



Impact of Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge on Learner Outcomes in Libode Sub-District, South Africa

N M Mjobo¹, E N Ciske², *M D Omojemite³

¹Continuing Professional Teacher Development, Faculty of Education, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa

²Nedbank Research Chair in Sustainable Rural Development, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa

³Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Continuing Professional Teacher Development, Faculty of Education, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa

Article Info

Article history:

Received August 31, 2024

Revised January 9, 2025

Accepted January 11, 2025

Available Online April 28, 2025

Keywords:

Challenges;

Characteristics;

Foundation Phase;

Knowledge;

Learners;

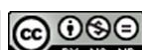
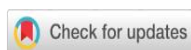
Pedagogical Content;

Reading Instructions;

Teachers;

ABSTRACT

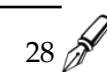
The effectiveness of reading instruction in the Foundation Phase (FP) is critical for developing learners' reading abilities. Despite this, FP teachers often face challenges related to their pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), teaching methods, and lesson preparation. This study investigates the impact of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge on learner outcomes in Libode Sub-District. The study was quantitative research which involved the use of descriptive research design. The population of the study was 200 teachers. Systematic random sampling was used to select forty (40) Grade 3 teachers. Teachers from all participating schools were allocated numbers 1 - 200, which were put in a hat. The main question addressed by the study requires the understanding of the contribution of FP teachers' lack of reading pedagogical content knowledge to Grade 3 learners' inability to read EFAL texts. Data were evaluated using analytical and logical reasoning to examine each component of data provided. The study's findings reveal a significant challenge in stimulating reading both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers in this group encounter difficulties that may be due to factors such as limited resources, insufficient parental involvement, and inadequate professional development. It was recommended that schools increase the availability of diverse reading resources, enhance parental involvement, provide targeted professional development for teachers, and promote student-centered approaches to reading instruction.



<https://doi.org/10.46627/silet>

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a critical skill that underpins academic success and lifelong learning, particularly in the early years of education. In the Foundation Phase, which covers Grades R to 3, the development of reading skills is central to the broader educational experience, as it enables learners to engage with and understand content across all subjects. The ability to read with comprehension is not only a fundamental academic skill but also a predictor of future educational attainment and overall cognitive development (Liu, 2025). The development of strong reading skills during the Foundation Phase is crucial because this period represents a window of opportunity where foundational literacy skills are established. Research indicates that early reading proficiency is closely linked to long-term academic outcomes; children who struggle with reading in the early grades are more likely to fall behind in other subjects and face ongoing challenges throughout their schooling (Haile & Mendisu, 2023). Reading is not just about decoding words on a page; it involves the complex integration of multiple cognitive processes,



including phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, and comprehension strategies, all of which are essential for meaningful engagement with texts (Vaughn & Fletcher, 2021). In addition to academic benefits, early reading skills are also associated with broader cognitive development. The act of reading stimulates brain activity, enhances critical thinking skills, and supports the development of memory and attention. These cognitive benefits extend beyond the classroom, contributing to children's overall intellectual growth and their ability to navigate various aspects of life (Nation, 2019).

Given the pivotal role that reading plays in a child's educational journey, it is imperative that educators in the Foundation Phase are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to teach reading effectively. This includes not only a solid understanding of reading pedagogy but also the ability to adapt teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of learners. Without these competencies, there is a risk that children will not develop the strong reading foundations they need to succeed academically and beyond. However, the teaching of reading in the Foundation Phase is fraught with challenges, particularly in multilingual and under-resourced settings like the Libode Sub-District. Research has shown that the effectiveness of reading instruction is heavily influenced by teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), which involves the ability to integrate subject matter knowledge with pedagogical strategies to enhance learning outcomes (Mrutu & Kulwenza, 2024). Teachers' PCK is crucial in determining how reading is taught, particularly in contexts where learners are acquiring literacy skills in both their home language and an additional language, such as English.

Morrison and Lutteneggar (2015), in the United States, show that there were significant constructs between the respondent's performance on one measure of PCK versus another in three areas, two related to vocabulary instruction and another concerning comprehension. Hence all assessments, including the respondent's lack of PCK, were consistent in a fourth area which is phonological awareness. They further emphasised the significance of PCK as the defining feature that distinguishes someone with content knowledge from a teacher who can represent ideas so that the unknowing can learn, those without understanding can comprehend, and the unskilled can become experts. Duan, et al, (2022) looked at the PCK of two English Second Language (ESL) teachers. They found that teachers need to constantly enhance their pedagogical skills in order to effectively present content and establish a diversified learning environment for ESL learners. In light of this, the researcher is of the opinion that the Department of Education should offer "How I teach" In-service Training (INSET) programmes for FP teachers.

Jacob (2020). investigated the effectiveness of PCK- guided Lesson Study (PCKLS) as an intervention to develop PCK competencies among teachers and consequently enhance learner achievement in terms of conceptual understanding. Teacher competencies and learner achievement in the PCKLS and the conventional groups were compared. The intervention in the PCKLS group consisted of the research team planning teaching the planned lesson while PCK observations were made. Another teacher from the group then implements the improvements in the reteach stage of the lesson study cycle. Finally, the lesson plans were revisited based on the consolidated suggestions for improvement. The data analysis revealed a significant difference in the teacher competencies of the PCKLS group teacher respondents compared to those of the conventional group. In terms of conceptual understanding, learner respondents demonstrated a significant increase in mean scores. As a result, it was determined that PCKLS was an effective method of developing teachers' PCK competencies and learner achievement in terms of conceptual understanding. Although PCK may not directly relate to learners' learning, improvement in teacher's PCK may contribute to deeper understanding of effective lessons to facilitate learners' learning, (Ventista & Brown, 2023)

Chen (2024) in their study on the Intermediate Phase teachers' preparedness for pedagogical content knowledge in reading, revealed that Intermediate teachers' results show that they were not confident to implement the demands of the reading curriculum. Teachers did not perceive themselves as being prepared for the PCK needed to teach reading effectively. When teachers experience a problem in teaching language skills, they remarked that mere content knowledge is

likely to be as useless pedagogically. The argument he made was that having profound knowledge about a subject does not make someone an expert teacher, and thus, mere knowledge of content is necessary but not sufficient for effective teaching. According to Manyike & Lemme (2014), in South Africa, the language of instruction in the Foundation Phase is often the learners' home language, with a gradual introduction of English as a First Additional Language (EFAL). While teaching in the home language has been shown to support early literacy development, it also presents unique challenges. Teachers are required to balance the use of the home language with the need to introduce and develop proficiency in EFAL. This balancing act is complicated by the limited PCK that many teachers possess, particularly in under-resourced rural areas (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Balfour, 2019).

The dominance of teacher talk, as observed in the Libode Sub-District, where teachers spend a significant portion of lesson time explaining and translating text rather than engaging learners in active reading practices, reflects a gap in effective PCK. Studies have indicated that when teachers rely heavily on translation and direct explanation, learners may struggle to develop independent reading skills, such as decoding, fluency, and comprehension (Linlin et al., 2024). This is particularly problematic in environments where teachers may not have received adequate training or ongoing professional development in reading pedagogy. Furthermore, the challenges of teaching reading are exacerbated by socio-economic factors, including poverty, limited access to reading materials, and overcrowded classrooms, which are prevalent in many South African rural areas (Meiklejohn et al., 2021). These factors contribute to a cycle of poor reading outcomes, where learners enter higher grades without the necessary literacy skills, leading to broader academic underperformance and increased dropout rates (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). In response to these challenges, there has been a growing recognition of the need for targeted interventions that enhance teachers' PCK in reading instruction. Professional development programs that focus on equipping teachers with the skills to effectively teach reading in both the home language and EFAL are seen as critical to improving literacy outcomes in the Foundation Phase (Wallington & Johnson, 2022). However, the implementation of such programs remains uneven, particularly in rural districts like Libode, where resources are scarce, and support systems are limited.

