

Towards a Theoretical Framework for Teaching Reading Comprehension: A Case Study of Three Rural Primary Schools

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ABSTRACT The main objective of this qualitative study was to explore how teachers teach reading comprehension to Grade 3 Tshivenda-speaking learners. The study developed a conceptual framework from the literature review, consisting of five phases that were identified and developed. The phases were namely, creating awareness of the reading comprehension challenge, strategic planning, teaching of reading comprehension strategies, self-monitoring and feedback and self-efficacy are interdependent and form a continuous cycle. The study recommended that, parents, principals, heads of departments and teachers need to be actively involved in the education of their learners. The teacher needs theoretical knowledge and be strategic in planning, creating an atmosphere conducive for learning. Teachers must be able to motivate learners to participate actively in the reading comprehension process. Teachers need to develop skills, knowledge, and self-regulatory strategies to support learners until they can read independently.

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is fundamental to a child's understanding of the text. For learners to read and comprehend a text they should be able to interpret, analyse and evaluate texts (Dole 2000); reading without understanding may be a waste of the reader's time and is likely to leave the reader discouraged and frustrated. Snowling and Hulme (2011); Shanahan (2006: 28) defined reading comprehension as the 'act of understanding and interpreting the information within a text'. Such reading requires word knowledge, as well as thinking and reasoning. In order for comprehending a text means that words must be decoded and associated with their meanings in a reader's memory.

Armbruster, Lehr and Osborn (2001: 53) point out that: 'if readers can read the words but do not understand what they are reading they are not reading'. The most important role of foundation phase teachers is to teach learners to read and construct meaning from the text (Department of Education (DoE) 2002). Acquiring reading skills acquisition thus is the process of ac-

quiring the basic skills necessary for learning to read, that is, the ability to acquire meaning from print (Tarchi 2010; Verhoeven 2000).

Butler et al. (2010: 1) state:

'A student's academic progress is profoundly shaped by the ability to understand what is read. Students, who cannot understand what they read, are not likely to acquire the skills necessary to participate in the 21st century workforce'.

The skills required for proficient reading fluently include the ability to read orally with speed, accuracy and vocal expression. The ability to read fluently is one of several critical factors necessary for reading comprehension. If a reader is not fluent, he or she may be difficult it to remember what has been read and to relate the ideas expressed in the text to his or her background knowledge (Verhoeven 2000). This accuracy and automaticity of reading serves as a bridge between decoding and comprehension vocabulary. A critical aspect of reading comprehension is the development of a vocabulary that it encompasses all the words we must know to access our background knowledge, express our ideas and communicate effectively and to learn about new concepts (National Reading Panel - NRP 2000).

Abstract: is part of the chapter on Theoretical frame work of my PHD thesis hence the similarity of the abstract

As part of the government's response to high illiteracy levels in schools, the DoE introduced various intervention strategies such as the Revised National Curriculum Statement (DoE 2002), the National Reading Strategy (DoE 2008), and the Foundations for Learning Campaign (DoE 2008) and Teaching Reading in Early Grades (DoE 2008). The aim of these intervention strategies was to help teachers become more competent in their teaching.

However, the Annual National Assessment (ANA) show that there has been no improvement in Grade 3 literacy. Additionally, the ANA (2011) indicates that of the nine provinces of South Africa, Limpopo has the lowest literacy levels, including its Grade 3 Tshivenda-speaking learners.

The focus for the study was selected for two reasons. Firstly reading comprehension has been identified as a major weakness of South African learners, and recent surveys have indicated that the problem is on-going (Howie et al. 2007; The Times 2011). It is therefore, that research should be carried out to establish possible reasons for this situation. Secondly the ability to read mother tongue is a critical skill for learners. Not only can this assist them to understand other languages, but the majority of school learners, especially in areas like Vhembe, use Tshivenda (not English) as a language of learning and teaching. They need to be able to read and understand texts in the mother tongue in order to pursue knowledge in a wide range of texts outside the classroom.

The importance of the study is that it adds knowledge the challenges teachers encounter in the teaching of reading comprehension in Tshivenda.

