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Reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8-10 learners toward English second language in Eersterust.

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**READING HABITS AND ATTITUDES OF
GRADES 8 -10 LEARNERS
TOWARD ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE IN EERSTERUST**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER TECHNOLOGIAE

in the

Department of Applied Languages

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TSHWANE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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November 2016

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation submitted for the degree MTech: Language Practice, at Tshwane University of Technology, is my own original work and has not previously been submitted to any other institution of higher education. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive reference list.

F.M. Olifant

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to:

My husband, Joey, and my two sons, Joel and Jowan.

I am deeply grateful for the love, unwavering support and encouragement that you gave me. You motivated me to continue with my studies when I felt like giving up. Thank you.

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Above all, I give all praise, glory and honour, to The Lord God Almighty, for giving me the courage and the strength to complete this study. To God be the Glory.

Proverbs 3:6 “In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths”

ABSTRACT

The reading habits and attitudes of learners are continuously debated and discussed by academics, as well as reading enthusiasts on an international platform; in search of methods to cultivate a love for reading and improve reading skills among learners. The focus of this study was to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners toward English second language in two high schools in the Eersterust area of the Tshwane south district. A total number of 100 learners and five teachers were selected purposefully for the study. A case study design was followed, which employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data were collected through the use of a questionnaire survey; as well as individual and focus group semi-structured interviews. The findings of the study revealed that learners did read; although the majority learners indicated that they predominantly read for the purpose of academic progression. The findings further indicated that most of learners preferred technology-based reading platforms compared to traditional print material. Based on the findings, the study recommended the involvement of all stakeholders in order to assist and encourage learners to practise good reading habits and to cultivate a positive attitude towards English second language reading. These include, but are not limited to, parents, government officials, caregivers, librarians, peers, and community role models.

KEYWORDS- English Second Language Learning; Reading; Reading habits; Reading attitudes; Reading motivation; Reading ability; English second language learner, English second language teacher

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAPS	-	Continuous Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	-	Department of Basic Education
DoE	-	Department of Education
ESL	-	English second language
FET	-	Further Education and Training College
FP	-	Foundation Phase (Grades R – 3)
GET	-	General Education and Training
GLSP	-	Gauteng Literacy Strategy project
HOD	-	Head of Department
IP	-	Intermediate Phase
L2	-	Second language
LL2	-	Second language learner
NCS	-	National Curriculum Statement
NQF	-	National Qualifications Framework
NRS	-	National Reading Strategy
OBE	-	Outcomes based education
PIRLS	-	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
RNCS	-	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SP	-	Senior Phase (Grades 8 to 10)
SANLI	-	South African National Literacy Initiative

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Reading is a method of acquiring new information and knowledge. Mackay, Barkman, and Jordan (1979: v) state that:

The importance of any individual's being able to read is unquestionable, in a world in which education and virtually all the means for personal and social advancement as well as day-to-day survival depend, to a greater or lesser degree, upon literacy skills.

Consequently, we can construe that literacy is an integral part of being human. Being human entails having the unique ability to acquire and/or learn a language, which incorporates the reading thereof.

When learners demonstrate good reading proficiency, this implies that they have achieved reading skills such as: the recognition and identification of written symbols (words), understanding of the meaning or message of the text, reaction of the reader after completing the reading of a text and integration and interpretation of the complete text (Dechant, 1969: 335).

Dechant (1973: 39) explains that "reading is a development task," which is influenced by determinants, such as the learner's intellectual, physical, social, emotional, language proficiency and sensory abilities, which prepare the learner to meet and satisfy the demands of society. Geske and Ozola (2008: 72) explain that there are many socio-economic factors that can influence the reading abilities of school learners, such as family conditions, poverty, instability, resources, attitudes toward education, and the relationship of parents with their children. In the view of Geske and Ozola's explanation, the researcher deduces that factors, such as the learners' cognitive ability, linguistic environment input, state of health, economic well-being, cultural and personal experiences, are all elements that are relevant to second language reading and the interpretation of a text.