This study seeks to contribute to the understanding of the characteristics of reading lessons in the Foundation Phase, the impact of teachers' PCK on learner outcomes, and the pedagogical challenges faced by teachers in this context. By examining these issues in the Libode Sub-District, the research aims to provide information that can inform strategies for improving reading instruction and, ultimately, learner achievement in similar settings.

Statement of the Problem

One of the problems seen by the researcher is that teachers teach the content in the learners' home language, which is IsiXhosa. In doing so, they spend 75% of the time talking and only 25% of the time is used to involve learners in the lesson. A lot of time is used by the teachers talking, selecting difficult words and telling learners their meaning and most of the time, they use the vernacular. They read the text independently and translate the whole text into IsiXhosa. As they do that, they cannot blend content and pedagogy into an understanding of how teaching reading can be organised, adapted and represented for instruction. This results in learners being unable to comprehend what is read, and as a result, they stammer and cannot attach meaning to what they read argues that there is no certainty that FP teachers in poor environment schools have the skills to teach in EFAL and produce competent learners. Hence, this study will explore the characteristics of lessons presented by foundation phase teachers; determine the extent to which teachers' lack of reading pedagogical content knowledge influences foundation phase learners' inability to read; and identify the pedagogical Content challenges faced by teachers foundation phase in teaching reading.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Questions

1. What are the characteristics of lesson presented by foundation phase teachers?
2. What is the extent to which teachers' lack of reading pedagogical content knowledge influences FP learners' inability to read?
3. What are the pedagogical content challenges faced by teachers' foundation phase in teaching reading?

Methodology

The study was a quantitative research that involved the use of a descriptive research design. Quantitative research was chosen to systematically collect numerical data, enabling statistical analysis and objective interpretation (Creswell, 2014). The descriptive research design allowed for a detailed analysis of the extent and characteristics of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its impact on Grade 3 learners' reading abilities (Babbie, 2020). The population of the study was 200 teachers. Systematic random sampling was used to select forty (40) Grade 3 teachers, ensuring that every teacher had an equal chance of being selected. Teachers from all participating schools were allocated numbers from 1 to 200, which were put in a hat. With the assistance of colleagues, forty numbers representing forty respondents were randomly drawn to form the study sample. Systematic random sampling was chosen as it ensures representativeness while being simple and time-efficient. Consequently, forty teachers from the Libode sub-district participated in the study. The Questionnaire tagged Questionnaire on Characteristics and Challenges of Reading Instruction (QCRCRI) was used as the primary data collection tool. It was delivered to schools and administered to respondents in person by the researcher. The questionnaire was designed to address the main research question: understanding the contribution of Foundation Phase teachers' lack of reading pedagogical content knowledge to Grade 3 learners' inability to read EFAL texts. Respondents were given the option to complete the questionnaire either in the staffroom or in their classrooms during breaks. A relaxed atmosphere was created, and respondents were allowed enough time to reflect and rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with certain statements. On average, it took 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised items measuring demographic information, pedagogical content knowledge, and challenges faced in teaching EFAL reading. Validity of the questionnaire was ensured through content and face validity by aligning items with the study objectives and conducting a pilot test with a small group of teachers. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha through SPSS version 25, with a reliability coefficient above 0.7 considered acceptable. Data were evaluated using analytical and logical reasoning to examine each component provided. Responses were analyzed through tables and graphs, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Data analysis involved collating, ordering, and interpreting results through descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings were communicated using tables, graphs, and charts to provide a clear representation of the study's outcomes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What are the Characteristics of Lesson Presented by Foundation Phase Teachers?

This section presents data based on the following observations:

- A significant number of Foundation Phase teachers rely predominantly on rote learning as their primary teaching method.
- There is a lack of variety in the teaching methods employed by FP teachers.
- Teachers occasionally enter the classroom without adequate preparation.
- Stimulating reading both inside and outside the classroom poses a considerable challenge for teachers.

A Significant Number of Foundation Phase Teachers Rely Predominantly on Rote Learning as their Primary Teaching Method

From the graph, 62.5% of respondents in cluster 1 agreed with the statement, while 12.5% strongly agreed. When the positive responses are collapsed, 75% of the respondents agreed with the statement, whereas 12.5% disagreed. The second highest positive response was registered in cluster 4, in which 50% of respondents agreed with the statement and 12.5% strongly agreed. The sum of the positive responses for cluster 4 is 62.5%, while 37.5% of respondents disagreed with the statement. In cluster 2, 37.5% and 12.5% of the respondents respectively agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. On the negative side, 37.5% disagreed with the statement and 12.5% strongly disagreed. In collapsing both the positive and negative, 50% agreed and disagreed respectively with the statement. The same (50% positive and 50% negative) applies to clusters 3 and 5. When the positive responses in clusters 2, 3 and 5 are collapsed a total of 50% in each was recorded. This implies that the majority in all the five clusters were positive and many FP teachers resort to rote learning as the only option to teach learners. When rote learning is the main focus of learning, learners do not learn how to think, analyze and solve problems. This means that even if learners can read words, they cannot make meaning of what they read, yet comprehension texts require critical thinking. Development of teachers' PCK would enable them to prepare and present their lessons such that learners will memorize words and develop their critical thinking.