Purpose of the Study

The lack of reading skills is particularly apparent in the foundation phase (Fleisch 2008). Indications are that the literacy basis in the foundation phase is not properly laid in Grades 1 to 3 and that the foundation phase teachers, especially Tshivenda-speaking teachers; do not know how to teach reading comprehension (Reeves et al. 2008). Although this obviously aggravates the problem, it is assumed that there may be other contributing factors for example, not all schools have class readers for the learners (Scheepers 2008). Heugh (2005) state that while

a teacher's handbook for teaching reading in English has been developed and is used widely across South African schools, the DoE has still not published a single handbook for teaching reading in any other African language.

This is a serious concern, the more so since it is acknowledged that indigenous African knowledge must be preserved and according to the National Education Policy (DoE 1996), every child has the right to mother tongue education. A survey of 93 foundation phase teachers undertaken by Lessing and De Witt (2005) indicates that more than half of the foundation phase teachers surveyed were not satisfied with their initial training to teach reading in their mother tongue and indicated a need for further training to enable them to become competent in their classrooms. Fleisch (2008) asserts that unless proper basis is laid in primary schools, children will continue to struggle in education at school.

Significance of the Study

The issues of reading acquisition are topical and are being discussed in many countries across the world as well as in South Africa (Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ II), 2000; Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2007; the Department of Education Systematic Evaluation Foundation Phase 2007; The Times 2011). These issues include the acquisition of reading skills required for proficient reading fluency, the ability to read orally with speed, and accuracy and vocal expression (DoE 2008a, 2008b). The ability to read fluently, then, is one of several critical factors necessary for reading comprehension. If a reader is not fluent, he or she may find it difficult to remember what has been read and to relate the ideas expressed in the text to his or her background knowledge (NRP 2000: 52).

Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to explore and understand how teachers teach reading comprehension in their classrooms in order to support their Tshivenda-speaking learners.

Objectives of the study were to explore how teachers understand and the concept of reading comprehension; to establish what teachers regard as important when teaching reading comprehension; to identify which strategies they

use to teach reading comprehension; analyse and describe, by means of a review of literature the importance of reading comprehension strategies and identify strategies which teachers can use to improve the teaching of reading comprehension.

Towards a Theoretical Framework for Teaching Reading Comprehension

The discussion of teaching reading comprehension at foundation phase is underpinned by the theories of Piaget's cognitive development, Vygotsky's socio-historical theory of cognitive development, Bruner's theory of learning and development, Bandura's theory of social learning, Ausubel's cognitive field theory and Zimmerman's applied social cognitive model. These theories are relevant to the study because teachers have to integrate theory into practice and develop appropriate balanced coping strategies for improving the teaching of reading comprehension. This study subscribes to the view that reading comprehension can be taught and learnt and that it cannot just happen (NRP 2000). This implies that teachers must have theoretical knowledge and practice to be able to motivate learners to a level where they can initiate, change and sustain learning in specific contexts to become masters of their own learning.

For Piaget (1967), learning is a process of internal construction. In teaching reading comprehension, learners must construct knowledge in their own minds through the guidance of more knowledgeable people (i.e. teachers).

Vygotsky's (1968) theory has implications for teaching reading comprehension when in facilitating learning; the teacher must take the cultural context of the learners into consideration as it influences their thinking and actions. Learners can be given problem-solving activities with instructions for the task of reading comprehension. Thereafter, the learner should work independently, using his/her own knowledge and skills with the guidance received from the teacher.

The implications of Bruner's theory (1973) for teaching reading comprehension are that new concepts should be presented repeatedly, initially at a simple level and overtime at an increasingly difficult level – a concept Bruner referred to as the "spiral ordering of content."

Ausubel's theory (1963) has implications for teaching reading comprehension because teachers must be aware of the fact that certain minimal levels of intellectual maturity are necessary be-

fore various subjects can be taught with a reasonable degree of efficiency and success. Therefore, teachers must use the existing interests of learners, consider their point of view and take into account their limited command of language and their grasp of concepts.

According to Bandura's theory (1977), learners imitate what they see other people do, be it their parents or their teachers. In teaching reading comprehension, teachers are seen as good models, as they usually have positive and nurturing relationships with learners. They should therefore display positive reading comprehension strategies so that learners can imitate and internalise these.