Reading habits, in turn, refer to how often, how much and what the readers read (Shen, 2006: 560), which acclaims the explanation by the Oxford *advanced learners' dictionary* (2010: 80) in which 'attitude' is defined as the way that you think and feel about something, whereas 'motivation' (2010: 963) is defined as making somebody want to do something, especially something that involves hard work and effort. Thus, for learners to demonstrate success in reading they need to be motivated to read, in addition, they must have a positive attitude (a willingness/desire to progress) towards the target language. There seems to be a parallel correlation among "habits"; "attitudes" and "motivation" and, sometimes, these terms are used interchangeably.

Gardner (1985: 10) notes that motivation is "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced by this activity." Hence, we can conclude that, when learners are positively motivated (with regard to practising good reading habits and being encouraged to read), they will demonstrate a positive attitude (willingness/desire) in terms of the reading of English as a second language (hereafter referred to as the L2). Krashen (1993: 84) pronounces that students who practise good reading habits, such as reading in their spare time, develop into better readers and display more content knowledge than those who do not read as often.

On the other hand, when motivation is lacking, according to Brown (1987: 127) a negative attitude towards a target language may result in the decrease or absence in motivation and, possibly, unsuccessful learning (which includes reading) in the target language. Consequently, a negative attitude towards reading produces negative reading outcomes, which will discourage the learner from making further ventures into reading, resulting in the development of a negative attitude (McKenna, Kear and Ellsworth, 1995: 941).

1.2 RATIONALE

Literacy, with specific reference to reading, is a real concern in South Africa (SA) today. Most of the criticism of education in South Africa is centred on our learners' inability to read with fluency and reasonable comprehension (PIRLS, 2006; 2011). The performance of SA learners on some international benchmarks has proved the long-known fact that our learners struggle to read at levels equivalent to the expectations of their grades.

This researcher completed her teacher training at a local high school in Eersterust, which included the English Second Language (ESL) teaching of Grades 8 to 10 learners. Whilst teaching ESL to Grades 8 to 10, she observed that many ESL learners were experiencing a number of reading challenges. During the ESL reading activities, she got the impression that learners appeared quite passive, disinterested, and displayed not only a lack of proficiency but also anxiety. Greenwood (1998: 5) contextualises this when he observed that "reading is for many of them, a passive, boring activity, performed constantly in isolation and perhaps associated with skills which they feel they do not possess".

The following observations can be made in this regard:

- Learners performed poorly during in-class reading comprehension assessment activities.
- On numerous occasions, this researcher requested some learners to read out loud in class. They refused by making excuses, such as: "I am not feeling well today"; "Do I have to read?" "I am not a good reader. Can I read to you in private?" "I don't like reading," "The others are going to laugh at me."
- Some of the learners that were willing to participate in reading out loud in class appeared to be extremely anxious and concerned about how their classmates reacted whilst they read.
- There were some readers who simply struggled to articulate words when reading.
- The failure to complete English homework tasks was a regular occurrence among learners.

- Social factors, such as teenage pregnancies, substance abuse, or the lack of sufficient financial resources, according to the learners, were some of the reasons why learners would be absent from school.

With reference to the observations mentioned above, the researcher developed an interest in exploring how variables, such as the L2 learning proficiency, reading habits, motivation, and attitude toward English L2, influence the reading ability of ESL learners within the socio-cultural context of the school, and community. Her curiosity was further enhanced by some concerned ESL teachers, who discussed the slow literacy progress made by their learners. This concern was made with reference to Afrikaans home language speakers in particular, who used English as the language of access to literacy, and, hence, a second or third language, in some cases.

This study focuses exclusively on ESL learners in Grades 8 to 10 where the reluctant and unenthusiastic reading behaviour of learners was observed. Therefore, this study focuses on the investigation and description of their reading habits and attitudes, and the possible impact of these on the reading skills of learners in Grades, 8, 9, and 10 in two high schools in the Eersterust area of the Tshwane South educational district.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.3.1 Statement of the problem

The essence of schooling is to teach literacy, namely, writing, speaking, listening and reading. As a result, reading is a key component in a learner's literacy journey. For many learners in Eersterust, English is a second, third, or fourth language; yet, it remains the medium through which the learners access literacy, making learning in all subjects more difficult. Therefore, a learner's reading habits and attitudes and motivation towards reading become critical aspects that can determine a learner's academic progress or the lack thereof. Failure in reading, according to Rowling, in Lerner and Johns (2009:382) becomes a strong factor in determining what goes on in the classroom. As such, understanding the learners' reading habits, attitudes, and

motivation toward reading is fundamental to language development, and the learners' reluctance to read requires further investigation.