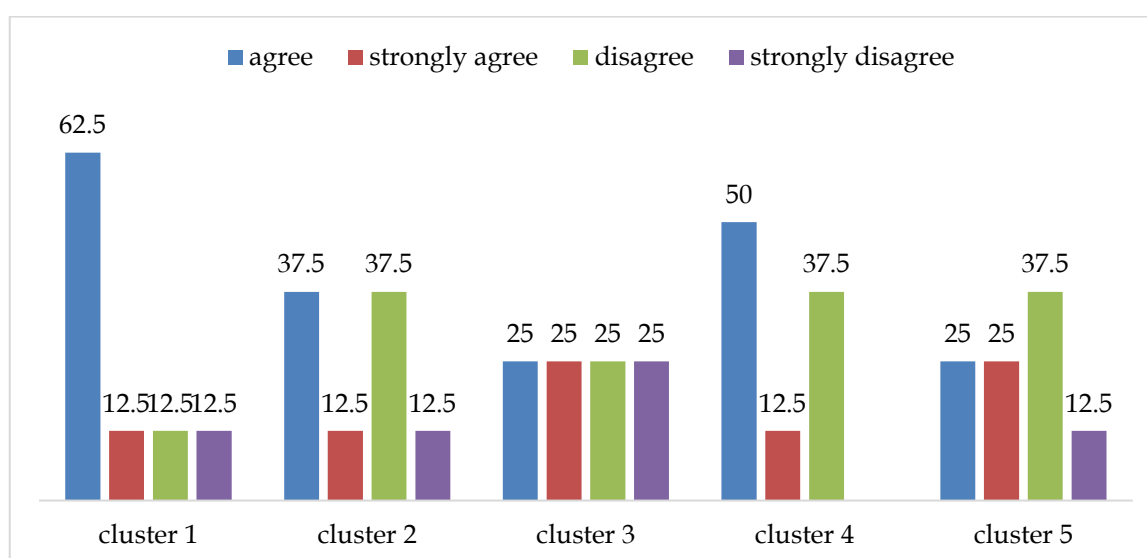


Figure 1. Rote learning as the only option

There Is a Lack of Variety in the Teaching Methods Employed by FP Teachers

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of responses concerning the use of varied teaching methods by Foundation Phase teachers, organized into five clusters. In Cluster 1, 25% of respondents agreed that teachers employ a variety of methods, 37.5% strongly agreed, while 25% disagreed and 12.5% strongly disagreed. This shows a generally positive view with some level of disagreement. Cluster 2 reflects a strong consensus, with 37.5% agreeing and another 37.5% strongly agreeing that varied methods are used, although 25% still disagreed. Cluster 3 reveals mixed opinions, with 37.5% agreeing, 25% strongly agreeing, 25% disagreeing, and 12.5% strongly disagreeing, indicating a range of views on the variety of methods used. In Cluster 4, only 12.5% agreed and none strongly agreed, while 62.5% disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed, highlighting significant concern over the lack of method diversity. Lastly, Cluster 5 shows a balanced distribution with 37.5% agreeing, 25% strongly agreeing, 12.5% disagreeing, and 25% strongly disagreeing, reflecting a mixture of opinions with notable disagreement. Three clusters (1, 3 and 5) positively responded to the statement, while two clusters (2 and 4) showed a negative response. Comparatively, it is noted that 60% of the clusters supported the statement that FP teachers do not use a variety of teaching methods when teaching reading. Not using various teaching

methods may suit few learners, thus leaving others not learning much or anything during the reading lesson and during the reading lesson. Therefore, they lag behind in their reading ability.

Table 1. Foundation phase teachers do not use a variety of teaching methods

Cluster	AG	%	SA	%	DA	%	SD	%
Cluster 1	2	25	3	37.5	2	25	1	12.5
Cluster 2	3	37.5			3	37.5	2	25
Cluster 3	3	37.5	2	25	2	25	1	12.5
Cluster 4	1	12.5			5	62.5	2	25
Cluster 5	3	37.5	2	25	1	12.5	2	25
Total	12		7		13		8	

Teachers Occasionally Enter the Classroom without Adequate Preparation

Cluster 2 presents a more mixed view, with only 12.5% agreeing and 25% strongly agreeing that teachers are sometimes unprepared, compared to 25% who disagreed and 37.5% who strongly disagreed, indicating a diverse range of opinions on teacher preparedness. In Cluster 3, 25% agreed and 25% strongly agreed that teachers occasionally lack preparation, while 37.5% disagreed and 12.5% strongly disagreed, showing moderate concern and varying perceptions among respondents. Cluster 4 shows 25% agreement with the statement and none strongly agreeing, while 37.5% disagreed and 37.5% strongly disagreed, reflecting a general belief that teachers are well-prepared. Finally, Cluster 5 shows a notable concern, with 62.5% agreeing and 12.5% strongly agreeing that teachers sometimes enter the classroom unprepared, while 25% disagreed and no respondents strongly disagreed, highlighting significant apprehension about teacher preparedness.

In summary, 3 clusters positively responded to the statement while 2 clusters did not agree with the statement. In other words, data about teachers sometimes going to class without any preparation were confirmed by 60% of the clusters. This implies that the majority of FP teachers who responded to the questionnaire do not prepare lessons before going to class. The researcher believes that lesson preparation is key to efficient teaching and learning, and if teachers assume that they can teach without having prepared, the majority of learners might not be able to read with comprehension.

Table 2. Sometimes, teachers go to class without any preparation

Cluster	AG	%	SA	%	DA	&	SD	%
Cluster 1	4	50	1	12.5	3	37.5		
Cluster 2	1	12.5	2	25	2	25	3	37.5
Cluster 3	2	25	2	25	3	37.5	1	12.5
Cluster 4	2	25			3	37.5	3	37.5
Cluster 5	5	62.5			1	12.5	2	25
Total	14		5		12		9	

Stimulating Reading both inside and outside the Classroom Poses a Considerable Challenge for Teachers

Stimulating reading both inside and outside the classroom is essential for fostering students' literacy skills and engagement. However, teachers often face significant challenges, such as limited resources, lack of parental involvement, and time constraints, which hinder their efforts to create an environment that encourages consistent reading habits. Figure 2: Below presents data on teachers' difficulties in stimulating reading inside and outside the classroom.

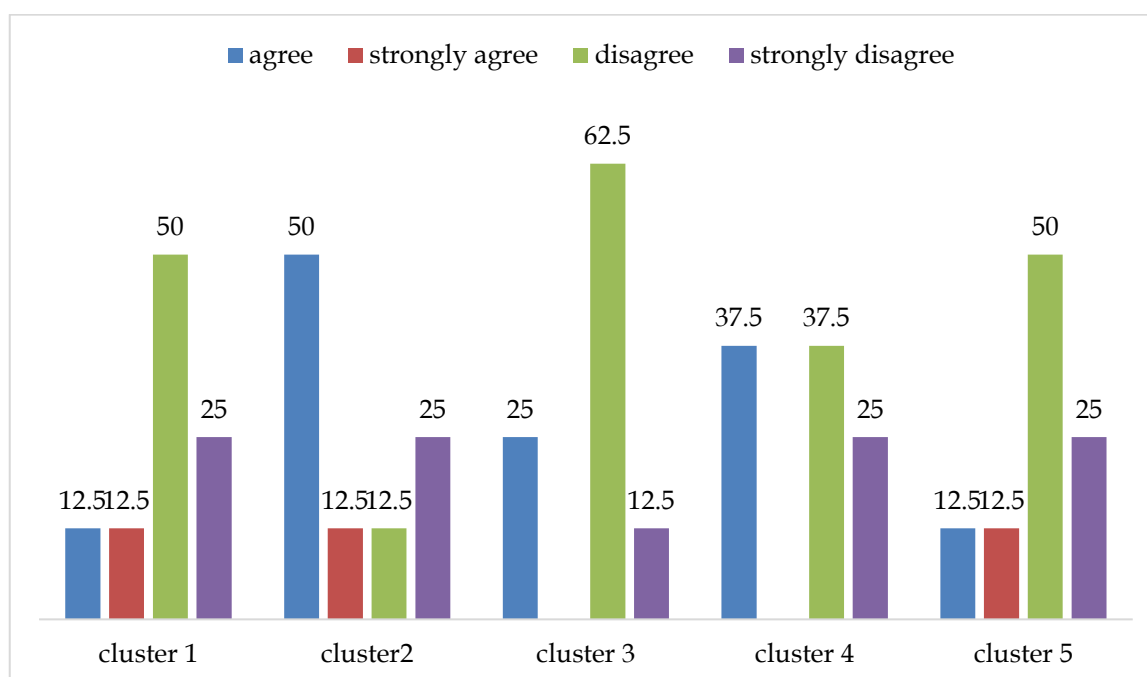


Figure 2. Bar chart showing teachers' difficulties in stimulating reading.

