a child with auditory discrimination problems, is his or her inability to tell whether two words read aloud are the same or different, for example, 'tank'-vs-'sank', 'man'-vs-'mat', or 'car'-vs-'can',. Rhyming is another confusing activity for some children with auditory discrimination problems, since it requires the ability to perceive auditory similarities among words.

Wallace (1979) adds that the confusion that results from auditory discrimination disturbances differs among children. He adds that some children experience difficulties with certain sounds, for example, /t/s. Spache and Spache (1977) report that skill in auditory discrimination was the best single predictor amongst a group of skills that were studied for predicting first grade reading success.

2.7.4. Sounds Blending.

According to Kirk and Kirk (1971), a child will encounter reading problems if sounds cannot be synthesized into words, even if the child knows all the sounds. Sounds blending are the ability to synthesize sounds into a complete word. They indicate that children with this difficulty are unable to blend /m/a/t/ into the word mat. The three phonemes of this word remain as separate sounds. They indicate further that difficulties in sound blending often occur when undue emphasis is placed upon speech sounds and when these sounds are learned in isolation. Some children have learned to separate speech sounds so distinctly that it is almost impossible for them to synthesize the sounds into words. Sound–blending activities for many reading-disabled children will not resemble traditional instructional approaches. Jordan (1977) suggests a highly structured method, emphasizing key-word patterns and regular word forms. Bannatyne (1973) asserts that blending and other such basic skills should become fully automatic so that the child can concentrate on communication aspects, rather than on the coding factors, in the process. Emphasison blending syllables, using words in a meaningful context and some over learning of important patterns seem to be the keys to remediation various sounds-blending deficits.

2.7.5. Memory Skills.

Children with memory disturbances experience difficulty in recalling information that has been learned. According to Chalfant and Scheffelin (1969), memory skills inreading include the ability to retain impressions or traces of visual and auditory stimuli, make comparisons with past auditory and visual experiences and store and retrieve grapheme-phoneme correspondences. They also indicate that the memory disturbances of many learning disabled children are associated with various visual or auditory process. Auditory memory problems may affect a child's ability to remember letter sounds and later blend these sounds into a word. Chalfant and Scheffelin (1969) also add that children who are unable to recall the image of the letter 'p', for example, are encountering retrieval problems. The memory for this letter is dependent upon adequate storage.

The role of attention among problems has been noted by a number of writers (Johnson and Myklebust, 1967; Malmquist, 1958).Some have suggested that failure on many tasks may be due to attention deficits rather than to lack of ability for task. South African Teachers (2011) add that those learners with visual and auditory memory problems are not able to remember instructions, words or what they have read.

2.7.6. Visual Problems

Many children with visual problems are unable to discriminate visually between various letters or words. According to Wallace and McLaughlin (1979), the child with difficulties in this area might be confused by letters with similar configurations, for example, 'h-n,''l–j' or 'v-w'. They add that other children with visual discrimination problems are unable to distinguish visually among words. Furthermore, the inability to match various sizes, shapes or objects is indicative of discrimination problems. Landsberg (2005), adds that visual discrimination enables a learner to differentiate symbols and words that almost look alike, such as'o' and 'g', or '3' and '8'.Bernice (1991) adds that visual processing deficits play a role in reading problems. Bernice (1991) indicates that clinical observations indicating that a disabled reader seems to confuse similar looking at letters and words in their reading and writing suggests that in comparison with normal readers, they may have some underlying difficulties in basic visual perception.

Willows, Kershne rand Corcos (1986),indicates that problems in visual perception include missing subtle differences in shapes, reversing letters or numbers, skipping words, skipping lines, misperceiving depth or distance, or having problems with eye–hand coordination. Professionals may refer to the work of the eyes as "visual processing." Visual perception can affect gross and fine motor skills, reading comprehension, and math. According to Willows, Kershner and Corcos (1986), visual memory process is when the child remembers the letters and groups of letters that characterize the spelling patterns and words of the language. These authors continue to explain that children should also recognise the letters for writing and spelling which means an individual must retain a record of them in memory and have easy access to that stored information.

Craik and Lockhart (1972) indicate that after visual information has passed from the very brief visual persistence level to a short-term memory storage level, the information must be processed further in long-term memory, if it is to be retained for later recognition and recall.The second type is reproduction from visual memory. According to Vellutino, Steger, Moyer, Hardin's and Niles (1977).in learning to read and write, the child must attend to and remember the visual information in the symbols to recognize them for reading and reproduce them for writing. Vellutino and his colleague investigated the possibility of visual memory differences between disabled and normal readers Vellutino, et al. (1977) concluded that poor readers performed as well as normal in short- and long-term memory of Hebrew to both groups.

According to Vellutino, et al. (1977) Short-sightedness is a refractive eye condition. Refractive eye conditions occur when problems with the eye's structure affect how light enters the eye. Most people are born slightly long-sighted where close objects appear blurred. This is because at birth the eyes have not grown to their full length. Children are able to "accommodate", which means they can overcome the long-sightedness. After the eyes have grown to their full length (by around eight years of age), the sight is normal. This is known as emmetropia.However, in short-sightedness, the eyes keep growing and become too long from front to back. This means that light doesn't reach the light-sensitive tissue (retina) at the back of the eye. Instead, the light rays focus in front of the retina, resulting in distant objects appearing blurred. Unlike long-sightedness, it isn't possible to overcome short-sightedness.

According to Wallace and McLaughlin (1979), one of the major characteristics of children with auditory disturbances in reading is the inability to differentiate that the ability to distinguish similarities and differences among words is also closely associated with this skill. Wallace and McLaughlin (1979) also found that children with disturbances in this area would be unable to identify the word that began with the 's', sound amongst a list of words read aloud. Similarly, the auditory differences between 'beg' and 'bag', 'pit' and 'pet', or 'pin' and 'pen', would be difficult for these children to distinguish. Wallace and McLaughlin (1979) also indicate that rhythm is another confusing activity for some children with auditory discrimination problems, since it requires the ability to perceive auditory similarities among words. Gillie's pie and Johnson (1974) also add that auditory discrimination refers to the ability to hear similar and differences between and among two or more sounds. This is also important for learning various phonic skills.

According to Landsberg (2005), auditory figure-ground identification is the ability to give attention to a specific conversation while other people are involved in other conversations in the same room. Learners, who are not able to ignore other incoming auditory stimuli, have problems hearing what others say. Furthermore, Landsberg (2005) adds that these learners also experience attention deficits, as they listen to people talking outside, or to a bird singing in a tree while the teacher is explaining concepts to the class. Wallace (1979) defines auditory perception as the ability to select pertinent sounds out of the environment. He explains that it is important to differentiate auditory perception from auditory acuity, which is an individual ability to receive sounds physiologically. He explains that a child with auditory perceptual difficulties may hear perfectly well, but still be unable to interpret what is heard correctly. Children with this disturbance may be unable to associate what is heard with the sound, to blend isolated sounds into words or to discriminate between whereas other children may be unable to make any sense of what they hear or they have short or long term auditory memory deficits.

According to Lerner (1993), short term memory is a temporary storage facility. Lerner indicates that in short term memory, the individual becomes very consciously aware of information. He adds that when a person thinks of a new problem, the new information replaces the old information in working, short term memory. The old information decays and is lost or it is placed into long term store. Lerner (1993) lists some of the strategies that can extend the time that information stays in short-term memory as a rehearsal or repetition of the information. For example, when you look up a telephone number, repeating the number may help you to remember it long enough to dial it. Grouping the information is when you remember group information that is easier than isolated bits of information, organising information is when you relate the parts to each other and making the information meaningful is when you make information meaningful by linking it to something you already know that is prior knowledge.

According to Klein (1987), long term memory is the permanent memory storage where learner's learn and retain information for a long period of time and that information must be transferred from short term to long term memory. Klein (1987) explains that the problem that people face in long term memory is not storage, but retrieval; that is, how to recall or remember information stored in long term memory. She explains further that in the computer analogy, when one wishes to work on a saved file, the file from long term storage must be loaded onto the desktop .Lerner (1993) names the two types of long term memory as episodic and semantic. Episodic memories are described as images of events in one's life. For example, where one's memory is triggered by the sound of merry-go-round. Semantic memories consist of the storage of general knowledge, language, concepts and generalisation.

Scruggs and Mastropieri (1991) discuss the strategies that could help with the retrieval of information in long term memory. They describe these as organizing schemes, using prior knowledge, concept mapping and key words. The organizing schemes strategy makes it easier to recall from long term memory using prior knowledge, the information received, interpreted and related to other knowledge. Concepts mapping makes related ideas more meaningful and easier to retrieve. The key word is a mnemonic system in which you link the word you want to remember with something that is familiar to you (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1991).

According to Kephart (1971), normal classroom activities make greater demands upon fine motor co-ordination than any other activity. He points out that the highly precise movement of the fingers and hands in colouring, drawing, copying and writing, make very heavy co-ordination demands upon the child. He adds that the learning disability child with fine motor deficits will often have trouble cutting, fastening snaps or stringing beads. Wallace and Machoughlin (1979) also indicate that most beginning writing skills depend upon adequate fine motor ability. They explain that as the child progresses, he may be unable to copy from the chalkboard, trace stencils, colour within an outline or print various letters.

Richek, Caldnell, Jennings and Lerner (2002) state that society suffers when citizens cannot read adequately. People with low reading levels compromise many of the unemployed high school dropouts, the poor and those convicted of crimes. The problems of our schools, the growth of poverty and the loss of family values all show some association with poor reading. Richek et al. (2002) add that although people of a few generations ago could cope well in business and society without the ability to read adequately, nowadays it is almost impossible. People need education and must be able to read at a certain level to obtain jobs and fulfil a number of daily tasks.