Zimmerman's (1998) model of self-regulated learning suggests that acquiring self-regulatory competence is important to prepare students to learn by themselves. Wolters (2011) cited in Zumbrunn et al. (2011: 4) assert that this competence can help students create better learning habits and strengthen their study skills. According to Zimmerman (2000: 223) this model is organised within a learning cycle based on three types of self-effective thoughts, namely goal setting and strategic planning, self-monitoring of one's accuracy in implementing a selected strategy, and self-assessment of strategy outcome and task performance.

Based on Zimmerman's applied social-cognitive theory of self-regulated learning the researcher outline the challenges to and suggestions for teachers when teaching reading comprehension. The researcher discussed the five phases namely creating awareness of the reading comprehension challenge, strategic planning, teaching of reading comprehension strategies, self-monitoring and feedback and self-efficacy. Teachers should be familiar with factors that influence a learner's ability to self-regulate and the strategies they can use to identify and promote self-regulated learning in their classrooms (Zumbrunn et al. 2011: 4). Teachers will then guide and assist learners as they learn how and when to apply the strategy, and help learners practise the strategy until they can apply it independently.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a qualitative design for the enquiry, as we planned to discover, describe,

compare, observe and analyse the underlying dimensions of the schools. Qualitative research was therefore appropriate for this study as it sought to explore and understand the way teachers understood the teaching of reading comprehension. Transcripts were initially read and coded, compared with the research literature (Braun and Clarke 2006) and refined to identify emerging themes. Themes were analysed by returning to the literature and then compared in order to identify similarities and differences in both the themes and the interpretation of data. The present article focuses on answering part of the question: What strategies can teachers use to improve reading comprehension?

Sample

The data presented in this article is derived from a larger research project undertaken in the Limpopo Province where we employed a case study (Stake 2000) of three government schools, each with two Grade 3 classes. These learners speak Tshivenda as their mother tongue and at school Tshivenda is the language of teaching and learning. Thus not all Grade 3 learners and teachers at the schools of the Vhembe district were included in the study. Although the generalisation of results derived from a case study was an anticipated constraint (Denzin and Lincoln 2000: 439), we provided a rich description of the case for applicability to other known cases (Seale 1999).

Procedures

Prior to the commencement of the study, permission was sought from the participants. Ethical conditions were adhered to; signed consent forms were obtained and the teachers were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Teachers were also given opportunities to clarify their understanding of the study, and to ask questions related to procedures and research activities related to the study.

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments used included individual interviews with teachers, focus group interviews, classroom observation and content analysis, each of which are clarified below:

Individual Teacher Interviews

The research was conducted at three government schools. Individual interviews with six teachers were conducted. Each school had two Grade 3 classes. These six teachers were all qualified to teach in the foundation phase with four of them holding university degrees. Individual interviews gathered in-depth information about teachers' knowledge of and strategies for reading comprehension. They also provided an important level of professional reflection and increased the credibility of the classroom observation.

Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews were conducted with the six teachers who participated in the study. Individual interviews with teachers and focus group interviews were conducted twice after school. Each session lasted no longer than an hour. Focus group interviewing is increasingly being used in qualitative research studies (De Vos 1998: 48). It is particularly effective for obtaining information about why people think or feel the way they do. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis. The research design and methodology assisted us in researching the main question: How do teachers teach reading comprehension to Grade 3 Tshivenda-speaking learners?

Classroom Observation

Permission to conduct the research was obtained from Vhembe District Office prior to the collection of data. The unions, the participating teachers, the principal and the School Governing Body (SGB) were informed before the commencement of the study. The purpose of the study was discussed. A naturalistic approach was adopted in studying teachers' techniques of teaching reading comprehension in the classroom on several occasions. One lesson observed per week for two months an observation schedule. This gave a total of 24 lessons to be analysed. Classroom observation allowed the researchers to observe what actually happened in the classroom as regards reading comprehension over time.

What is Self-regulated Learning?

Zimmerman (1999; Zumbrunn et al. (2011) assert that there is agreement among scholars

about the importance of self-regulated learning in the teaching of reading comprehension and therefore, whoever is hired to teach should be adequately prepared for their facilitation of self-regulated learning strategies.

In describing self-regulated learning Zimmerman (2000) states:

Self-regulated learning in terms of self-processes and associated self-beliefs that initiate, change, and sustain learning in specific contexts. These processes and beliefs are linked to three fundamental questions about students' self-regulated approach to learning: How questions refer to students use of metacognitive processes such as planning, organising, self-instructing, self-monitoring and self-evaluating ones efforts to learn. Where questions pertain to behavioural processes such as selecting, structuring, and creating learning environments that optimise growth.