Data analysis from figure 2 shows that in cluster 2, 50% of respondents agreed with the statement and 12.5% strongly agreed. When collapsing the two positive responses, 62.5% of respondents agreed, while 12.5% disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed with the statement. A total of 37.5% is found when adding the negative responses. Clusters 1 and 5 show equal responses where 12.5% of respondents agreed and 12.5% strongly agreed. When collapsed, 25% of respondents agreed and 75% disagreed. Clusters 1 and 5 did not agree with the statement that teachers find it difficult to stimulate reading inside and outside the classroom.

In cluster 4, 37.5% agreed, while in cluster 3 only 25% of respondents agreed with the statement. In cluster 4, 37.5% and 25% of respondents similarly disagreed and strongly disagreed. When collapsed, 62.5% of respondents disagreed with the statement. In cluster 3, on the negative side, 62.5% and 12.5%, disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement respectively. This gives a total of 75% negative responses. Out of the 5 clusters, only cluster 2 with 62.5%, agreed with the statement, while all other 4 clusters disagreed. Even though the majority of the respondents disagreed with the statement, reflecting that they do not have difficulty stimulating reading, there are those who experience difficulty.

Research Question 2: What Is the Extent to which Teachers' Lack of Reading Pedagogical Content Knowledge Influences FP Learners' Inability to Read?

Data presentations, in this section, are as per the following statements:

- Lack of reading skills is a recipe for disaster to FP learners;
- Inability to read affects learners in all grades; and
- Learners cannot read because teachers cannot impart key information that helps learners read.

Lack of Reading Skills Is a Recipe for Disaster to the FP Learners

Table 3 below reflects the respondents' responses to the notion that teachers' lack of reading skills could be a recipe for disaster to the FP learners.

Table 3. Lack of reading skills is a recipe for disaster to the FP learners

Cluster	Agree	%	Strongly Agree	%	Disagree	%	Strongly Disagree	%
Cluster 1	2	25	4	50	2	25		
Cluster 2	3	37.5	5	62.5				
Cluster 3	1	12.5	7	87.5				
Cluster 4	1	12.5	5	62.5	1	12.5	1	12.5
Cluster 5	2	25	6	75				
Total	9		27		3		1	

The table above shows that in cluster 1, 25% of respondents agreed and 50% of them strongly agreed that lack of reading skills is a recipe for disaster to the FP learners. When adding the positive responses, it shows that 75% of respondents agreed while 25% disagreed with the statement. In cluster 4, 12,5% of respondents agreed with the statement and 62,5% strongly agreed, while 25% respondents disagreed. This means that 75% of respondents agreed with the statement in cluster 4 while only 25% disagreed. Clusters 2, 3 and 5 did not have negative responses. In cluster 2, 37,5% and 62,5% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively. Cluster 3 shows 12,5% agreement and 87,5% of respondents who strongly agreed, while in cluster 5, 25% agreed and 75% strongly agreed. When collapsing the responses of clusters 2, 3 and 5, 100% agreement in each cluster is evident. The data show that all 5 clusters unanimously agreed that lack of reading skills is a recipe for disaster to the FP learners. This means that teachers' inability to teach learners to acquire reading skills results in learners' inability to read with comprehension.

Inability to Read Affects Learners in All Grades

The comparison of cluster responses to the statement that inability to read affects learners in all grades is presented in the following figure.

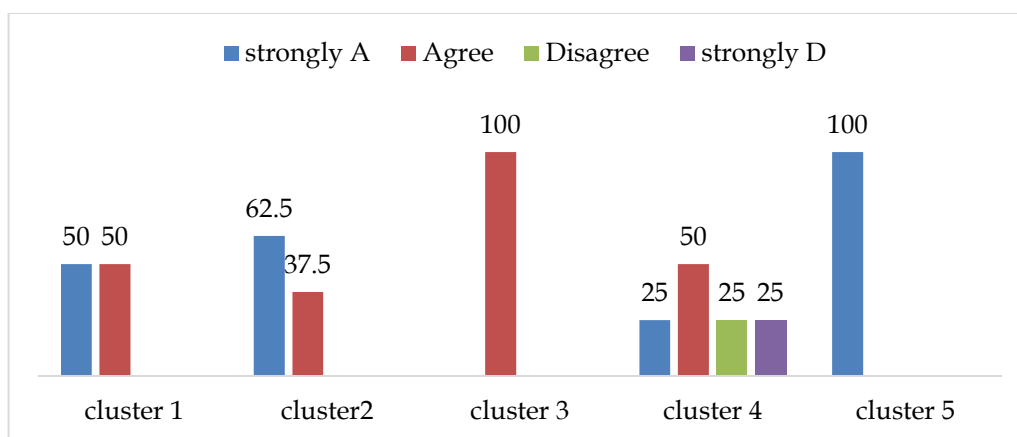


Figure 3. Inability to read affects learners in all Grades

The figure above shows that clusters 3 and 5 reflect 100% strong agreement, while in cluster 1, 50% agreed with the statement, and 50% strongly agreed. When these responses from cluster 1 are collapsed, 100% agreement is registered. Cluster 2 shows 37,5% agreement and 62,5% respondents who strongly agreed. The positive response of 100% is also registered in cluster 2. In cluster 4, 25% of respondents agreed and 50% strongly agreed while on the negative side, 12,5% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. All 5 clusters were unanimously positive to the statement that inability to read affects learners in all Grades. If learners do not get a good foundation in reading, it is unlikely that they may perform well in the higher grades.

Learners Are Unable to Read Because Teachers Cannot Impart Key Information that Helps Learners to Read

The table below reflects the degree of responses in each cluster to the statement.

Table 4. Learners are unable to read because teachers cannot impart key Information that can help learners to read

Cluster	Agree	%	Strongly Agree	%	Disagree	%	Strongly Disagree	%
Cluster 1	2	25	3	37.5	2	25	1	12.5
Cluster 2	4	50	1	12.5	1	12.5	2	25
Cluster 3	2	25	4	50	2	25		
Cluster 4	4	50	3	37.5	1	12.5		
Cluster 5	3	37.5	4	50	1	12.5		
Total	15		15		7		3	

Data analysis on the statement that learners cannot read because teachers cannot impart key information shows varying responses, where in cluster 1, 25% of respondents agreed and 37.5% strongly agreed. Collapsing the positive responses resulted in 62.5% agreement and 37.5% disagreement. A total of 50% of respondents agreed and 12.5% strongly agreed with the statement in cluster 2, with the sum of the responses being 62.5% agreement and 37.5% disagreement. In cluster 3, 25% of respondents agreed and 50% strongly agreed, and when the positive responses are collapsed, 75% agreement is registered. This cluster (3) reflects 25% disagreement responses. In clusters 4 and 5, the sum of the positive responses is 87%, whereas, 12.5% disagreement is noted. Again, a strong agreement by all clusters has been noted in the statement that learners are unable to read because teachers cannot impart key information. When teachers neglect to clarify important words and phrases that could give meaning to the text, it may be difficult for learners to understand what they read.

Research Question 3: What Are the Pedagogical Content Challenges Faced by Teachers' Foundation Phase in Teaching Reading?

In this section, data on the Pedagogical Content Knowledge challenges experienced by teachers when teaching reading are presented. The following statements were posed in an attempt to address the objective.

- FP teachers lack methods of imparting reading skills to pupils;
- Lack of resources poses challenges to the teaching of EFAL; and
- The majority of FP teachers might not have been trained to teach reading.

FP Teachers Lack Methods of Imparting Reading Skills to Pupils.

The table below reflects the presentation and analysis of data with regard to the above statement.