The actual art of writing involves a number of very distinct skills, including the ability to keep one idea in mind to formulate the idea in words, to plan the correct graphic form for each letter and word to correctly manipulate the writing instrument and to have sufficient visual and motor memory (Lerner, 1993). Lerner indicates that it is no wonder that many learning disability students intensely dislike written language activities and avoid them whenever possible. Wallace and Machoughlin (1979) also indicate state that there are three areas of written language in which disturbances occur most frequently: are handwriting, as it is the most concrete of all the basic academic skills, spelling, as many children are unable to use handwriting skills because they have not mastered a number of prewriting skills and written expression. The formation of various letters causes difficulty for many learning disabled children.

2.7.7. Letter and Word Reversal.

Wallace and McLoughlin (1979) write that a widely discussed characteristic of children with reading disabilities is the tendency of many children to read some letters and words backwards, rotated or inverted. They continue to explain that single letters, such as b, d, p, q, n, u, m, and w, are among the letter symbols which are often read upside down or backwards. Learning disabled children are also observed reversing a whole word, for example, 'saw' for 'was'. Wallace and McLoughlin (1979) add that it is not unusual for preschool and primary age youngsters to reverse various letters as reading instruction is introduced. The child with learning problems will probably reverse more letters and words over a longer period of time than younger children reverse as part of a developmental process.

2.7.8. Word Analysis Skills.

According to Wallace and McLoughlin (1979), one of the most important skills for learning to read adequately is the ability to analyse words effectively. They explain that adequate word analysis skills are usually judged by the versatility of techniques utilized by the reader. Among the many word analysis techniques available, phonics is probably the most widely used technique. However, structural analysis, configuration, picture clues, sight vocabulary and contextual analysis should also be used by the efficient reader. Wallace and McLoughlin (1979) also refer to structural analysis as the identification of words by using words parts such as prefixes, suffixes, root word and infections.

Heilman (1977) believes that these word analysis approaches are not all of equal value in learning to read. He indicates that some methods have only limited value, while other techniques may be used over a period of time. Brueckner and Bond (1955) advise that words should be analysed only when a child is unable to recognize a word by sight. They emphasize the necessity of flexibility in word analysis, so that if one method does not work, other approaches may be utilized. They also indicate that the simultaneous use of a variety of analysis techniques should be the goal for all reading disabled children.

2.7.9. Sight Words.

Wallace and McLoughlin (1979) refer to sight words as the words which a reader can recognize. Some words appear over and over again in basic reading material, for example, 'said', 'you' and 'all'. Wallace and McLoughlin (1979) state that, the ability to recognize these words immediately facilitate early achievement in reading. Other words do not conform to common phonic generalizations, for example, 'should', 'were' and 'eight'. The child who is unable to recognize some words at sight will be severely limited in reading. Heilman (1977) suggests that the child may develop many unfortunate reading habits, including wild guessing, very slow reading, substituting words and constantly losing the place. Some reading disabled children have difficulty in learning sight words, due to visual memory problems.

2.7.10. Literal Comprehension Skills.

Johnson (1974) states that children with literal comprehension difficulties might find it difficult to locate or recall specific reading passages which describe a person, place or thing. The difficulties that many reading disabled children encounter in words meaning. Many literal comprehension difficulties arise from the inability to understand various words which are associated with repeated attempts to decode various words. Many children have difficulties differentiating various meaning of words. Some children do not know word meanings because they have not been exposed to various experiences, such as books people and places. Gillespie and Johnson (1974) indicate that many children are unable to separate the myriad of details in some reading passages from the central theme of the selection. The basic idea of the reading passage is lost. Sometimes undue emphasise upon facts and details will be associated with this problem.

2.7.11. Interpretive Comprehension Skills.

According to Wallace and McLoughlin (1979) interpretive comprehension involves those skills which go beyond the printed page, including critical judgements. Many learning disabled children have Comprehension disturbances, because of cognitive deficits. Some children have a difficult enough time merely reading a short passage. In addition, Spache and Spache (1979) indicate that the slow reading of these children focuses attention on word recognition and other mechanical aspects, with consequent loss of retention of the ideas being expressed.

2.7.12. Critical Reading Skills.

Critical reading is a type of comprehension which involves value judgements based on the attitudes and experiences of the reader (Spache & Spache, 1979).It is usually considered the highest level of comprehension when the reader analyses and evaluates the reading material. Spache and Spache (1979) add that some skills include under critical reading include judging accuracy, drawing conclusions, distinguishing between facts and opinion.

Kaluger and Kolson (1978) suggest that the reader must engage the material in a dialogue at the critical reading level in which he compares the printed material with other material. They explain that critical reading is an area of growth that is often overlooked by many teachers of reading disabled children. The development of critical reading skills is dependent upon literal and interpretive comprehension, and difficulties with either of these skills will certainly affect the degree of critical reading growth.

2.7.13 Copying disability

According to Wallace and McLoughlin (1979), like all learning problems, difficulties in writing can be devastating to a child's education and self-esteem. As children progress through school, they are increasingly expected to express what they know about many different subjects through writing. If a child fails to develop certain basic skills, he will be unable to write with the speed and fluency required to excel as these demands increase. Indeed, for a child struggling with a writing problem, the writing process itself interferes with learning. Students faced with such difficult odds have trouble staying motivated. Writing problems rarely occur in isolation, and improvements in writing go hand in hand with the development of other non-writing-specific skills. Thus, a problem with the development in one of these areas is likely to interfere with a child's progress as a writer.

According to Burns, (1992), looking for patterns trains the mind to search out and discover the similarities that bind seemingly unrelated information together in a whole. Burns also indicate further that a child who expects things to 'make sense' looks for the sense in things and from this sense develops understanding. Furthermore a child who does not see patterns often does not expect things to make sense and sees all events as discrete, separate, and unrelated. Children in the primary grades develop an awareness of patterns in their environment. Those who are successful in mathematics expand this awareness into understanding and apply it to learning about the number system. Children who do not look for patterns as a means of understanding and learning mathematics often find mathematics to be quite difficult. Thus, it is critical in the early grades to establish an early predisposition to looking for patterns, creating patterns, and extending patterns.

Polacco (1988) add that children should recognize, construct and extend patterns with pattern blocks, cubes, toothpicks, beans, buttons and other concrete objects. Children in kindergarten can recognize patterns in motion, colour, designs, sound, rhythm, music, position, sizes, and quantities. They are very aware of sound and rhythm, and can clap out patterns that repeat, such as clap-clap-clap-pause, clap-clap-clap-pause, etc.Polacco also indicates that they can sit in a circle and wear collared hats which make a pattern, such as red-white-blue, red-white-blue. One child can walk around the circle and tap successive children in an arm-shoulder-head pattern. The teacher may ask the class who the next person to be tapped on the head would be if the pattern were to be continued.

In addition to repeating patternsPolacco comments that, students should have experiences with expanding patterns. They can indicate such a pattern by using motion: skip-jump-turn around, skip-jump-jump-turn around, skip-jump-jump-jump-turn around, and so on. Songs are excellent examples of repetition of melody or of words, as well as of rhythmic patterns. Burns (1992) indicates that children's literature abounds with stories which rely on rhythm, rhyming, repetition and sequencing. As students move on to first and second grade, they should start to create their own patterns and develop pictorial and symbolic representations of those patterns. The transition will be from working with patterns using physical objects to using pictures, letters, and geometric figures in two and three dimensions, and then to using symbols, such as words and numbers, to represent patterns.

2.7.14. Stuttering.

According to Andrews, Craig, Feyer, Hoddinott, Howie, and Neilson, (1983) teachers working with very young children who stutter realize that many tend to be late in passing their speech and language developmental milestones. These children show a three times greater risk of speech sound errors than nonstutterers. In addition, reports of delayed language development are found more frequently in the case histories of children who stutter. More stuttering occurs on the first sound of the first word in a sentence, longer words, words that carry more meaning, and words that are used infrequently (Andrews et al., 1983).

Starkweather, Gottwald, and Halfond, (1990) state that the frequency and severity of stuttering varies from moment to moment and situation to situation. Children are more likely to stutter when talking with a partner who speaks much faster than they do; using long complex sentences; attempting less familiar vocabulary; talking to a nonattentive listener; speaking in front of a class; or when they are tired or excited. Initially children who stutter are no different intellectually or in personality from children who do not stutter. However, they also indicate that as stuttering persists or becomes more severe, it is not uncommon for a child to become socially withdrawn, shy, or anxious. These are reactions to the disorder rather than causal factors. Nevertheless, these reactions can make the problem worse.

2.8. THE EVALUATION OF READING PROBLEMS

Hammill and Bartel (1982) suggest a checklist for evaluation of reading problems. They indicate that the teacher should be fully conversant with the different symptoms of reading problems. They also indicate that if the teacher keeps a comprehensive list of such problems, it is very easy to record the child's reading errors on various occasions. They suggest that the checklist contain the following details: general matters, reading aloud and reading comprehension.

2.8.1. General matters.

According to Hammill and Bartel (1982), the checklist for general matters includes when the child points to the word he is reading, holds the book too close or too far away from his face, avoids reading tasks, seems very tense when he has to read, fidgets a great deal, closes one eye when he reads or turns his head noticeably when he reads.

2.8.2. Reading aloud

According to Kapp (1991) the checklist for learners with reading aloud problems should contain the following details: the learner reads slowly and word-for-word, reads very hurriedly, ignores punctuation, struggles with the pronunciation of words, inserts words, omits words, unfamiliar words are sounded out, guesses at unfamiliar words, reverses parts of words, reads hesitantly or repeats words and parts of sentences.

2.8.3. Reading comprehension

According to Hammill and Bartel (1982), and Kapp (1991), the checklist for should include: where learners cannot remember facts, cannot draw conclusions, cannot interpret metaphorical language, have a poor understanding of the meaning of words, or answer comprehension questions in a very roundabout way, without reaching the essence of the words.