1.3.2 Research questions

This study asks the following main research question:

What are the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8-10 learners with regard to English L2?

In addition to the lead question, the support questions are:

- What are the reading habits of Grades 8 to 10 learners in English L2?
- What are the attitudes of Grades 8-10 learners toward reading English L2?
- What are the perceptions of the English L2 teachers of Grades 8 to 10 learners' reading habits?
- What are the perceptions of the English L2 teachers of the attitudes of Grades 8-10 learners toward reading?

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8-10 learners toward English L2 in two high schools in the Eersterust area of Tshwane south district, with a view to suggesting how to improve their reading habits and attitudes.

1.5 SUMMARY INDICATION OF THE LOCATION AND SAMPLE POPULATION

Two high schools in Eersterust have been identified as research sites for this study. Both schools are Afrikaans-English dual medium of instruction institutions. Eersterust is located 15km east of Pretoria city centre. The primary language used in this community has been and still is predominantly Afrikaans (77.5%), although other languages, including English (10.5%) are also used to a lesser degree (Statistics SA, 2011).

The residents of Eersterust did not escape the negative impact of the social ills of segregation (Nelson Mandela Organisation, n.d.). The consequences of the group areas act (Act no 41 of 1950) are still experienced on a daily basis and the community is plagued with problems such as severe poverty, inadequate infrastructure, crime, a high level of substance abuse, soaring numbers of teenage pregnancies, family instability and an increasing incidence of HIV /Aids and the high rate of unemployment, as indicated by Penzhorn (2006: 95). Furthermore, it appeared to the researcher, and for the purpose of this study, that elements such as the absence of after-school literacy activities, under-resourced library facilities, over-crowded classrooms seem to be rife in poverty afflicted areas like Eersterust.

School A had an enrolment of about 723 learners, and 36 teachers. School B was approximately twice the size of School A, with an enrolment of 1,440 learners and 62 teachers. Both schools are supported by government funding, in addition to the school fees paid by learners. Both schools are quintile 4 schools on the Department of Basic Education ranking of 1-5 (well-resourced to poor) scale. This means that the schools are in a disadvantaged area, but are not at the bottom of the ranking ladder.

1.6 DIVISION OF WORK INTO CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter to this study which provides an overview on the reading habits and attitudes of ESL reading. It consists of the background information; the rationale of the study; the statement of the problem; the research questions, the aim of the study; and the summary indication of the research location and sample population

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The starting point for this study was the review of related literature. The literature study concentrated on a wide variety of information sources such as books, and articles from scholarly journals and the Internet that related to the comprehension of the reading

habits and attitudes of ESL reading. The researcher had to collect as much information as possible available on the topic, to be able to critically evaluate and understand the problem; and to construct a theoretical framework, which served as the blue print of this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research problem is investigated using a case study approach with a triangulation design and employs a mixed methods perspective, entailing both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

For the quantitative research element, the learners were required to fill out a questionnaire, which was followed by the qualitative stage of the study, which comprised semi-structured individual interviews with ESL teachers and focus group interviews with learners. In these interviews certain issues which are pertinent to the study were investigated and discussed.

The data obtained from the questionnaires survey were analysed with the aid of spreadsheet software and interviews were manually transcribed and analysed using the data crystallisation process. Final conclusions were based on the results of both the quantitative and qualitative research.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

The findings of the questionnaire survey and the data collected from the interviews are presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings are discussed and analysed and conclusions are made from based on the findings.

CHAPTER 6: SYNOPSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A synopsis of the findings is presented and recommendations are made.

1.7 SYNTHESIS

South Africa recognises the serious crisis resulting from the reading culture deficiency that exists among our learners, students and ultimately, the population in general in our country. The elements constituting this crisis are commonly perceived as:

- Only a few people are in the habit of reading.
- A small section of the public invests in the purchase of books.
- The availability and services of public libraries are in decline, and school libraries are practically non-existent.