Table 5. FP teachers lack methods of imparting reading skills to learners

Cluster	Agree	%	Strongly Agree	%	Disagree	%	Strongly Disagree	%
Cluster 1	3	37.50	1	12.5	4	50.00		
Cluster 2	5	62.50			1	12.50	2	25.00
Cluster 3	2	25.00	2	25	3	37.50	1	12.50
Cluster 4	2	25.00			4	50.00	2	25.00
Cluster 5	4	50.00			1	12.50	3	37.50
Total	16		3		13		8	

Data on the above table reveal that FP teachers lack methods of imparting reading skills to learners, shown by 37.5% of respondents who agreed, and 12.5% strongly agreed with the

statement in cluster 1. The sum of the positive responses is 50%. On the negative side, 50% of respondents from the same cluster disagreed with the statement. In cluster 3, 25% agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, with the statement. A total of 50% (37.5% and 12.5%) was found when collapsing the negative responses, which implies 50% disagreement. Also, in cluster 5, 50% agreement and 50% disagreement (made up of 37.5% and 12.5%) is noted respectively. Although data in clusters 1, 3 and 5 similarly reflect 50% agreement and disagreement, clusters 2 and 4 have different responses. In cluster 2, 62.5% of respondents agreed while 12.5% disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed with the statement. When the negative responses are collapsed, 37.5% disagreement is obtained. The least positive responses are registered in cluster 4 where only 25% of respondents agreed with the statement. However, 50% disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed with the statement. When the negative responses are collapsed, 75% of respondents did not agree with it.

In summary, 80% of the clusters agreed that FP teachers lack methods of imparting reading skills to pupils. Only 20% of them did not agree with the statement. Therefore, this implies that learners' inability to read can be attributed to teachers' lack of methods to impart reading skills. Teachers' lack of methods to impart reading skills to learners, is therefore, posing a challenge to learners' ability to read EFAL.

Teachers Seem Not Exposed to Major Communicative and Interactive Reading Approaches

Cluster 2 has the highest percentage (62.5%) of respondents agreeing with the statement, but 12.5% did not agree and 25% strongly disagreed with the statement. The total percentage of those who disagreed is 37.5%. In cluster 3, 37.5% of respondents agreed and 25% strongly agreed with the statement. The total of positive responses is 62.5%. On the negative responses, 25% disagreed and 12.5% strongly disagreed, and when collapsing the two negatives, 37.5% disagreement is observed. The third highest positive response is in cluster 1, where 37.5% and 12.5% of respondents respectively agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. Looking at the negative responses in cluster 1, 37.5% of respondents disagreed and 12.5% strongly disagreed. The total percentage of both positive and negative responses in this cluster is 50%. In cluster 4, 25% of respondents, whereas 50% of them disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed agreed with the statement. Collapsing the negative responses show that 75% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. In cluster 5, 37.5% of respondents agreed, while, 37.5% disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed with the statement. The sum of the negative responses is 62.5%.

Table 6. Non-exposure to major communicative and interactive reading approaches

Cluster	Agree	%	Strongly Agree	%	Disagree	%	Strongly Disagree	%
Cluster 1	3	37.5	1	12.5	3	37.5	1	12.5
Cluster 2	5	62.5			1	12.5	2	25
Cluster 3	3	37.5	2	25	2	25	1	12.5
Cluster 4	2	25			4	50	2	25
Cluster 5	3	37.5			3	37.5	2	25
Total	16		3		13		8	

In this statement, three out of five clusters (60%) agreed that teachers seem not exposed to major communicative and interactive reading approaches. The researcher contends that, in order for teachers to be able to understand communicative and interactive approaches, they should be trained. Mastering these approaches will contribute to improving teachers' PCK, which in turn will positively contribute to learners' reading ability.

Lack of Resources Constitutes Challenges to the Teaching Of EFAL

Figure 4 below reflects the respondents' responses to the above statement.

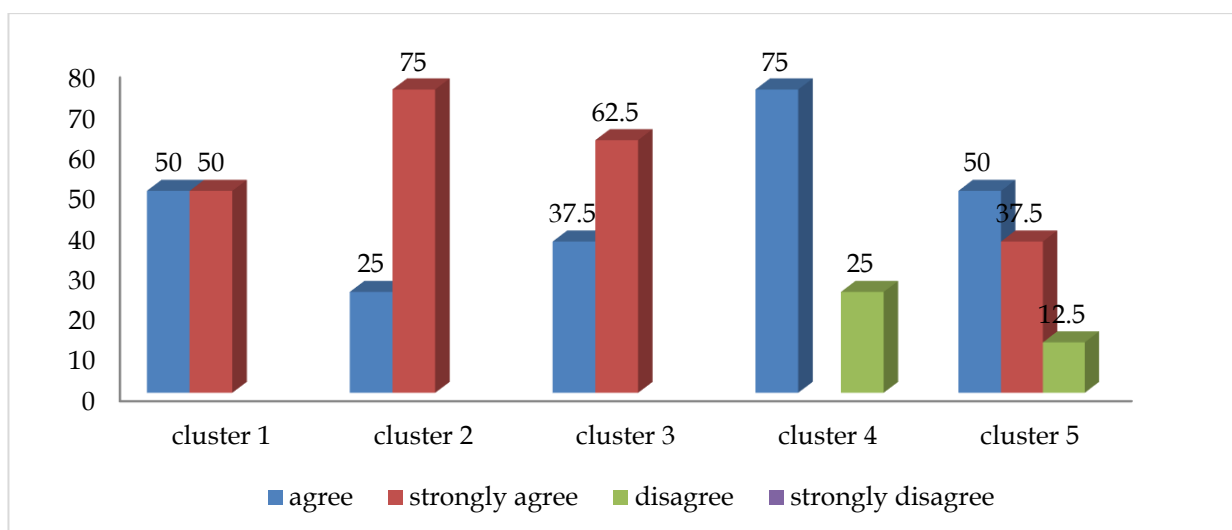


Figure 4. Bar Chart of response on lack of resources constitutes challenges to the teaching of EFAL

The data show that in cluster 1, 50% of respondents respectively agreed and strongly disagreed that lack of resources constitute challenges to the teaching of EFAL, and this adds up to 100% agreement. In cluster 2, 100% agreement was made up by 75% and 25% of respondents who agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. In cluster 3, 62.5% of respondents agreed and 37.5% strongly agreed, and that gives a total of 100%. In cluster 5, 35.7% of respondents agreed and 50% strongly agreed with the statement, which adds up to 87.5% agreement, and a minority of 12.5% respondents did not agree with the statement. In cluster 4, 75% of respondents agreed while 25% disagreed with the statement. The responses depicted in the figure above prove that all 5 clusters believed that lack of resources constitute challenges to the teaching of EFAL. The researcher believes that lack of resources hinders teachers' ability to teach reading with understanding to First Additional Language learners. Therefore, the availability of resources could enable teachers to apply reading strategies that would improve learners' reading ability and thereby minimise the PCK challenges faced by teachers.

The Majority Of FP Teachers Have Not Been Trained to Teach Reading

The following figure reflects teachers' responses to the above statement.