2.9. CONCLUSION.

In the literature in general, definitions of reading acknowledge the importance of two skill components that is the ability to decode the written word and make sense of the written symbols on the page and, secondly, the ability to comprehend and attach meaning to the words that have been decoded. Both are critical elements in effective reading. However, they play a differing role at the various stages of reading development. In the earlier years when the child is learning to read, both decoding and comprehension play an equally important role in the reading process. Later, once the child has mastered the mechanics of reading, comprehension plays a more significant role in effective reading. Reading is viewed as an interactive process between the written word and the reader's knowledge and experience.

A closer look at the reading process itself revealed certain prerequisite skills, which include word recognition, decoding and comprehension. These skills are heavily weighted in terms of cognitive requirements and the literature is in agreement that reading is a deeply complex process. Acknowledgement is also given to other factors which influence the reading process. These include, amongst others, the reader's language proficiency, physical and intellectual development, emotional development and socio-cultural background. The review of the literature revealed a generally strong positive relationship between reading ability and academic performance.

The greater an individual's reading ability, the stronger his academic performance and the better his chances of reaching his academic potential. The literature generally indicates that reading remediation given to struggling readers is of benefit in improving their reading skills. The literature indicated a relationship between reading ability and academic performance, and the intent of this investigation was to examine the nature of this relationship within a specific context. The following chapter will give attention to the research design and methodology which was used to carry out the investigation.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, literature around learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in the foundation phase was discussed. This chapter focuses onresearch design and methodology and techniques on how this research was conducted. A research design indicates the structure and procedures that were followed to answer research question.

3.2. THE AIM OF THE STUDY

Educators are faced with the challenge of enabling learners to read fluently in Foundation Phase. Learners are also failing to read effectively. As a teacher in the Foundation Phase, I have experienced a multiplicity of challenges in the teaching and learning situation; one of which is the inability to accurately identify reading problems experienced by learners. Many a times, it has been difficult to say with certainty which phenomenon is linked to educational challengesfor example, in language development, reading, writing, attention, perception andsocial relationships. The further down the grades that one teaches, the more difficult it is to identify reading problems. These reading problems also impact on the development of some learners.

In my interactions with colleagues, I have observed that some teachers, more often than not, have labelled and still continue to label learners who experience reading problems as slow learners, mental retards, behaviourally disordered, crippled, emotionally disturbed and so forth. Teachers view and understand reading problems differently and in most cases, incorrectly. These differences in understanding and labelling learners inaccurately warrant teachers to acquire basic theoretical knowledge and practical skills to identify reading problemsInformal discussions with other teachers in the Foundation Phase about reading problems revealed that there are several challenges that teachers experience whenattempting to identify reading problems. At face value, it is noticeable that many teachers lack the necessary knowledge, skills and tools to identifyreading problems. All these problems made me to investigate how educators cope with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in Grade 2 in the Foundation Phase. The primary aim of this study was to investigate how educators cope with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in Grade 2 in the Foundation Phase.

Secondary aims of this study are to:

- Investigate how reading problems in Tshivenda affect learners' academic performance in the Foundation Phase.
- Establish the relationship between reading problems in Tshivenda and learners' academic performance.

3.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were investigated in this study:

- How do educators cope with Grade 2 learners who experience reading problems in Tshivenda in the Foundation Phase?
- How do reading problems in Tshivenda experienced by learners in the Foundation Phase classes affect their academic performance?
- What is the relationship between reading problems in Tshivenda and learners' academic performance?

3.4 THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on howeducators cope with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in Grade 2 in the Foundation Phase. Educators indicate those issues they regard as sensitive to provide information.

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to De Vos (2005) a research design is a logical strategy for gathering evidence about knowledge desired. Durrheim (1999) asserts that a research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) state that, a research design describes how the study should be conducted. They further indicate that it summarizes the procedures for conducting the study, including when, from whom, and under what conditions the data will be obtained. In other words, the research design indicates the general plan. According to Mouton (2001), research design is a plan or a blueprint of how one intends to conduct the research. He also indicates further that a research design focuses on the logic of the research.

The research design followed in this study was quantitative in nature. Questionnaires were used to collect data from the educators of the sampled schools. The discussion below gives the research methodology used which include, population,sampling procedure, instrumentation, data collection procedure, data capturing and data analysis.

3.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Rodolo (2008) in her recent study defines research methodology as a study of a research process in all its broadness and complexity. The various methods and techniques that are employed, the rationale that underlines the use of such methods, the limitations of each technique, the role of assumptions and presumptions in selecting methods and techniques, the influence of methodological preference of the type of data analysis employed and the subsequent interpretation of findings.'According to Punch (2005), research methodology of a study denotes the value of selected measurement instruments and reasoning behind the selection.

3.6.1. Population.

According to Graziano and Raulin (1993) a population is a group of subjects from which a sample is drawn. Bless and Smith (1995) define a population as the entire set of objects and events or group of people, which is the objects of research and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics. The populations of this study consisted of educators teaching Tshivenda in foundation phase Grade 2 in schools in the Dzondo circuit of the Limpopo Province.

3.5.2. Sampling procedure.

According to Graziano and Raulin (1993) sampling methods is the process of selecting a subset of cases in order to draw conclusions about the entire set. McMillan and Schumacher and McMillan (1993) define the concept sample as the number of individuals selected from a population for a study. While (De Vos, 2002) viewed sample as a subset of measurement drawn from a population in which one is interested. The simple random sampling procedure was used to get representation of teachers from different schools. All educators were chosen from foundation phase classes. I selected them because they werethe ones who teach those phases.

I requested for permission to conduct my study from the district senior manager and school managers and educators. The respondents were not be expected to identify themselves in any manner when completing the questionnaire. They will also be informed about their rights to withdraw if they do not want to participate. In my study 156 primary school educators in Vhembe district, Vuwani area, Dzondo Circuit were selected to take part in the survey. Both educators selected were from rural community.

3.6.3. Instrumentation.

According to Nelwamondo (2012), an instrument is reliable if it consistently gives the same results. Silverman (1999) states that, reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different occasions. In this study Quantitative collection procedure was done using a questionnaire where respondent were requested to indicate their opinion by making a cross(x) in the space provided The questionnaire was used in order to obtain information from the educators with regard to how educators cope with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in Grade 2 in the Foundation Phase. This questionnaire was constructed following a literature review on reading problems. Knowledge gained from the studied literature served as a guiding framework for the development of the measurement instrument. The research question served to guide the construction of this study's questionnaire and indicated a positive correlation between reading problems and academic performance of the learner.

The instrument consisted of two sections. The first section requested biographical information regarding gender, age, highest academic qualification, teaching experience and teaching phase or band. The second section consists of 24 items using a five point Likert type scale, to indicate, 1 strongly agree, 2 agree, 3 not sure, 4 disagree and 5 strongly disagree with regard to how educators cope with learnersexperiencing reading problems. Educators were request to indicate their opinions by making a tick on the appropriate box.

Some of the factors under the second section were as follows: Learners with visual problems, learners with developmental arithmetic disability, auditory perceptual problems, auditory figure ground affects hearing ,short term memory disability, auditory problems, directional problems, hand co-ordination, visual and auditory discrimination, visual sequencing, learners with depth perception disability, attention hyperactive disorder developmental articulation and reading disability. The questionnaire was pre-tested with five educators in foundation phase, who were requested to give their comment on the clarity of the items before delivered to the majority of respondents. According to (Harry et al., 2005, Punch, 2005, and Janesick, 2000), a small –scale pretesting of survey questionnaire is recommended for feasibility, convenience and cost effectiveness.

According to Hammersley *(2000),* validity is the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers. To many authors' validity and reliability complement each other.Hammersley indicates further that validity is based on the view that a particular instrument measures what is suppose to be measured. For this study, findings were taken back to educators for them to verify if what was captured was actually what they said.

After the respondents finished completing the pre-testing process, they were asked to give their comments or constructive criticism on wording and sequencing, redundancy, missing and confusing statements. The respondents did not suggest any change to the instrument. The results of the pre-testing session were included in the main findings as there were no changes on the instrument.Questionnaires were administered to all participants. Participants were allowed to answer the questions in privacy, in their own time and at their own place. This allowed them to truthfully express their views, while remaining anonymous. I informed participants beforehand that the information sourced would only be used for research purposes only.

3.6.4 Data collection procedure.

The questionnaires were distributed to primary schools where permission was requested from the principals and educators. I made a list of those selected schools, the name of principals and the number of questionnaires distributed to identify the questionnaires that will get lost with the educators. Those schools were selected without considering any criteria and most of the schools in Dzondo Circuit were chosen. Those questionnaires were hand delivered to all schools. I requested the principal to distribute the questionnaires myself to the foundation phase educators that offers grade 2 to avoid any disappointment. A total number of 156 questionnaires were distributed.

I requested the principal to collect the questionnaires after one week from the day on which the questionnaires were left. When collecting the questionnaires after a week, 100 questionnaires were completed and 51 were not because other educators forgot and some misplaced them. I resubmit those other 51 questionnaires to another different school and also collect them after two weeks. Most schools responded in time. The questionnaires were checked on site so that any errors were corrected before collection. At the end of fourth week all the questionnaires were completed. The total numbers of 156 questionnaires were completed including those 5 for pre testing.

3.6.5. Data capturing

The data collected from the field was given to expect to capture and edit it. Errors that might have occurred during capture were corrected by examining the data set directly using summaries approach.

3.6.6. Data analysis

The data was analyzed through the computer loaded with SPSS programme (statistical package for Social Science). The presentations were mainly descriptive, supported by frequency distributions and percentage where applicable. The results were given in the form of tables.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, research design and methodology regarding issues related to how educators cope with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in Grade 2 in the Foundation Phase was conducted in quantitative approach. In this chapter the presentation and analysis of the collected data is going to be presented in two sections: Section A and B. Section A comprises of Biographical information and section B issues related to reading problems and academic performance. The presentations were mainly being descriptive, supported by tables and percentage. Data was collected through questionnaires completed by educators.

SECTION A

4.1. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION.

The biographical details obtained from the questionnaire were the following: Gender of respondents, age of respondents, highest academic qualifications, teaching experience and teaching phase. This biographical information is discussed in the section below:

4.1.1. Gender of respondents.

Respondents were requested to indicate their gender. Results are presented in Table 4.1 .