Why questions refer to processes and beliefs that motivate self-regulated students to learn, such as beliefs about their efforts.

The teacher must teach learners to acquire self-regulatory competence in order to become independent readers and learn to read and use the appropriate strategies for the text. These processes are planned and adapted to support the pursuit of personal goals in changing learning environments. Zimmerman (1998) proposed the idea of learners themselves being the source of plans, intentions, strategies and the emotions that are necessary to create meaning from the written text. According to Zimmerman (1998), teaching multiple strategies is important, since the self-regulatory strategy will not work for all learners and using a few strategies will not work on all tasks. Zimmerman (1998; 1990) and Zimmerman and Hutchins (2003) suggest multiple self-regulatory strategies rather than a single strategy and state that learners can be taught to become more self-regulated. This view is linked to the constructivist theory, which holds that learners should be able to construct meaning from the written text. By learning to self-regulate a skill from peers, parents or teachers, each new generation of learners can build on the achievement of prior generations and avoid the mistakes of the past (Zimmerman 1998).

According to Zimmerman (1989), self-regulated learning involves the regulation of three general aspects of academic learning. Self-regulation of behaviour involves the active control

of the various resources learners have available to them, such as their time, their study environment and their collaboration with others, such as peers, to help them (Garcia and Pintrich 1994; Pintrich et al. 1993).

Zimmerman (1998) postulates that the applied social-cognitive model of self-regulated learning can be organised within a learning cycle based on three types of self-effective thoughts goal-setting and strategic planning; self-monitoring of one's accuracy in implementing a selected strategy and self-assessment of strategy outcome and task performance

These processes are considered cyclic because each process entails information that can lead to changes in a subsequent step of the cycle, and they are integral to reciprocal teaching. These processes qualify as self-reflective cognition activities and the associated corrective processes are central features of each step included in the cycle (Sporer et al 2009: 273). Drawing on Zimmerman's applied theory of self-regulated learning, during reciprocal teaching learners are engaged in cognition and metacognitive activities, and they alternate between prompting, using a strategy, applying the selected strategy and monitoring its accurate implementation (Sporer et al. 2009: 273). A self-regulated learning perspective on learners' learning and achievements has profound implications for the way teachers should interact with learners and the manner in which schools should be organised. Zimmerman's social-cognitive model of self-regulated learning provides a theoretical basis for suggesting the effects of strategy instruction and reciprocal teaching, namely strategies are taught and how they are taught and practised effectively. In the context of the study if teachers can be exposed to Zimmerman's applied social-cognitive model of self-regulated learning may be able enhance reading comprehension of their learners.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework and relevant theories that directed this study. Figure 1 is a visual representation of the most important arguments based on the concepts and theories found in the literature and their relationship to reading comprehension. In the following paragraphs, the concepts are described the concepts in depth with reference to related