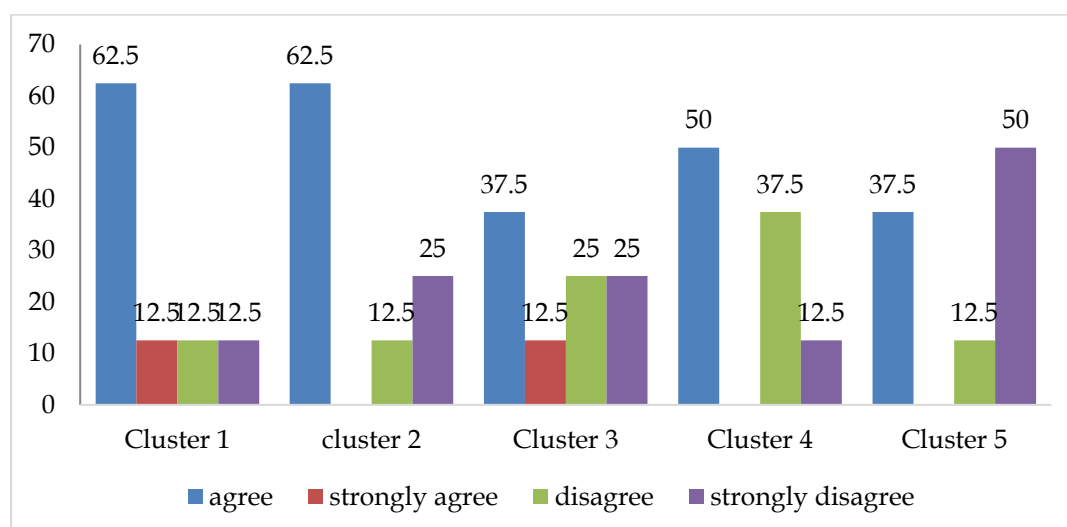


Figure 5. Bar chart of responses on how FP teachers have not been trained to teach reading

Analysis of responses showed that, in cluster 1, 62.5% and 12.5% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the statement, thus, giving positive responses at 75%. On the negative side,

12.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively, and when the negatives are collapsed, 25% disagreement is noted. Cluster 2 shows 62.5% agreement while 12.5% disagreement and 25% strong disagreement are observed. The sum of the negative responses is 37.5%. In cluster 3, 37.5% agreed and 12.5% strongly agreed; the positives sum up to 50%, while another 50% disagreed with the statement. The same 50% response (positive and negative) is noted in cluster 4 where 50% of respondents agreed while 37.5% disagreed and 12.5% strongly disagreed. When the negative responses are collapsed, 50% of respondents disagreed. The least positive response is registered in cluster 5 where only 37.5% of respondents agreed and a total of 62.5% respondents disagreed.

All in all, in four clusters, positive responses exceed negative responses and it is only in cluster 5 where most respondents did not agree with the statement. It could be deduced that a high percentage of respondents believe that they were not trained to teach reading. The researcher believes that teachers who were not trained in teaching reading do not have the knowledge and skills to teach it, and that contributes to PCK challenges that teacher face when teaching reading.

Discussion

The findings revealed that while many teachers had a strong academic background in languages, their professional training was not tailored to the Foundation Phase (FP), resulting in a significant gap between content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. This was corroborated by Ncube (2024) and Sarkar (2024) who stated that content knowledge alone is insufficient to address learners' challenges in reading and that pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is critical for equipping learners with the necessary skills for comprehension and critical thinking. The inability of teachers to effectively integrate PCK contributes to learners' struggles in reading, (Gumede & Siyepu, 2021). The significance of PCK in reading instruction aligns with Piaget's constructivism learning theory, which advocates for activity-based learning and outdoor activities to spark learners' interest and enhance engagement (Piaget, 1972; Manzoor et al., 2024). Teachers who fail to adapt their lessons to students' needs often cause learners to "bark at the text," an issue identified by Alpuerto (2023), who found that deliberate and well-planned reading instruction is vital for comprehension development. Teachers must plan lessons that connect learners' prior knowledge to new content, fostering a gradual transition from familiar concepts to unfamiliar ones to build understanding and confidence (Farhang et al, 2023). The inability to read not only hinders learners academically but also negatively affects their self-esteem and confidence which will potentially shape their adult lives (Sari, 2024). This is consistent with Piaget (1972) constructivist perspectives, which stress the need for teachers to build lessons on learners' prior experiences to promote meaningful learning. By integrating pedagogical strategies like scaffolding and activity-based learning, teachers can create an environment that supports comprehension, critical thinking, and self-expression (Wolhuter, 2020). Such an approach ensures that learners gain the skills necessary to navigate academic and real-world challenges effectively.

The findings indicate that Foundation Phase (FP) teachers do not engage in adequate lesson preparation before teaching. Lesson planning is a critical process where teachers visualize the learning journey, organize learning experiences, and align instructional objectives with learners' needs. However, in this study, teachers were found to simply instruct learners to read from randomly selected texts, with no structured objectives or guided activities. This unstructured approach results in learners "barking at the text," meaning they read aloud without comprehension or attaching meaning to what they read. Effective lesson planning ensures that teaching objectives are clear, learning activities are meaningful, and delivery methods are engaging. This aligns with Alpuerto (2023) assertion that deficiencies in teacher preparation – such as failing to address learners' prior knowledge, cultural diversity, and content quality – hinder reading proficiency. Bakar (2022) also found that reading comprehension requires deliberate, well-planned instructional patterns rather than incidental learning. In the same way, Farhang (2023) found out in their study that lesson planning is indispensable, arguing that

teachers who fail to prepare risk diminishing their effectiveness in fostering learner engagement and achievement.

The findings revealed that although many teachers majored in languages, their professional training was not relevant to the Foundation Phase (FP), highlighting the insufficiency of content knowledge without pedagogical knowledge (PCK) to improve learners' reading abilities. According to Patra and Guha (2017), teachers who lack PCK often struggle to design and deliver lessons that effectively integrate subject content with teaching strategies, leading to poor learner outcomes. In the same way, Taylor (2022) found that without PCK, teachers fail to address learners' developmental needs, exacerbating challenges in literacy acquisition. This deficiency aligns with Hart (2023) assertion that inability to teach children to read has cognitive implications akin to brain stunting, which shows the urgent need for targeted professional development programs for teachers. The application of Piaget's constructivist learning theory advocates for activity-based learning and outdoor engagement to foster learner interest and comprehension. However, FP teachers who fail to adopt such strategies leave learners unable to read or understand text, significantly affecting their ability to express themselves and diminishing their self-confidence (Nkomo et al., 2023). This lack of confidence can lead to long-term impacts on personality development and self-esteem. Furthermore & Farhang (2023) argues that building lessons on learners' prior knowledge and progressing from known to unknown fosters better comprehension and critical thinking skills. When teachers utilize constructivist approaches, they create an inclusive learning environment that supports learners' growth and improves reading outcomes.

The findings reveal that learners struggle to read due to teachers' inability to convey key information effectively, which often stems from their lack of understanding of individual learner needs and developmental stages. According to Piaget's theory, new information should align with learners' cognitive development stages, enabling teachers to tailor content delivery appropriately (McLeod, 2024). Teachers' inadequate knowledge of their learners' backgrounds and cognitive abilities further exacerbates the issue, as they fail to present subject matter at an accessible level. As noted by Rao (2014), understanding learners' specific contexts and needs is critical for effective teaching, particularly in the early phases of education. Moreover, teachers' attitudes toward reading strategies and their limited understanding of reading pedagogy play a significant role in learners' reading difficulties. Erasmus (2022) found that teachers often lack the foundational skills required to motivate learners to read or to cultivate habitual reading practices, which hinders learners' comprehension development. These limitations highlight the need for FP teachers to be equipped with robust reading strategies, including techniques like prediction, visualization, question-and-answer sessions, and critical thinking exercises. According to Farhang (2023) such strategies align with constructivist principles, emphasizing that teaching reading should be an active process where learners engage meaningfully with text. By adopting these methods, teachers can foster a deeper understanding of comprehension texts among learners and improve literacy outcomes.