Table.4.1. Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	112	71.8
Male	44	28.2
Total	156	100.0

There was a majority (71.8 %) of females who completed the questionnaire as compared to men who comprised 28.2% of the sample.

These results indicated that more female educators were found in foundation phase because they can handle them. Foundation Phase teaching was meant for elderly female teachers, the myth that female teachers were suitable for the Foundation Phase has its origins from the initial training of teachers. The majority of male teachers were trained to teach at Senior Primary and Secondary schools.. Female teachers seemed to be satisfied to teach in the Foundation Phase because of the acknowledged stereotype that mothers, have a better understanding of children at a lower level. The issue of femaleness was supposed to put these teachers in a good standing, regarding the identification of reading problems since most of them, are mothers, possess knowledge and experience of children's developmental milestones. Many of them ought to know when and whythings are not working well with their learners

4.1.2. Age of respondents

Results showing age of respondents are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Ages.

Ages.	Frequency	Percent
20-29 years	1	0 .6
30-39 years	34	21.8
40-49 years	57	36.5
50-59 years	56	35.9
60 years and older	8	5.1
Total	156	100.0

The results indicates that 36, 5 % of the respondents aged between 40-49 years. Whereas respondents aged 50-59 years obtain 35, 9 percent which gives the difference of 04%, and 6% to those of 40-49 respondents. Respondents between 30 and 39 are 21, 8 % and respondents between 60 years and older are only 5, 1%. These results indicated that more respondents were aged between 40-59 years. Therefore these educators have more experienced in teaching learners with reading problems and they also know different strategies used to help them.

4.1.3. Highest academic qualifications.

Table 4.3 below presents the academic qualification of the respondents.

Table.4.3.Academic qualifications of respondents

Academic qualifications	Frequency	Percent
Standard 10	23	14.7
First degree	51	32.7
BED or Honours degree	61	39.1
Masters degree	19	12.2
Doctoral degree	2	1.3
Total	156	100.0

A large number (39.1%) of respondents who completed the questionnaire have BED or Honours degree, and 32.7% of the respondents have first degree. Only 12.2% of the respondents have Master degree and minority of 1.3 % has Doctoral degree.

The results indicated that more educators who are teaching in the foundation phase Grade 2 have Honours and First degree. Educators are unwillingness anymore because the government only give them cash bonus when they have completed, rather than increasing their notch salary. This Issue discourage most of educators.

4.1.4. Teaching experience.

Respondents were requested to indicate their teaching experience. Results are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Teaching experience.

Teaching experience	Frequency	Percent
1-5 years	26	16.7
6-10 years	20	12.8
11-15 years	26	16.7
16-20 years	34	21.8
21 years and above	50	32.1
Total	156	100.0

A large number 72(46.2%) of the respondents who completed the questionnaire have 1-15 years of teaching experience. A further 21.8% have 16-20 years, and 32.1% of the respondents have 21 years and above.

Looking at the number of accumulated years in teaching, one would expect that the majority of the teachers would be masters of knowing with certainty, how learners learn, and what the factors that adversely affect learners learning were. It is important to mention that some educators had accumulated a wealth of knowledge regarding issues that were a hindrance to learners' academic performance and reading.

These results indicated that many educators who are teaching in foundation phase have more experience and most of them are older people and they know how to teach those learners with reading problems. Therefore reading problems will be minimised because they know all the different strategies used to make learners read.

4.1.5. Teaching phase.

Table.4.5 below shows respondents indicating their teaching phase.

Table 4.5. Teaching phase.

Teaching phase	Frequency	Percent
Foundation Phase	125	80.1
Intermediate Phase	29	18.6
GET band	1	.6
FET band	1	.6
Total	156	100.0

The majority (80.1%) of respondents were in foundation phase which means they are teaching from Grade R to Grade 3. A minority of 18.6% were in intermediate phase.

The result shows that many educators in study teach foundation phase.The foundation phase provides the support system for all learning and is the solid base of education starting from Grade R to Grade 3.These phase is where most of the learners with learning problems are discovered.

SECTION B

4.2 ISSUES RELATED TO READING PROBLEMS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Results show that there are several issues related to reading problems and academic performances, and these have been identified: Learners with visual problem has difficulty with reading problems, development arithmetic disability, auditory perceptual problems ,auditory figure ground, learners with short term memory problem ,auditory problems, learners who stutter talk with confidence, directional problems, copying disabilities, memory makes academic success difficult, hand co-ordination, visual and auditory discrimination ,visual and auditory memory, visual Sequencing ,learner's with auditory sequencing, pattern formation ,learners with depth perception, the ability to sound out new words ,learner's who are short sighted ,attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, development articulation, learner's with fine motor, learner's with reading disability and learners with reading problems can steel read well. These issues are discussed in the section below.

I have identified the following four categories with regard to Issues related to reading problems and academic performance: reading problems, academic performance, reading disabilities and other issues related to reading problems and academic performance. These are discussed in the sub-section that follows.

4.2.1 Reading problems.

Results from respondents show that there are four reading problems: namely, Learners with visual problem has difficulty with reading problems, Learners with auditory perceptual problems have difficulties in taking information through the sense of hearing, Auditory problems affect learners' academic performance and Directional problems affect learners writing skills.

4.2.1.1 Learners with visual problem have difficulty with reading problems.

Respondents were requested to indicate whether learners with visual problem have difficulty with reading problems. Results are represented in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6 Learners with visual problem has difficulty with reading problems.

Learners visual problem	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	55	35.3
Agree	75	48.1
Not sure	5	3.2
Disagree	14	9.0
Strongly disagree	7	4.5
Total	156	100.0

The above findings reflect that 130 (83.4%) respondents agreed that learners with visual problem have difficulty with learning alphabet. Very few (3.2%) respondents in this regard were not sure. A further minority of 13.5% disagree with the statements.

These results are consistent with literatureWallace and McLaughlin (1979), which indicates that some students or learners have difficulty in recognizing the position and shape of what they see. Silver indicates further that they might see reverse letters example. d as b or p as q.

These results indicated that learners with sight problems must sit close to the front of class and should be referred for an eye test. Instead of the child struggling to look at the chalkboard, educator must write the learners work on flash card so that it will be easier for that learner to write exercise.

4.2.1.2 Learners with auditory perceptual problems have difficulties in taking information through the sense of hearing.

Results showing whether learners with auditory perceptual problems have difficulties in taking information through the sense of hearing are presented in Table 4.7 below.

Table.4.7. Auditory perceptual problems

Auditory perceptual problems	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	45	28.8
Agree	95	60.3
Not sure	9	5.8
Disagree	8	5.1
Total	156	100.0

There were 139 (89.1%) of respondents who agreed that learners with auditory perceptual problems have difficulties in taking information through the sense of hearing. A minority (5.8%) of respondents were not sure. A further minority of 5.1% disagreed.

These results are consistent with literature Wallace and McLaughlin,(1979)which indicates that difficulties with auditory perception can make it difficult to screen out completing sounds in order to focus on one of them, such as the sound of the educator's voice .This also result in difficulty processing and understanding what is said.

These results indicate that learners with auditory perceptual problems are not able to remember what they have heard or seen. They also struggle to pronounce word correctly or say phrases in the correct orders. Learners with auditory perceptual problems must take notes in class and discuss what was taught with other students and educator. The learner must try to listen to important facts and wrote them down.

4.2.1.3.Auditory problems affect learners' academic performance

Table 4.8 below presents results from the respondent whether they agreed or disagree that auditory problems affect learners' academic performance.

Table 4.8 Auditory problems

Auditory problems	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	39	25.0
Agree	63	40.4
Not sure	18	11.5
Disagree	29	18.6
Strongly disagree	7	4.5
Total	156	100.0

A significant percentage (65.4%) of respondents agreed that auditory problems affect learners' academic performance. A further 11.5% had neutral response to the issue; only 23.1 % experienced a sense of disagreeing or strongly disagreeing response to the issue.

These results indicated that learners with auditory problems have the problem to identify words that are the same and words that are different. These results are consistent with literature Willows, Kershner and Corcos, 1986)) which indicates that the ability to hear things correctly greatly impacts the ability to read, write and spell.

Learners with auditory problems should be given exercises to listen carefully and make contact with the symbol sequences to be learned. Through repeated systematic rhythmic imitation, finger tracing and verbalization, the student begins to feel and acquire the pattern. Then copying, writing, visualization, and chalk board activities are introduced to reinforce learning and retention.

4.2.1.4 Directional problems affect learners writing skills.

Respondent were requested to indicate whether they agreed that directional problems affect learners writing skills. Results are presented in Table 4.9 below:

Table 4.9 Directional problems.

Directional problems	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	13	8.3
Agree	95	60.9
Not sure	33	21.2
Disagree	13	8.3
Strongly disagree	2	1.3
Total	156	100.0

A significant 69.2 % of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that directional problems affect learners writing skills. A further 21.2% of respondents in this regard were not sure. Only 9.6% disagreed with this statement.

These results are consistent with literature Vellutino et.al. (1977) who indicated that educators should make sure that learners know how books are organised, they should be taught the basic about books that they are read from left to right and top to bottom.

Learners with Directional problems should be introduced to the directional charts every day in the morning in order to learn the direction .Exercise like move to the left, right, up, down are very important to solve this problems.

4.2.2 .Academic performance

Under academic performance I have identified eight issues. Namely: Learners with development arithmetic disability have difficulty in understanding simple mathematical calculations, Copying disabilities affect learners' academic performance in the foundations phase, Memory makes academic success difficult, Visual and Auditory memory affects learners in remembering the different objects they have seen, Visual and Auditory discrimination is the key to young

learner's academic performance, Learner's who are short sighted perform well academically, Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder affects learner's academic performance, and Learner's with fine motor perform well academically.

4.2.2.1 Learners with development arithmetic disability have difficulty in understanding simple mathematical calculations.