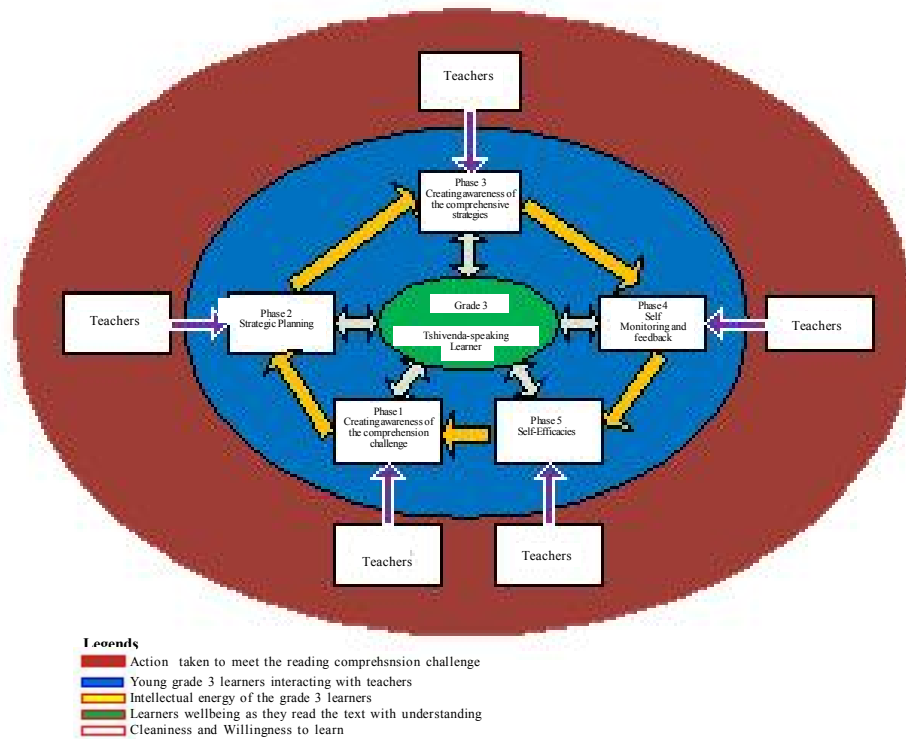


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework related to the teaching of reading comprehension

Source: Author

theories and Zimmerman applied social cognitive model of self-regulated learning. Based on literature, the researcher designed a conceptual framework related to the teaching of reading comprehension.

Overview of the Framework

From the literature it became clear that in order to teach reading comprehension effectively, principals, heads of departments and teachers need to be actively involved in the education of their learners. The teacher needs theoretical knowledge and must do strategic planning when creating an atmosphere conducive to learning. Teachers must be able to motivate learners to participate actively in the reading comprehension process. Teachers need to develop skills, knowledge and self-regulatory strategies to support learners until they can read independently. It is critical for to be aware of that the use of research-based strategies in the in the classroom may assist learners to read the text with understanding. Activities must be planned according-

ly with more emphasis on self-monitoring activities coupled with constructive feedback.

As depicted in Figure 1 the researcher intends to refer to these concepts and theories when seeking answers on how teachers teach reading comprehension to Grade 3 Tshivenda-speaking learners. The literature of Shanahan (2006), NRP (2000), Van Keer (2004) and Oczkus (2004) about concepts and theories indicates that the teacher must be strategic, know about cognitive processes in reading and how and when to teach reading comprehension strategies before, during and after reading the text. This implies that teachers should be competent and clear about the use of strategies. The teacher has to demonstrate such strategies to the learners and give them opportunities to use each strategy until the learners can use them independently. This implies that reading comprehension can be taught and learnt. Learners can construct meaning from the text by means of strategies before, during and after reading of the text and so become self-regulated, strategic readers.

Structural Description of the Framework

The structure of the framework in figure 1 is cyclical and is adapted from the theories promoted by Piaget (1983), Vygotsky (1978), Bruner (1986), Ausubel (1963) and Bandura (1977) and Zimmerman's applied social-cognitive theory of self-regulation and forms the framework for understanding the teaching of reading comprehension.

In the conceptual framework, the teachers are in the teachers on the outer circle (red). This reflects the seriousness of the reading comprehension challenge, and that the teachers are willing to take action and contribute towards each phase in the inner circle.

The inner circle (blue) represents that it is important for teachers and learners to interact in all the phases towards effective teaching of reading comprehension to Grade 3 Tshivenda-speaking learners. Each phase flows into the other. Teachers will employ baseline assessment to evaluate the current status of reading comprehension challenges. The assessment will form the basis of discussion during strategic planning to address the challenges identified in the baseline assessment. Teachers will then implement those strategies as per planning in phase 2. In phase 3 teachers should teach learners reading comprehension strategies. This is followed by phase 4 in which teachers monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the comprehension strategies taught during phase 3. In phase 5 teachers evaluate their self-efficacy levels to ensure they teach with confidence.

The arrows (yellow) represent the intellectual energy of the teachers and movement from one phase to another in order to help learners to read the text with understanding. The green colour in the centre represents the well-being of the Grade 3 Tshivenda-speaking learner who should be able to read and understand the text if all the phases have been carried out well. All five phases, namely creating awareness of the reading comprehension challenge, strategic planning, teaching of reading comprehension strategies, self-monitoring and feedback and self-efficacy are interdependent and form a continuous cycle.