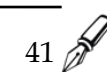
It further emerged that teachers found it difficult to stimulate reading both inside and outside the classroom. This aligns with recent research emphasizing the role of teachers in fostering reading comprehension skills. For example, Munthe, & Westergård, (2023) stated that teachers should not only focus on developing reading comprehension within the classroom but also collaborate with parents to extend this focus into the home environment. Similarly, Piaget's constructivist theory, which promotes teaching as a social and collaborative process, supports the idea that external assistance, such as parental involvement, is valuable for fostering literacy. However, the researcher acknowledges that illiterate parents may face significant challenges in supporting their children's literacy development at home. Teachers with Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) are well-positioned to bridge this gap by building strong relationships with parents and guardians, encouraging reading both inside and outside the classroom. Study by Leenders (2019) further reinforces this, showing that positive teacher-parent partnerships are integral to improving literacy outcomes for students. Moreover, the findings indicate that many

teachers struggle with effectively stimulating reading inside and outside the classroom due to an underdeveloped understanding of reading instruction. This is consistent with findings by Lu (2022), who note that many educators lack the necessary skills to teach reading effectively, which limits their ability to engage students in literacy practices. Lu (2022) suggests that teachers should be equipped with a range of carefully selected graded readers and should design activities that support the development of students' reading comprehension. This recommendation is in line with research by Dwiningtiyas (2020), who emphasize the importance of varied and well-structured reading materials in enhancing students' comprehension skills. Furthermore, the study highlights that teachers' lack of appropriate teaching strategies contributes to learners' struggles with reading English First Additional Language (EFAL) texts. This view is supported by Munna & Kalam (2021), who argue that effective teachers need to employ a variety of instructional strategies to accommodate the diverse learning abilities of students. They stated that teachers who use a range of methods are better equipped to cater to the different needs of learners, ultimately promoting improved literacy outcomes.

The finding further revealed that teachers in the study were not trained to teach reading. Only a few teachers were trained to teach in the Foundation Phase, while the rest were trained in qualifications relevant to other phases and bands. This finding aligns with Erasmus, (2022) who found that many teachers do not view reading comprehension as an integral part of the reading process and are unable to teach English First Additional Language (EFAL) concepts because they were not trained to do so during their professional development. In the same way Barends & Reddy (2024) found that overcrowded classrooms hinder the teaching and learning process of reading, as teachers struggle to address the individual needs of their learners in such settings. The findings of the study corroborate this, indicating that the quality of reading instruction is restricted in crowded classrooms, making it challenging for teachers to provide tailored support for each student. Furthermore, the study revealed that a multi-grading system, which was practiced in some research sites, hindered a teacher's ability to teach reading effectively. Teachers reported lacking the knowledge and skills to teach reading in multi-grade classrooms, as they were not trained for this specific teaching approach. Additionally, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document does not specify how multi-grade classes should be managed, leaving teachers without clear guidance. This finding contrasts with Kivunja & Wood (2012) who argues that multi-grading is not a challenge, and instead sees it as a practice that fosters higher self-esteem and social confidence among learners. However, this is further debated by Ismail (2022), who found that while some teachers perceive multi-grading as burdensome, others believe it promotes cognitive and social growth and reduces antisocial behavior, providing a more well-rounded educational experience.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

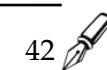
The study's findings reveal a significant challenge in stimulating reading both inside and outside the classroom, particularly among a specific group of teachers who report notable difficulties compared to others. This discrepancy suggests that some teachers face unique barriers that affect their ability to cultivate a robust reading culture. Teachers in this group encounter difficulties that may be due to factors such as limited resources, insufficient parental involvement, and inadequate professional development. Effective reading stimulation is crucial for enhancing students' literacy skills, as teachers' capacity to create an engaging reading environment and promote reading for pleasure plays a significant role in students' reading abilities and overall academic success. Addressing these issues can help alleviate the difficulties faced by teachers and improve the effectiveness of reading stimulation efforts, ultimately supporting better literacy outcomes for students. Based on the study's findings, several recommendations are suggested to address the challenges in stimulating reading both inside and outside the classroom. Schools should invest in a diverse range of reading materials, including books at various reading levels, genres, and formats, such as digital books. This ensures that all students have access to engaging and appropriate reading resources tailored to their interests and needs. Additionally, schools



should implement programs to actively involve parents in their children's reading development. This can include workshops on supporting reading at home, regular communication between teachers and parents about students' progress, and initiatives that encourage parental participation in school reading activities. Offering ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers focused on innovative reading instruction methods, strategies for stimulating reading, and the use of diverse resources is also crucial. This will equip teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to create more dynamic and effective reading environments. Furthermore, schools should encourage teachers to use student-centered approaches in reading instruction, such as personalized reading plans, choice-based reading activities, and interactive reading sessions, to make reading more engaging and relevant to each student.

REFERENCES

- Alpuerto, M. V. A. (2023). Teachers' preparedness in teaching learners with diverse needs in Polillo Group of Islands Central Schools: Basis for a teacher development program. *Psych Education*, 14, 355–372. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8423986>
- Babbie, E. (2020). *The practice of social research*. Cengage Learning.
- Bakar, A., Adams, F. H., Tetteh-Osei, F., Ochour, B. K., Ansah, P. O., & Asabere, I. K. (2022). Teachers' technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge in the junior high school social studies curriculum. *Universal Journal of Social Science and Humanities*, <https://doi.org/10.31586/ujssh.2022.301>
- Barends, Z., & Reddy, C. (2024). Moving beyond a balanced approach to reading instruction – In search of a contextualised alternative. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 14(1), a1528. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v14i1.1528>
- Barends, Z., & Reddy, C. P. (2024). Moving beyond a balanced approach to reading instruction – In search of a contextualised alternative. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v14i1.1528>
- Chen, Y., Tang, J., Du, J., & Huang, S. (2024). A literature review of teachers' preparedness to teach and its influencing factors. *Frontiers in Sustainable Development*, 4(5), 63–69. <https://doi.org/10.54691/57j55m12>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Du Plessis, P., & Mestry, R. (2019). Teachers for rural schools: A challenge for South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 39(Suppl. 1), S1–S9. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v39ns1a1774>
- Duan, G., Jia, L., & Chen, H. (2022). The role of English as a foreign language teachers' technological pedagogical content knowledge on English as a foreign language students' achievement. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 946081. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.946081>
- Dwiningtiyas, G. N., Sofyan, D., & Puspita, H. (2020). Teachers' strategies in teaching reading comprehension. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literacy*, 4(2), 23–36. <https://doi.org/10.25157/jall.v4i2.3682>
- Erasmus, C. D. (2022). *Teachers' use of reading strategies in the teaching of reading for meaning in EFAL classrooms in the Intermediate Phase* (Master's thesis, North-West University). <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8604-3412>
- Farhang, Q., Hashemi, S. S. A., & Ghorianfar, S. M. (2023). Lesson plan and its importance in the teaching process. *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*, 6(8). <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/V6-i8-57>
- Fergina, A., Ghazy, A., Prancisca, S., Ananda, E., & others. (2024). Enhancing reading comprehension through extensive reading. *Journal of English Education Program*, 5(2), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.26418/jeep.v5i2.71717>
- Haile, S. Z., & Mendisu, B. S. (2023). Early-grade reading: The challenges that affect teachers' practice of phonological awareness: The case of Koorete language. *Education Research International*, 2023(1), 9527369. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2023/9527369>