Table 4.10 below shows results of respondents indicating whether learners with development arithmetic disability have difficulty in understanding simple mathematics calculations.

Table 4.10.Development arithmetic disability

Development arithmetic disability	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	41	26.3
Agree	84	53.8
Not sure	24	15.4
Disagree	4	2.6
Strongly disagree	3	1.9
Total	156	100.0

There were 125 (80.1%) who agreed that learners with development arithmetic disability have difficulty in understanding simple mathematical calculation. A further 15 4% of respondents were not sure. Only a minority (4.5%) of respondents disagreed with this issue. The educators' perceptions were that learners with development arithmetic disability cannot do simple mathematics operations like additions, subtraction, division and multiplication.

These results are consistent with literature Lipson and Wixson,(1991) who comments that sometimes this difficulty called dyscalculia, a math disability that can course difficulties such as learning math concepts such as (e.g. quantity, place value and time), difficulty organizing numbers and understanding how problems are organized on the page.

Learners with arithmetic disability may have trouble with fractions, percentages, geometry and algebra, and may have trouble with things like time, money and measuring and have other problems with shapes and drawing.

4.2.2.2 Copying disabilities affect learners' academic performance in the foundations phase

Table 4.11 shows the frequency and percentage of respondents indicatingwhether copying disabilities affect learners' academic performance in the foundations phase can be seen.

Table 4.11 .Copying disabilities

Copying disabilities	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	28	17.9
Agree	84	53.8
Not sure	28	17.9
Disagree	14	9.0
Strongly disagree	2	1.3
Total	156	100.0

A majority 112 (71.7%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that copying disability affects learners academic performance in the foundation phase. Only 17.9 % of respondents were neutral to the issue. A minority of 10.3 % disagreed or strongly disagreed to the issue.

These results are consistent with literature Wallace and McLaughlin, (1979) who comments that Like all learning problems, difficulties in writing can be devastating to a child's education and self-esteem. As children progress through school, they are increasingly expected to express what they know about many different subjects through writing. If a child fails to develop certain basic skills, he will be unable to write with the speed and fluency required to excel as these demands increase in speed.

Learners who have copying problem are not able to analyse, synthesize, remember and use closure to copy accurately like write down something displayed on the writing board. For a child struggling with a writing problem, the writing process itself interferes with learning. Students faced with such difficult odds have trouble staying motivated.

4.2.2.3. Memory makes academic success difficult

Table 4.12 below shows the results of respondent indicating whether they agreed that memory makes academic success difficult.

Table 4.12 Memory makes academic success difficult.

Memory makes academic success difficult	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	23	14.7
Agree	49	31.4
Not sure	23	14.7
Disagree	39	25.0
Strongly disagree	22	14.1
Total	156	100.0

These were 46.1 % of respondents who agreed that memory makes academic success difficult .A further 39.1% who disagreed in this regard. Only 14.7 % of respondents were neutral.

These results are consistent with literature Willows,Kershner and Corcos,(1986) which indicates that working memory refers to the ability to hold on to piece of information until the pieces blend into a full thought or concept.

These results indicated that learners with short term memory cannot store or retain information for a long time .While for the academic success of the learner; learners need to have long term memory where they should store information over a long period of time.

4.2.2.4. Visual and Auditory memory affects learners in remembering the different objects they have seen.

Respondent were requested to indicate whether they agreed thatvisual and auditory memory affects learners in remembering the different objects they have seen. Results are presented in Table 4.13 below:

Table 4.13 Visual and Auditory memory

Visual and Auditory memory	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	35	22.4
Agree	75	48.1
Not sure	14	9.0
Disagree	24	15.4
Strongly disagree	8	5.1
Total	156	100.0

The results on the table show that 110(70.5%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Visual and Auditory memory affects learners in remembering the different objects they have seen.20.5% of respondents disagreed in this regard. Only 9% were neutral.

These results are consistent with literature Grove and Hauptfleish, (1982) which indicates that the eyes and ears are the primary means of delivering information to the brain, a process sometimes called input.

These results indicate that those learners' with Visual and Auditory problems are not able to remember what they have read. They will also not be able to make connections or associations between sounds in written words.

4.2.2.5Visual and Auditory discrimination is the key to young learner's academic performance.

Results showing whether respondents agreed or disagree that visual and auditory discrimination is the key to young learner's academic performance are presented in Table 4.14 below:

Table 4.14 Visual and Auditory discrimination

Visual and Auditory discrimination	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	45	28.8
Agree	72	46.2
Not sure	12	7.7
Disagree	21	13.5
Strongly disagree	6	3.8
Total	156	100.0

The majority 117 (75%) of respondents strongly agreed that visual and auditory discrimination is the key to young learner's academic performance. Only 7.7% of respondents were neutral. A further 17.3 % in this regard disagreed with this statement.

These results are consistent with literature Wallace and McLaughlin, (1979) which states that learners with this disability often have reading problems. They may jump over words, read the same line twice, or skip line.

This result indicates that learner's with visual and auditory discrimination cannot discriminate between colour, size, shape, letters, sounds and words. It can also create difficulties in learning new words.

4.2.2.6. Learner's who are short sighted perform well academically

In this study I wanted to find out from educators whether learner's who are short sighted can perform well academically. The results are presented in Table 4.15 below

Table 4.15 Learner's who are short sighted

Learner's who are short sighted	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	9	5.8
Agree	32	20.5
Not sure	26	16.7
Disagree	66	42.3
Strongly disagree	23	14.7
Total	156	100.0

There were 89(57%) of respondents who disagreed that learner's can perform well academically while they have short sighted. A further 26.3% of respondent agreed with this statement. Only 16.7% were neutral.

These results are consistent with literatureVellutino, et al, (1977) which states that learners with Short-sightedness is a refractive eye condition. Refractive eye conditions occur when problems with the eye's structure affect how light enters the eye. Most people are born slightly long-sighted where close objects appear blurred. This is because at birth the eyes have not grown to their full length.

These statistics indicated that they cannot perform well academically due to their sight problem. An area of concern has been indicated by these findings that every learner's who are short sighted should be or sit in the front row inside the classroom ,and next to the chalk board so that they won't struggle while copying things because they are unable to see things clearly unless they are close to the eyes.

4.2.2.7 Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder affects learner's academic performance.

Results showing whether Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder affects learner's academic performance are presented in Table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	26	16.7
Agree	79	50.6
Not sure	33	21.2
Disagree	11	7.1
Strongly disagree	7	4.5
Total	156	100.0

The majority of respondents 105(67.3 %) agreed or strongly agreed that learner's academic performance can be affected by attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. A further 21.2% of respondents were neutral with this statement. Only 11.1 5 disagreed in this regard.

These results are consistent with literature Goldstein, and Goldstein, (1998) who writes that these learner's are expected to be perfect students in every way and if they don't fit this stereotype they may be misidentified as having a learning disability of psychological or neurological problem even though their behaviour is perfectly normal and rational for a gifted child.

These results indicate that this disorder found in children and marked as hyperactive and they have poor concentration in the class that lead to learning problems or disability.

4.2.2.8 Learner's with fine motor perform well academically

This item provides interpretations of educators' views regarding whether learners with fine motor can perform well academically. The statistics of the results are presented in Table 4.17 below:

Table 4.17 Learner's with fine motor.

Learner's with fine motor	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	42	27.9
Agree	70	44.9
Not sure	19	12.2
Disagree	19	12.2
Strongly disagree	6	3.8
Total	156	100.0

A majority 112 (71.8%) of respondents strongly agreed that learner's with fine motor perform well academically. Only 12.2 % are neutral. A further 16% of respondents disagreed with statement.

These results are consisted with literature Goldstein & Goldstein, (1998) which indicates that people with fine motor difficulties may have trouble with hand writing.

Learners with fine motor difficulties write slowly and their hand writing is unreadable. They make many errors when writing. Fine motor development is extremely important for learners to succeed in foundation phase and beyond. Fine motor skills are a prerequisite for any small movement or skill that requires learners to use their hands. Using scissors, colouring, drawing, writing, putting together puzzles, are skills that require fine motor development.

4.2.3 Reading disability.

Under reading disability I have identified two issues. Namely: Learners with reading disability have reading difficulty including fluent word recognition and learners with reading problems can steel read well.

4.2.3.1Learners with reading disability has reading difficulty including fluent word recognition.

In this study I wanted to find out from educators whether learners with reading disability have reading difficulty including fluent word recognition. The results are presented in Table4.18.

Table 4.18 Learner's with reading disability

Learner's with reading disability	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	56	35.9
Agree	80	51.3
Not sure	7	4.5
Disagree	11	7.1
Strongly disagree	2	1.3
Total	156	100.0

The majority 136(87.2%) of respondents agreed to this statement which says learners with reading disability has reading difficulty including fluent word recognition.A further 8.4% of respondent disagreed in this regard. Only 7.1 % were neutral.

These results are consistent with literature Goldsworth, (1996) who indicated that the most common learning disabilities of all students with specific learning disabilities have difficulty in reading. He indicated further that a reading disability can affects any part of the reading process including fluent word recognition.

These results suggest that learner's who struggle with reading often exhibit difficulties in reading accurately and quickly, and they fall behind very rapidly in nearly all school subjects.

4.2.3.2 Learner's with reading problems can still read well.

Respondent were requested to indicate whether they agreed or disagree that learner's with reading problems can still read well. Results are presented in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19 Learner's with reading problems.

Learner's with reading problems	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	9	5.8
Agree	33	21.2
Not sure	8	5.1
Disagree	76	48.7
Strongly disagree	30	19.2
Total	156	100.0

A large number 106(67.9%) of respondents who completed the questionnaire disagreed that learner's with reading problems can still read well. A further 27 % of respondent agree in this regard. Only 5.1% of the respondents were neutral.

These results are consistent with literature Grove and Hauptleish, (1982) who indicated that basic reading problems occurs when there is difficulty understanding the relationship between sound, letters and words.