Phase 1: Creating Awareness of the Reading Comprehension Challenge

The objective of this phase is for teachers to identify the reading comprehension challenges, to develop learners' awareness of the reading

comprehension process and reading comprehension strategies. To this end, teachers will do reading comprehension checks across the Grade 3 classes. For example, they should conduct baseline assessment to find out the learners' levels of ability. During their cluster meetings, Grade 3 teachers must discuss methods they think will be appropriate for building reading comprehension skills in the classrooms. In the researcher's view, when this phase has been implemented properly, teachers will be able to plan strategically for the next phase.

Phase 2: Strategies Planning

The objective of phase 2 is for the teachers to understand the challenges and to identify the support needed to address the challenges. The teachers should take the necessary decisions for their individual classes and determine how they can encourage learners to master their own reading comprehension (Zimmermann 1998)

The role of the teacher is to plan a reading programme that incorporates and emphasises the teaching of reading comprehension strategies.

The teacher should gain a deeper understanding and practical knowledge of teaching reading comprehension. This can be attained by reading literature and research done on this subject. Armed with this knowledge, the teacher will be able to address reading comprehension challenges in the classroom by incorporating some of these practices and strategies during the actual teaching of reading comprehension. If this phase is done well, during the next phase, teachers will be able to plan the reading comprehension lessons and focus on teaching reading comprehension strategies during the next phase with better results in mind.

Phase 3: Teaching of Reading Comprehension Strategies

The objective of phase 3 is for the teacher to plan and facilitate reading comprehension lessons. Learners have the opportunity to listen to the teacher reading the text and using the reading comprehension strategies before, during and after reading the text. The role of the teacher is to teach comprehension strategies explicitly to assist learners to understand what they are reading. The teacher incorporates before, during and after reading comprehension strategies. Re-

search has confirmed that learners who have been trained by modelling specific regulatory techniques, describing their form and improving enactive feedback are better and competent readers than learners who have not been trained (Schunk and Zimmerman 1994).

Before reading teachers should teach learners how to activate background knowledge, establish a purpose for reading, generate questions and make predictions. During reading teachers should demonstrate how to engage with the text, use metacognitive and cognitive strategies, verify and reformulate predictions, integrate new information with prior knowledge, self-monitor comprehension, construct a graphic organiser and summarise the text. During reading comprehension, the learners should be able to monitor, pace and direct themselves by making use of different strategies, for example fix-up strategies, to understand the reading text. Learners could connect personal experience to something that happened in the book.

After reading the teacher should teach the learners how to reflect on what they read, evaluate predictions, examine questions that guided reading, respond to text through discussions, retell or summarise the text.

If phase 3 is done successfully, learners will be able to become masters of their own learning. They will be able to regulate and monitor their own reading comprehension by making use of reading comprehension strategies and when problems occur they will be able to use fix-up strategies. For example, they will know when and how to use self-directed strategies. The framework in Figure 1 reflects a for teachers to provide support to the learners. This means the challenge of reading comprehension should not be left to the Grade 3 teachers only the learners should be responsible for their own learning (Zimmerman 1998). Teachers must be accountable for creating a conducive atmosphere for the learners to read and know how to use comprehension strategies effectively during reading. The learner develops understanding of the reading text within the historical, cultural and social context. In the classroom, Grade 3 teachers must interact with the learners and facilitate learning. Reading comprehension strategies must be taught in a social context with a variety of interesting texts that learners may interact with and that will increase their understanding (Vygotsky, 1978). This may influence learners' com-

prehension in a positive manner. Learning then becomes a dynamic process in which learners play an active role, constantly interacting with the environment and people around them. The teachers and learners must participate actively in all the phases.

Phase 4: Self-monitoring and Feedback

The objective of phase 4 is for teachers to monitor their own teaching and to give feedback in a form of report or discussions with colleagues and to identify learners who are in need of intervention strategies. A feedback mechanism is built into phase 4. For example, if the learners are experiencing reading comprehension problems, this is where the teachers assist the learners, making them aware of the importance of reading comprehension and give them proper guidance (Bandura 1977; Vygotsky 1978). Reading comprehension is viewed as the interaction between the learner, his background knowledge and frame of reference places the learner at the centre of the framework.