- Hart, S. A. (2023). Identifying the factors impacting the uptake of educational technology in South African schools: A systematic review. *South African Journal of Education*, 43(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v43n1a2174>
- Ismail, S. N., Muhammad, S., Omar, M. N., Shanmugam, S. K. S., & Rajoo, M. (2022). The practice of critical thinking skills in teaching mathematics: Teachers' perception and readiness. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 19(1), 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.32890/mjli2022.19.1>
- Jacob, F., John, S., & Gwany, D. M. (2020). Teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and students' academic achievement: A theoretical overview. *Journal of Global Research in Education and Social Science*, 14(2), 14–44. <https://ikprress.org/index.php/IOGRESS/article/view/5405>
- Kivunja, C., & Wood, D. (2012). Multigrade pedagogy and practice: Accelerating millennium development goals for sub-Saharan Africa. *International Journal of Learning and Change*, 18(11), 17–32. <https://doi.org/10.18848/1447-9494/CGP/v18i11/47811>
- Leenders, H., de Jong, J., Monfrance, M., & Haelerman, C. (2019). Building strong parent-teacher relationships in primary education: The challenge of two-way communication. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 49(3), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2019.1566442>
- Linlin, Z., Jeyaraj, J. J., & Ismail, L. (2024). A systematic review of teacher talk and its effects on English language learning outcomes. *World Journal of English Language*, 14(5), 454. <http://wjel.sciedupress.com>
- Liu, S. (2025). Pedagogical content knowledge: A case study of ESL teacher educator. *English Language Teaching*, 6(7), 128. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n7p128>
- Lu, H. (2022). Challenges teachers face in teaching reading among elementary pupils. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education*, 11(16), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.5861/ijrse.2022.354>
- Makoelle, T. M., & Malindi, M. J. (2014). Multi-grade teaching and inclusion: Selected cases in the Free State Province of South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 7(1), 77–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09751122.2014.11890171>
- Mankgele, K. P. (2023). The consequence of overcrowded classrooms in the teaching and learning of entrepreneurial subjects in secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Research*, 3(4), 1533–1545. <https://ajmesc.com/index.php/ajmesc/article/view/620>
- Manyike, T. V., & Lemme, E. (2014). Research in language education in South Africa: Problems & prospects. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(8), 251. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n8p251>
- Manzoor, A. A., Tufail, N., & Hayat, K. (2024). Exploring the role of lesson planning on prospective teacher professional skills at the University of Narowal: A qualitative research study. *Qlantic Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(2), 66–75. <https://doi.org/10.55737/qjss.349976385>
- McLeod, S. (2024). Piaget's theory and stages of cognitive development. *Simply Psychology*. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/piaget.html>
- Meiklejohn, C., Westaway, L., Westaway, A. F. H., & Long, K. A. (2021). A review of South African primary school literacy interventions from 2005 to 2020. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 11(1), a919. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v11i1.919>
- Mrutu, N., & Kulwenza, R. (2024). Exploring the teaching of reading in lower primary classes: A case study of one government primary school in Kocheke Sub County, Uganda. *African Journal of Education and Practice*, 10(6), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.47604/ajep.3105>
- Munna, A. S., & Kalam, M. A. (2021). Teaching and learning process to enhance teaching effectiveness: A literature review. *International Journal of Humanities and Innovation (IJHI)*, 4(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.33750/ijhi.v4i1.102>
- Munthe, E., & Westergård, E. (2023). Parents', teachers', and students' roles in parent-teacher conferences: A systematic review and meta-synthesis. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 136, 104355. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2023.104355>

- Nation, K. (2019). Children's reading difficulties, language, and reflections on the simple view of reading. *Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties*, 24(9), 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19404158.2019.1609272>
- Ncube, G., Kutame, A. P., Ntombela, S., & Ajani, O. A. (2024). Teachers' views on their professional identity in teaching number concepts in the foundation phase. *International Journal of Business and Educational Studies*, 6(5). <https://doi.org/10.36096/ijbes.v6i5.565>
- Nkomo, S. A., Magxala, X. P., & Lebopa, N. (2023). Early literacy experiences of two children during Covid-19 lockdown in South Africa: A semi-ethnographic study. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 0(0), 1–34. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687984231154351>
- Patra, A., & Guha, A. (2017). Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and teacher effectiveness in geography teaching in respect of experience and qualification: A comparative study. *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 5(4), 821–824. <https://doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/3881>
- Piaget, J. (1954). *The construction of reality in the child*. Basic Books. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/11168-000>
- Piaget, J. (1972). *The principles of genetic epistemology*. Routledge.
- Rao, N., Sun, J., Wong, J., Lee, D., & others. (2014). Early childhood development and cognitive development in developing countries: A rigorous literature review. *Child Development Perspectives*, 8(3), 141–147. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12074>
- Sari, A. (2024). Exploring the relationship between digital literacy skills and student success in online science courses in Indonesia. *International Journal of Online and Distance Learning*, 5(2), 30–40. <https://doi.org/10.47604/ijodl.2746>
- Sarkar, M., Gutierrez-Bucheli, L., Yip, S. Y., Lazarus, M., Wright, C., White, P. J., Ilic, D., Hiscox, T. J., & Berry, A. (2024). Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in higher education: A systematic scoping review. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 144, 104608. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2024.104608>
- Taylor, N. (2022). Teacher quality: The preparation and utilization of teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa. In *Teacher Quality* (pp. 1–16). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-59533-3_1-1
- Vaughn, S., & Fletcher, J. (2021). Explicit instruction as the essential tool for executing the science of reading. *Reading League Journal*, 2(2), 4–11. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9004595>
- Ventista, O. M., & Brown, C. (2023). Teachers' professional learning and its impact on students' learning outcomes: Findings from a systematic review. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 8(1), 100565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2023.100565>
- Wallington, E. T., & Johnson, A. (2022). Systemic approaches for professional development on diverse learners in rural communities. *Educational Considerations*, 48(2). <https://doi.org/10.4148/0146-9282.2332>
- Wildsmith-Cromarty, R., & Balfour, R. J. (2019). Language learning and teaching in South African primary schools. *Language Teaching*, 52, 296–317. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444819000181>
- Wolhuter, C. C. (2020). Critical issues in South African education. In C. C. Wolhuter (Ed.), *Critical issues in South African education: Illumination from international comparative perspectives from the BRICS countries* 2, 1–28. AOSIS. <https://doi.org/10.4102/aosis.2020.BK207.01>

Author (s):

Nobabalo Mandisa Mjobo
Continuing Professional Teacher Development,
Faculty of Education,
Walter Sisulu University,



South Africa.

Email: mandisanogaga@gmail.com

Elphina Nomabandla Cishe
Nedbank Research Chair in Sustainable Rural Development,
Walter Sisulu University,
South Africa
Email: ecishe@wsu.ac.za

*Matthew Damilola, Omojemite
Post Doctoral Research Fellow,
Continuing Professional Teacher Development,
Faculty of Education,
Walter Sisulu University
South Africa
Email: momojemite@wsu.ac.za