These statistics indicated that learner's with reading problems cannot read well. Learners who have reading problems identified when they reverse letters or words, omitting letters when reading, remembering little and also poor comprehension.

4.2.4. Other issues related to reading problems and academic performance.

Other issues related to reading problems and academic performance, I have identified ten categories. They are: auditory figure ground affects hearing a sound over background noise, learners with short term memory problem perform well despite the disability, learners who stutter talk with confidence, hand co-ordinates affect learners in doing simple activities where the hand has to follow what eyes see, visual Sequencing contributes towards efficient reading skills, learner's with auditory sequencing struggle to pronounce words correctly, pattern formation affects learner's identification skills, learners with depth perception difficult can perceive how far away an object may be, the ability to sound out new words allows children to learn new words on their own and development articulation affects learner's control their speech rate.

4.2.4.1 Auditory figure ground affects hearing a sound over background noise

Respondents were requested to indicate whether they agree or disagree that auditory figure ground affects hearing a sound over background noise. Results are presented in Table 4.20 below:

Table.4.20 Auditory figure ground

Auditory figure ground	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	19	12.2
Agree	91	58.3
Not sure	39	25.0
Disagree	7	4.5
Total	156	100.0

Although only 7 (4.5%) respondents disagreed to that Auditory figure ground affects hearing a sound over background noise, a majority (70.3%) of respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. A further 25% were natural.

These results are consistent with literature South African Teachers, (2011) who indicates that a learner who is not able to hear or interpret what he or she has heard is experiencing auditory difficulties. The learner cannot discriminate between sounds.

These results indicate that these children may have difficulty when there is a lot of background noise .They will never concentrate because the noise will be irritating them .They cannot read and narrate story or carry out simple instructions.

4.2.4.2 Learners with short term memory problem perform well despite the disability.

Table 4.21 shows the results of respondents with regard to learners with short term memory problem.

Table 4.21 Learners with short term memory problem.

Learners with short term memory problem	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	12	7.7
Agree	32	20.5
Not sure	22	14.1
Disagree	78	50.0
Strongly disagree	12	7.7
Total	156	100.0

A majority 90 (57.7%) of the respondents disagree that learners with short term memory problem perform well despite the ability. Only 14.1% of the respondents were neutral. A further 28.3 % of respondents agreed with the statements.

These results are consistent with literature Lerner, (1993) which indicated that short term memory is also a temporary storage facility. With the first system, the sensory register, the individual is not consciously aware of information.

These results indicated that short term memory is a working memory, because it is a temporary storage where learners need to store things and rehearse later. Learners with short term memory cannot perform well despite their ability.

4.2.4.3 Learners who stutter talk with confidence.

Respondents were requested to indicate whether they agree or disagree that those learners who stutter talk with confidence. Results are presented in Table 4.22 below:

Table 4.22 Learners who stutter talk with confidence.

Learners who stutter talk with confidence	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	9	5.0
Agree	35	22.4
Not sure	33	21.2
Disagree	59	37.8
Strongly disagree	20	12.8
Total	156	100.0

There were 79 (50.6%) respondents who disagreed that learners who stutter talk with confidence .A further 28.2 % respondents agreed in this regard. Only 12.2 % respondents in this regard were not sure.

These results are consistent with literature Andrews et al.,(1983) who indicated that educators working with learners who stutter realize that many tend to be late in passing their speech and language developmental milestones. These children show a three times greater risk of speech sound errors than nonstutterers. In addition, reports of delayed language development are found more frequently in the case histories of children who stutter. More stuttering occurs on the first sound of the first word in a sentence, longer words, words that carry more meaning, and words that are used infrequently.

Since 50.6% of respondents disagreed that learner who stutter talk with confidence, this results shows that learners who stutter struggle to pronounce words correctly and they become shy. They end up losing confidence when doing oral work and during reading time. It can cause learners to lose a great deal of confidence.

4.2.4.4Hand co-ordinates affect learners in doing simple activities where the hand has to follow what eyes see.

Results showing whether respondents agreed or disagreed that hand co-ordinates affect learners in doing simple activities where the hand has to follow what eyes see are presented in Table 4.23 below.

Table .4.23 Hand co-ordination.

Hand co-ordination	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	28	17.9
Agree	75	48.1
Not sure	23	14.7
Disagree	23	14.7
Strongly disagree	7	4.5
Total	156	100.0

Almost 103(66%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that hand co-ordination affects learners in doing simple activities where the hand has to follow what the eyes see. A further 14.7% of respondents were neutral. Only 19.2 % of the respondents disagree in this regard.

These results are consistent with the literature Wallace and McLaughlin (1979)which indicates that if there is difficult with visual, perception there could be problem with tasks that require eye hand co-ordination (visual skills) such as catching a ball, doing a puzzle, or picking up a glass.

These results indicated that learners without good eye hand co-ordinates are unable to do simple activities where the hand has to follow what the eyes see. Eye hand co-ordinates influences writing as the hand does what the eyes see. Therefore these results in poor handwriting and weak control over other fine motor movement like cutting and colouring.

4.2.4.5 Visual Sequencing contributes towards efficient reading skills.

In this study I wanted to find out from educators whethervisual Sequencing contributes towards efficient reading skills. The results are presented in Table 4.24 below.

Table 4.24 Visual Sequencing.

Visual Sequencing	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	32	22.4
Agree	101	48.1
Not sure	15	9.0
Disagree	6	15.4
Strongly disagree	2	5.1
Total	156	100.0

It is quite interesting to discover that 133 (85.2%) of respondents agreed that Visual Sequencing contributes towards efficient reading skills. There were only 9.0% of respondents who were not sure. A minority of 5.1 % disagreed in this regard.

These results are consistent with the literature Wallace and McLaughlin (1979) which indicates that many children with visualSequencing. problems are unable to discriminate visually between various letters or words. According to Wallace and McLaughlin (1979), the child with difficulties in this area might be confused by letters with similar configurations, for example, 'h-n,''l–j' or 'v-w'. They add that other children with visualSequencing problems are unable to distinguish visually among words. These results indicate that learners who have visual sequences are able to remember what they have seen or heard. This becomes an evident when learners struggle to pronounce words correctly or to say phrases in the correct order .e.g. when saying rhymes and verses.

4.2.4.6 Learner's with auditory sequencing struggle to pronounce words correctly.

Respondents were requested to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed that learners with auditory sequencing struggle to pronounce words correctly. Results are presented in Table 4.25 below.

Table 4.25 Learner's with auditory sequencing.

Learner's with auditory sequencing	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	15	9.6
Agree	61	39.1
Not sure	26	16.7
Disagree	47	30.1
Strongly disagree	7	4.5
Total	156	100.0

Respondents who agreed that learners with auditory sequencing struggle to pronounce words correctly were 76(48.7 %). A further 34.6% of respondents disagreed in this regard. However 16.7 %were neutral.

These results are consistent with literature Willows,Kershner and Corcos,(1986) which indicated that the ability to distinguish subtle differences in sounds, or hearing sounds at the wrong speed make it difficult to sound out words and understanding the basic concepts of reading and writing.

These statistics indicate that learners who have auditory sequencing problems may not interpret and store words that are heard and may have specific weakness in learning from sound.

4.2.4.7. Pattern formation affects learner's identification skills

In this study I wanted to find out from educators whether Pattern formation affects learner's identification skills. The results are presented in Table 4.26 below.

Table 4.26 Pattern formation.

Pattern formation	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	16	10.3
Agree	63	40.4
Not sure	33	21.2
Disagree	38	24.4
Strongly disagree	6	3.8
Total	156	100.0

These results indicated that 50.7% of respondents agreed with this regard. A further 21.2% were neutral. There were only 28.2 who disagreed that pattern formation affects learner's identification skills.

These results are consistent with literature Burns, (1992) which indicated that aslearners move on to first and second grade, they should start to create their own patterns and develop pictorial and symbolic representations of those patterns. The transition will be from working with patterns using physical objects to using pictures, letters, and geometric figures in two and three dimensions, and then to using symbols, such as words and numbers, to represent patterns. These learner's with pattern formation lack some of the skills that are used for writing. When drawing patterns learners are expected to follow or repeat decorative design accordingly.

4.2.4.8. Learners with depth perception difficult can perceive how far away an object may be.

This item provides interpretations of educators' views regarding whether learners with depth perception difficult can perceive how far away an object may be. The statistics of the results are presented in Table 4.27 below:

Table 4.27 Learners with depth perception.

Learners with depth perception	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	8	5.1
Agree	61	39.1
Not sure	35	22.4
Disagree	41	26.3
Strongly disagree	11	7.1
Total	156	100.0

Just under the half of the respondents (44.2%) agreed that learner's with depth; perception difficulty can perceive how far away an object may be. A further 33.4 % of respondents disagreed in this regard. Only 35 out of 156 respondents which reflect 22.4% of the total number of overall respondents were neutral.

These results are consistent with literature Willows, Kershnerand Corcos (1986), which indicated that problems in visual perception include missing subtle differences in shapes, reversing letters or numbers, skipping words, skipping lines, misperceiving depth or distance, or having problems with eye–hand coordination. Professionals may refer to the work of the eyes as "visual processing." Visual perception can affect gross and fine motor skills, reading comprehension, and math. According to these results, these learners are expected to see something from a distance, from the top or surface down or from the front to the back of the classroom. The results agreed that 44.2 % that learning with difficulty cannot be of something very far away.

4.2.4.9. The ability to sound out new words allows children to learn new words on their own.

Respondents were requested to indicate whether they agreed that the ability to sound out new words allow children to learn new words on their own. Results are presented in Table 4.28 below.

Table 4.28.The ability to sound out new words.

The ability to sound out new words	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	44	28.2
Agree	84	53.8
Not sure	10	6.4
Disagree	16	10.3
Strongly disagree	2	1.3
Total	156	100.0

The majority 128 (82%) agreed and only 11.6 % disagreed in this regard. A minority of 6.4% were not sure.