It is commonly known that the reading ability of learners is poor; as a result, the South African learner lags behind, compared to the reading ability of their international counterparts. Consequently, the intention of this study is to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners regarding ESL reading.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

“Literacy is a key lever of change and a practical tool of empowerment on each of the three main pillars of sustainable development: economic development, social development and environmental protection.” These words were uttered by the former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan on literacy day on 08 September 2005 in Bangkok. (Annan, 2005)

Literacy, according to Street (in Purcell-Gates, 2007: 3), is rooted within the daily action of the human society, with reading as one of the essential components thereof, and is practised by social and cultural groups. Subsequently, literacy issues, such as reading habits and attitudes, are always inseparable from language, and the socio-political, socio-economical or socio-cultural environment of society.

“It all boils down to reading,” said Minister Angie Motshekga at the handover of a new library, classrooms and changing-room facilities to Tlhasedi Primary School in Hebron on 18 July 2016, in commemoration of Nelson Mandela Day (Fin24.com). According to Minister Motshekga, (2012) almost 85% of South Africans do not read regularly and even those who can read do not read enough. Accordingly, Minister Motshekga explained that South African learners struggle with mathematics, because they are challenged by word sums. In order to understand and correctly compute a word sum, the learner must be able to read, thus: “It all boils down to reading”.

During the above indicated handover, the Read to Lead Campaign (Read2Lead) was highlighted, which is a programme that encourages learners to adopt a positive reading habit as part of their daily activities, thereby making it a lifestyle choice. The Department of Basic Education launched the Read2Lead campaign on 22 July 2015, with the primary aim to ensure that all learners demonstrate age appropriate levels of

reading by 2019, and additionally, the focus of the campaign was to improve the reading abilities of all South African children, as well as require everybody to employ a positive reading attitude and develop a passion for reading as a critical skill. (Read2Lead campaign, 2015)

In South Africa, many people can read, have access to reading materials, as well as the time and resources to read, however they still choose to abstain from the act of reading books. Despite many initiatives by The Department of Education (DoE), various national and international literacy organisations and literacy bodies, private sector organisations and academic institutions, the South African population still exhibit a deficient reading habit. This situation is aggravated by schooling systems that produce learners who lag behind their international counterparts regarding the following: “The South African learners are reading far below age appropriate expected levels.” (DoE, 2008 (a):2)

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS, 2011) reported results which indicated that South Africa recorded the lowest reading literacy levels in all 40 the countries investigated. Australia, Austria, Botswana, Denmark, England, Germany, Indonesia, Morocco, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden and United States were some of the countries that formed part of this investigation. South African Grade 4 and Grade 5 learners were compared to international equivalents on their reading performance (PIRLS, 2006; 2011) and the report indicated that: “South African learners were found to be more than two grades behind their international peers as in regard to reading.”

The study also found that forty-three percent of the evaluated South African Grade 4 and Grade 5 learners were unable to reach the Lowest International benchmarks for reading. Furthermore, Pretorius and Machet (2004: 47) reported that the South African primary and secondary school learner, and even the tertiary level student demonstrates reading skills that are poorly developed.

Various South African governmental departments, non-governmental institutions and a number of enterprises have and still are engaging and contributing to the promotion of readership. In addition, a range of programmes have been introduced to cultivate the act of reading within the South African population. In 2008, the National Reading Strategy (NRS) was launched (to encourage a culture of reading with reference to reading habits) among learners and teachers, as well as support and invest in a nation of readers (National reading strategy, 2008). Campaigns such as Ithuteng (ready to learn), the South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI), project by Read 2010, Read2Lead2012, Room to Read 2012, A National Book Week, Reading Association of South Africa, Read educational Trust 2010 and the Drop all and Read programme (better known as read me a book), were launched, all to advocate and accentuate the practice of reading.