Phase 5: Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy has its foundation in social cognitive theory and can be applied to the teaching of reading comprehension to Grade 3 Tshiven-da-speaking learners. The objective of phase 5 is for the teacher to check on their capabilities of teaching reading comprehension and the correct use of comprehension strategies. Part of the tools and techniques of this phase include referring to the baseline outcome completed in the first phase and determining how that compares to the self-efficacy levels reached in this phase. During this phase the teacher's role is to motivate learners to self-regulate their own learning, for example by using comprehension strategies when difficulties occur (Zimmerman 1998) check whether they have achieved the goal they have set in phase 1 and now have the capabilities for attaining the set goals; assess if they are succeeding in the task of teaching reading comprehension; identify gaps and misunderstandings and think critically about what must be done to remedy the situation and to reflect on how certain or confident they are now to teach reading comprehension – in other words self-efficacy (Zimmerman 1989, 1990, 1998, 2001).

DISCUSSION

The framework in Figure 1 reflects a pathway to enable teachers to provide support to the learners. This means the challenge of reading comprehension should not be left to the Grade 3 teachers only the learners should also be accountable for their own learning (Zimmermann 2013, Beck and Mckeown 2006, Zimmermann 1998). The learner develops understanding of the text within the historical, cultural and social context (Bandura 1977). In the classroom, Grade 3 teachers must interact with the learners and facilitate learning. Reading comprehension strategies must be taught in a social context with a variety of interesting texts that learners may interact with and increase their understanding (Dewitz et al. 2010; Pardo 2004). This may influence learners' comprehension in a positive manner. Learning then becomes a dynamic process in which learners play an active role, constantly interacting with the environment and people around them (International Reading Association 2010, Engelbrecht and Green 2001). In the applied social-cognitive model of self-regulated learning, the teachers and learners move together to each phase together, proving that the teaching of reading comprehension is a power-sharing relationship (Zimmerman 1998). The circular shape of the framework indicates that the reading comprehension process continues and moves from one phase to the next. The teachers are critical role players in the phases of the framework, driving the process of reading comprehension to success. The teachers should internalise the skills and the theoretical knowledge and be able to function autonomously in order to help learners to attain self-regulated reading comprehension strategies. The researcher's view is that this may motivate the teachers and enhance reading comprehension to learners.

The framework (Fig. 1) reflects five consecutive phases namely creating of the reading comprehension challenge, strategic planning, teaching of reading comprehension strategies, self-monitoring and feedback and self-efficacies. The phases are continuous and each one is based on the previous one, moving in a circular pattern. Teaching of reading comprehension requires competent teachers who are committed and have practical and theoretical knowledge about the teaching of reading comprehension. The teacher has a direct impact on the language

of the learner, because within the school context the learner develops linguistic ability and knowledge of reading, and is taught comprehension strategies and their role in understanding the reading text (Malloy et al. 2010; Garcia and Pintrich 1994). If the learners are experiencing reading comprehension problems, this is where the teacher assists them, making them aware of the importance of reading comprehension strategies (Ogle 2011; NRP 2000; Dole 2000).

CONCLUSION

The conceptual framework shows teachers the steps to be followed when teaching reading comprehension.

Learners become intrinsically motivated and actively involved in reading comprehension and teachers show a sense of agency to motivate their learning through the use of self-regulatory process such as goal setting, self-monitoring, self-evaluation and correct use of various comprehension strategies. The researcher acknowledges that this is a case study and that it may be possible to generalise the conclusions, however, this study does reflect the state of the teaching of reading comprehension and underscores that reading comprehension is poorly taught in schools all over the country, partly because of the lack of theoretical knowledge and guidelines for teachers of African language teachers. Nevertheless as this is a topic under discussion globally, it can be argued that other communities facing similar difficulties can use the results of this study to their advantage. This can be achieved by examining whether the teaching of reading comprehension in those communities is caused by similar reasons if the causes are similar, apply the results and recommendations of this study may also be applicable to those situations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

What emerged from the conceptual framework is that reading comprehension is a social event in which the teachers and learners should collaborate. It emerged conclusively that reading comprehension cannot take place in a vacuum. Learners need to be taught comprehension strategies and how to apply them correctly. The applied social model of self-regulation of Zimmerman encourages the teacher to give learners the opportunity to become involved in their own

learning. Then teachers should gradually relinquish their responsibility and let learners take control of their own learning.

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