These results are consistent with literatureKalugerandKolson,(1978) which indicated that learning the alphabet and the sounds that letters make, learning to distinguish sounds in speech, and learning to sound out words. As this process gets underway, children also have to focus on reading connected text; that is, reading Easy Readers at the right level of difficulty in order to develop the facility and automat city that leads to fluency. These results indicate that learners who cannot sound out new words have learning disabilities because they cannot learn without new words. That is why a minority of respondent agreed with statement.

4.2.4.10 Development articulation affects learner's control their speech rate

Results showing interpretations of educators' views regarding whether learners withdevelopment articulation affects learners control their speech rate are presented in Table 4.29 below:

Table 4.29 Development articulation

Development articulation	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	11	7.1
Agree	87	55.8
Not sure	42	26.9
Disagree	12	7.7
Strongly disagree	4	2.6
Total	156	100.0

Although 26.9% of respondents were not sure in this regard, 62.9% of respondents agreed that learner's speech rate also affected by development articulation. Only

11.6 % of respondent disagreed. These results are consistent with literature Polaco, (1988)which indicate that children with Development articulation disorder may have trouble controlling their rate of speech. Or they may lag behind playmates in learning to make speech sounds. Developmental articulation disorders are common. They appear in at least 10 percent of children younger than eight years old. Fortunately, articulation disorders can often be outgrown or successfully treated with speech therapy.

For the development of every child academically, learner's need to speak fluently and clearly .Because during oral work learner's are expected to express themselves in words. That is why 62.9% of respondents agreed in this regard.

4.3. CONCLUSSION

In this chapter, data was presented and interpreted in quantitative study. The study revealed that learners with reading problems cannot read well, and they have problems of reading when it comes to identifying letters or words, omitting letters when reading, remembering little and also poor comprehension. The participating educators came up with a solution, saying that there must be workshops organised regularly for training Tshivenda reading. They also suggest that time allocation should be revised. The next chapter contains the conclusions that were drawn from the results of this study. Recommendations for future research are made and the limitations of the study highlighted.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.

This chapter focuses on the main findings, conclusions and recommendations. The main findings of the study are presented following how educators cope with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in Grade 2 in the Foundation Phase. The majority of participants at all the participating schools were in agreement that learning problems, such as reading and writing, as well as mathematical problems, such as counting and reasoning skills, were the biggest problems among learners.

5.1. MAIN FINDINGS.

The following are the main findings from the teachers' responses.

5.1.1 Biographical information

- Gender of respondents.

  The majority of the teachers was female and had been teaching for many years, ranging from forty to fifty nine years.The findings were that male teachers felt that they were lost in the pool of the Foundation Phase cohort, and as a result, lacked confidence, felt misplaced and demotivated. They held the view that female teachers were suitable to handle children in the Foundation Phase

- Age

  These results indicated that more respondents were aged between 40-59 years. Therefore these educators have more experienced in teaching learners with reading problems and they also know different strategies used to help them.

- Highest academic qualification

The findings of this study were that more educators who are teaching in the foundation phase Grade 2 have Honours and First degree. Educators are unwillingness anymore because the government only give them cash bonus when they have completed, rather than increasing their notch salary.

- Teaching experience

Many educators who are teaching in foundation phase have more experience and most of them are older people and they know how to teach those learners with reading problems. Therefore reading problems will be minimised because they know all the different strategies used to make learners read.

- Teaching phase

The results result shows that many educators in this study teach foundation phase because Grade 2 is a foundation phase.

5.1.2. ISSUES RELATED TO READING PROBLEMS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- Visual problems

The study found that learners with visual problems should sit in front near the chalkboard to see well. Learners seating arrangements should allow learners to be close to different classroom activities. The educator should also encourage critical thinking, arguments and action on the part of learners in the learning situation. I also found that these learners need constantly motivation and praise to complete tasks.

- Short-Sighted learners.

Areas of concern have been indicated by these findings that learners who are short-sighted or long-sighted experience difficulties in class. I have discovered that these learners find it difficult to copy work from the board, experience difficulty in written activities, and also experience word recognition difficulty.

The findings of this study with regard to short sighted learners was that ,short sighted is a common eye condition that causes distance objects to appear blurred while close objects can be seen clearly. A learner with short sighted find it difficult to see things in the distance such as chalkboard in the class. A test should be used to help assess the learner's vision. That learner must use lenses such as glasses so that it won't disturb the learner's academic performance.

- . Developmental arithmetic disability

- The results on developmental arithmetic disability found that most learners who have developmental arithmetic disability are caused by absence from and changes of school. They emphasize that this are the most important causes of mathematical difficulties as they cause back logs in mathematical knowledge.

- The results reflected major challenges that inadequate teaching also results in difficulty in understanding simple mathematical calculations where some learners may be able to discover the concepts on their own.

- The statistics of findings also raise the issue of reading difficulties as poor reading cause's difficulties in reading mathematical combinations and constructions of word sums.
- One of the finding was that most learners have negative attitude towards mathematics where they lack self confidence when doing mathematics.

Respondents emphasize that most learners believe that they cannot do mathematics and are easily discouraged if the work seems difficult.

- Auditory perceptual problems

Findings on Auditory perceptual problems were that a child with auditory perceptual difficulties may hear perfectly well but still be unable to interpret what is heard correctly. They also add that children may be unable to make any sense of what they hear.

- Auditory figure ground

Results showed that learners with auditory figure ground are not able to ignore sounds that are unimportant. They cannot keep their attention on a conversation or story that is more important.

- Short term memory

Most of the respondents disagreed to the statement that learners with short term memory disability perform well despite the disability. Educators comments that learners with short term memory has been related to problems in rehearsal and organisation. They faced the problem of how information is processed and mentally represented.

- Auditory problems

One of the finding was that, a learner who is not able to hear or interpret what he or she has heard is experiencing auditory difficulties. Some challenges that was noted was that these learners cannot discriminate between sounds, carry out instructions, cannot retell a story and are unable to focus on a specific source.

- Learners who stutter

Results showed that educators disagreed that learner who stutters talk with confidence. The majority of educators agreed that speech problems such as stuttering can cause learners to lose a great deal of confidence while reading. There was a concern regarding this issue by respondent that large group interaction should be introduced gradually as confidence is built.

- . Copying disability

The results reflected major challenges that learners who have copying problems are not able to analyse, synthesize, remember and use closure to copy accurately like write down something displayed on the writing board.

Writing starts as a physical activity. However, the writing skill grows out of spoken language and reading and is supposed to gain learners competency through verbal experiences. The task of writing is a demanding one, and many learners display a grammatical ability that is much poorer than their spoken competency. Writing as a means of communication is problematic, due to the limited vocabulary, lack of comprehension and poor grammatical skills among many learners. Since academic success is based on an understanding of the language of communication, the majority of participants listed reading and writing as problematic for learners.

- Memory

One of the findings from this study was that learners who have memory difficulties cannot recall newly learned information and cannot store information for a long time.

Some of the learners may not recall what they have done in the morning and how to write their names.

Because so many writing processes need to be automatic, active working memory is critical. Children may have difficulty recalling spelling, grammar, and punctuation rules, accessing prior knowledge while writing, or organizing ideas. A memory problem may manifest itself in a child's writing as: poor vocabulary, many misspelled words and frequent capitalization, punctuation, and grammar errors Problems with memory can occur with short-term or working memory, or with long-term memory. Most memory difficulties occur in the area of short-term memory, which can make it difficult to learn new material without many more repetitions than is usual. Difficulties with visual memory can impede learning to spell.

- Eye hand coordination

One of the findings was that learners without good eye hand co-ordination are not able to do simple activities where the hand has to follow what the eyes se. This results in poor handwriting and weak control over other fine motor movement like and colouring.

- Visual and auditory discrimination

Most respondents agreed to the statement that visual and auditory discrimination is the key to young learner's academic performance. Learners with visual and auditory discrimination creates difficulties in learning new words and results in inaccuracies in calculations, spelling and spoken language, and incorrect behaviour in general.

- Visual and auditory memory

Results showed that visual and auditory memory affects learners in remembering the objects they have seen. Most respondents indicated that those learners with visual and auditory memory problems are not able to remember instructions, words or what they have read. They will not be able to make connections or associations between sounds in written words.

- Visual sequencing

The majority of the respondents agreed that visual sequencing contributes towards efficient reading skills. Visual sequencing problems become evident with reading, writing and spelling of words. These are learners who are not able to remember what they have seen.

- Auditory sequencing

Findings on Auditory sequencing were that these learners are not able to remember what they have heard. Learners struggle to pronounce words correctly or to say phrases in the correct order, i.e. when saying rhyme.

- Attention deficit hyperactivity

Learners who have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are likely to talk too much in class and may constantly fight with friends, siblings and classmates. I also found that these learning also have social and behavioural problems. Educators add that these learners have a loud presence in the classroom, and constantly ask questions and make comments and demands. That is why their disorder affects learner's academic performance.

- Fine motor

Most of the respondents support this idea by adding that normal classroom activities make greater demands upon fine motor coordination than any other activities. Another finding was that fine motor abilities usually include the small muscles, involving eye movements and hand use.

- . Reading disability

Results showed that learners who have great difficulty in acquiring reading skills often encounter special types of problems such as reversals, oral reading, finger pointing, lip moving and poor silent reading. Educators also comment that reading needs skills in word recognition to develop fluent in reading.

Although there has been a great improvement in the provision of learning material by the Education Department, it is still not uncommon for educators not to have access to these materials. It is therefore no surprise that many participating educators blamed insufficient learning material as a contributing factor to learning problems. Educators comment that Learners are unable to read, due to insufficient learning material like reading books (readers).

The learners have a reading problem, which result to less interest for other learning areas. Reading has also affected their way of perceiving things, the ability of carrying out instructions is affected, the listening skill is affected and their interest in learning is affected, writing and spelling of words, to construct sentences is worse.

5.2. CONCLUSION.

The following conclusions were drawn from this study.

- Let learners with sight problems sit close to the front of the class or hand out the work in written form if the learners are sitting far from the board.
- It is important to check into the previously acquired work to ensure that the learner is ready for what needs to be learned.
- Learners who have auditory difficulty should sit close to the front of the class or near to educator at small group times and look directly at the learner when giving instructions.
- When doing reading, educators should choose illustrated texts at an easier level for these learners. It is very important for school too consider reading lessons.Educator is aware of always keep an accurate record of the reading problems.
- Never isolate a learner from the rest of the class as a result of reading problems. When a student has difficulty with reading, it can be overwhelming to teachers and emotional for both parents and students. The more that is learned about reading and the specific problem, however, the less overwhelming things will seem. Parents and teachers can act on behalf of a student who struggles with reading by trying to pinpoint the nature and source of a student's difficulty, by increasing skills levels, and by building upon his or her strengths
- Let the learners experience success by assessing their work on an ongoing basis in order for them to be aware of their progress. Choose topics that would interest the learners and which are within their learning context.

- At most of the participating schools, educators lacked the know-how on specific remedial teaching, even though participants saw remedial skills as a solution to helping learners with reading problems. A few participants indicated that they needed support from individuals, such as specialist or remedial educators or lecturers from academic institutions offering programmes. This need was expressed, as most schools lacked such specially trained specialists.

- Participants varied in their views regarding the use of remedial educators, versus trying out different strategies on their own. Participants expected that more support should be given to them in the schools where trained and qualified remedial educators were teaching, and that these 'experts' could work closer with them and share their knowledge and assist with the problems experienced.

- In addition, some schools have trained remedial educators available, but they are not primarily and effectively used in the school remedial programmes. At schools where a remedial educator was available, participants made use of their expertise by negotiating and requesting their assistance, but they are busy in their own classrooms. Participants add that when they are free theydiscussthe reading and learning problems of the learners with them and then they try to implement what they said they must do.

5.3 RECOMMENDATION.

- Before starting with either individual or group support to learners experiencing reading difficulties, assessment should be done of their situation, attitudes, behaviour and achievements in school work as well as of their social skills. Learners who experience difficulty should be referred for test in different areas.

- The individual educator could plan for a variation in his/her teaching techniques in reading, spelling, and/or mathematics. These skills could be learnt from support groups, workshops or self-study.

- Before deciding on techniques for teaching all learning programmes, the educator must understand the learner's abilities and disabilities to attainment levels and the operations that the learner can perform.

- The individual educator should read widely, attend workshops or enrol for specific qualification, such as the Advance Certificate in Education (ACE) in Special Needs Education (SNE). The knowledge and skills thus acquired, would improve the educators' competence to teach all learners, including those experiencing reading problems.

- Learners who have auditory difficulties should be arranged for a hearing or speech therapist to assess the learner.

- All educators should establish a 'reading corner' in their classrooms. Reading material could be photo copies of interesting text, a block loan from the municipal library, or old magazines or other books donated by church groups or donors.

- Assist struggling learners by allowing them to use concrete teaching and learning resources and to have multiple opportunity of working with friends who explain work to them and listen to them explaining.

- Educators from each grade should get together and form their own internal support teams that could cooperate and collaborate in developing simple reading tasks that could be swapped between classes. This would save educators time in preparing these reading tasks and provide them with more time to spend on the task of helping learners experiencing problems.

* Ask questions demanding appropriate conceptual development, but express questions in such a way that all learners can understand what is required.

* Educators (individuals or a support group) could organise activities that would promote reading, for example, 'Tell your favourite story' or organise a reading marathon. In this way, learners' reading would improve and educators could spend more time on other educational tasks.

* Educators should give learners constant support for activities. For example, when counting in multiples let them use real counters that they group and count. Educators as a support group should consider team-teaching activities. Educators who cannot bridge the reading problems of certain learners could be supported by colleagues in identifying possible reading problems, and in so doing find some solutions. Such team teaching activities will support and develop good teaching practices that is empowering to the educators and benefit the learners.

* Educators should try to make learners feel safe and comfortable in their environment at school.

* Learners should be encouraged to assist their classmates for example by reading aloud what is written on the board for a classmate who does not see well, and, by repeating things for a classmate who does not hear well.

* Educators should explain new concepts when teaching specify purposeful, direct and clear. Give the learner time to think before answering questions.

* Educators should use simple language when giving instructions so that every learner should understand what is needed.

* A variety of complexities contributes to the learning problems experienced by learners in the foundation Phase. It is apparent that especially not only skills lack in language, such as reading and writing, but also in spelling and

mathematics such as counting, calculating and reasoning, were seen as the most relevant problems. The lack of these skills negatively influenced how learning took place.

- Educators found it essential that professionals such as psychologists and social workers should provide assistance with regard to the challenges they faced. They contended that if their requests were promptly dealt with, the struggles they endured when instructing learners experiencing reading problems would be much more tolerable.

- Parents should be involved in their children's schooling and not fear the stigma associated with reading problems.

- At the same time it would be true that if educators themselves read widely, their subject knowledge, general knowledge and language abilities will improve, empowering LOLT educators directly.

- The individual educator could plan improved group-work activities during which stronger learners could assist weaker learners and the educators could assist weaker learners before moving them to other groups. This will assist educators in spending effective time with weaker learners, whilst working through the curriculum at a reasonable pace.

5.4 CONCLUSSION

The Foundation Phase teachers are the primary layers of a strong base on which future developments will be built. Therefore, it is critical to identify reading problems and development that could hamper the teaching and learning activities during this stage. By the time learners are in Grade 2, the Foundation Phase third class, it could be too late for any constructive and mediated interventions to be effective. Appropriate intervention and support programme ought to have been in place bythen and be finalized during Grade 2. Grade 2 teachers ought to be empowered tocarry on the Grade R, and 1 teacher's support work.No learner ought to be in Grade 2 without any form of basic knowledge and practical skills to write legibly, count and read with confidence. As it stands now, many Grade 2 learners experience problems in writing, reading and counting. Where is the problem? The answer lies in the early identification (diagnosis) of reading problems; early intervention and early support.

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ANNEXURE A

Learning disabilities and academic performance Questionnaire

SECTION A

The purpose of this study is to find out the impact of learning disabilities on foundation phase learner's academic performance.

Please supply the following information by making a mark on the appropriate block.

1. Gender

Female	1
Male	2

2. Age

20-29 years	1
30-39 years	2
40-49 years	3
50-59 years	4
60 years and older	5

3. Highest academic qualifications

Standard 10	1
First degree	2
BED or Honours degree	3
Masters degree	4
Doctoral degree	5

4. Teaching experience

1-5 years	1
6-10 years	2
11-15 years	3
16-20 years	4
21-25 years and above	5

5. Teaching phase/band

Foundation phase	1
Intermediate phase	2
GET band	3
FET band	4

SECTION B

For each of the following statements regarding your academic performance indicate, by making a mark in the appropriate block, what applies to you.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your academic performance in relation to learner disability.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. Learners with visual problems have difficulty with learning alphabet.	I	2	3	4	5
7. Learners with developmental arithmetic disability have difficulty in understanding simple mathematical calculations.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Learners with auditory perceptual problems have difficulties in taking information through the sense of hearing.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Auditory figure ground affects hearing a sound over background noise.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Learners with short term memory disability perform well despite the disability.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Auditory problems affect learners' academic	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
performance.					
12. Learners who stutter talk with confidence.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Directional problems affect learners' writing skills.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Copying disability affects learners' academic performance in the foundation phase.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Memory makes academic success difficult.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Hand co-ordination affects learners in doing simple activities where the hand has to follow what the eyes see.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Visual and auditory discrimination is the key to young learners' academic performance.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Visual and auditory memory affects learners in remembering the different objects they have seen.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Visual sequencing contributes towards efficient reading skills.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Learners with auditory sequencing struggle to pronounce words correctly.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Pattern formation affects learners' object identification skills.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Learners with depth perception difficulty can perceive how far away an object may be.	1	2	3	4	5
25. The ability to sound out new words allows children to learn new words on their own.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Learners who are short-sighted perform well Qacademically.	1	2	3	4	5
27.Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder affects learners' academic performance	1	2	3	4	5
28.Developmental articulation affects learners' control their speech rate	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29. Learners with fine motor perform well academically.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Learners with reading disability have reading difficulty including fluent word recognition.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Learners with reading disability can still read well.	1	2	3	4	5

ANNEXURE B

Ramaano A.

BOX 11

LWAMONDO

0985

15 October 2012

Dear Educator

I have selected you to participate in my research programme that aims to investigatehow educators cope with learners experiencing reading problems in Tshivenda in Grade 2 in the Foundation Phase. Your participation in this research will help us to determine how best we can identify reading problems at an early stage. Please help by telling me how you go about identifying reading problems and academic performance.

Note that all questions request you to share your knowledge and experiences as an educator in the Foundation Phase when identifying reading problems .Please remember that this is not a test; there are no right or wrong answer. I would like to assure you that the information you give will be treated with complete confidentiality. Therefore, I humbly request you to assist me with this project by completing this questionnaire.

I wish to thank you sincerely for your willingness to participate in this research.

RAMAANO A.

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ANNEXURE C

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
VHEMBE DISTRICT

REF: 14/7/R

ENQ: MANENZHE T.A

TEL: 0828683499

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
VHEMBE DISTRICT
DSM'S OFFICE
2012 -08- 23
PRIVATE BAG X2250, SIBASA 0970
TEL. 015 962 1313/4
LIMPOPO PROVINCE

RAMANO A.

P.O.BOX 11

LWAMONDO

0985

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT DZONDO CIRCUIT.

Permission is hereby granted to you to conduct research in Dzondo circuit

1. We advise you to conduct your research with the consent of both the circuit managers and principals of the identified schools.
2. We further would like to advise that at no stage should the research process interrupt the normal learning and teaching time.
3. Wishing you all the best in your studies.

.... 2012-08-23

DISTRICT SENIOR MANAGER DATE