Recent studies on the phenomenon of reading indicate that the message of the importance of reading has been heard on a global platform. However, more needs to be done to remedy and build up positive reading habits among learners. Learners need to be educated on how to engage with and internalise the act of reading by the repeated practice there-of, thus displaying a good habit of reading. Thomas (2012:30) confirms that knowledge (which is obtained through the practice of reading) should be viewed as emerging from the engagement with the repeated practice of reading, again indirectly indicating the habit of reading. A good reading habit is the practice through which a learner will achieve a high-level reading ability, which is the tool for the acquisition and increase of knowledge, academic advancement and social-cultural success.

2.2 READING LITERACY PERSPECTIVES

2.2.1 Reading on an International platform

Globally, research indicates a growing concern for the poor reading abilities displayed by learners, which prohibits them from a successful academic career and a lifelong learning opportunity. In an international reading comprehension comparative study, Houtveen and Van de Grift (2007: 405) recorded that only 7% of the Dutch students

who participated were unable to read proficiently, and were able to function independently in society, compared to 17% of European students.

Accordingly, it seems as if the ability to read provides the global population with access to information and a lifelong journey of learning. In this age of technology that is characterised by vigorous competitiveness and a high level of competency, reading literacy is essential for the survival and success of mankind. The fast-paced development and changes in a multi-national, multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, multi-religion and multi-societal milieu set new demands for literacy. Hence the researcher construed that the inability to, or poor reading ability, causes literacy to remain a global concern.

According to Hugo *et al.* (2005: 210) 40% of children in the United States of America (USA) experience challenges in becoming competent readers. In an International Educational Achievement study, it was found that 40% of grade four learners lacked the ability to read at a basic level, with 69% of black and 64% of Hispanic learners demonstrating the same inability. A survey conducted by Temple *et al.* (2005: 4) recorded that 30% of grade 8 and 25% of grade 12 learners could not demonstrate basic reading ability. Abadzi (2008: 4) reports that most learners from Francophone Guinea fail to internalise the entire alphabet by the end of grade 2, and as a result the average learner could only read four of the twenty words presented to them in the study. The researcher reported a similar situation in Peru, where only 25% of grade 1 learners and 45 % of grade 2 learners demonstrated the ability to read letters of the alphabet and simple words.

In the United States of America, Walberg and Tsai (1995: 162-165) administered questionnaires and test booklets among 1459 nine-year-old participants to investigate and identify the factors which affect reading achievement, attitude towards reading and cognitive learning of English first language learners. The dependent variables such as the home environment, socio-economic status, instruction quality, library facilities, the availability of print materials and spare time were investigated to determine the possible influence on the dependent variables, reading attitudes and reading achievement. The findings of the study indicated a parallel correlation

between the mentioned independent variables and the reading attitude and academic achievement, as well as a positive affiliation between reading attitude and achievement.

On the other hand, in the United Kingdom- England based study by Twist *et al.* (2004: 393-394,) these researchers established that as learners mature, there is a decline in their positive attitude towards reading. The researchers concluded that at the time of the study, not enough research had been conducted into the subject of attitude towards reading. (2004: 399).

2.2.2 Reading on a domestic platform

In South Africa, the history of education indicates a democratic and demographic transition within the school system since 1994. The education acts, policies, and curriculum of democratic South Africa have been continuously challenged and reviewed. In 2000, a new curriculum was implemented. This was followed by a Revised National Curriculum Statement in 2002, the production and distribution of which documents stretched to 2005. In 2009 the National Curriculum Statement Gr. R-12(NCS) was introduced, which, after it was amended in 2012, resulted in the implementation of the presently used Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DoE, 2011: 2).

To date, the curriculum, as revised by the Department of Education (2011: 2), serves the purpose of equipping learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical or intellectual ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country.

Based on the continually revised curriculum, the Annual National Assessments (ANA) were introduced by the Department of Basic Education (DBE). According to the ANA report (2001: 5) pilot studies were conducted in 2008 and 2009, to determine the effectiveness of the ANA programme, and in 2011, the ANA provided sufficient consistent data to assess the literacy and numeracy performance levels of learners in

the school curriculum. The ANAs covered Grades 1 to 6 in numeracy and literacy, and these were expanded in 2012 to include Grade 9 learners.

Statistics South Africa (2014: 25-26) report that functional illiteracy declined from 27,3% to 15,8% between 2002 and 2014, which occurred as a result of improved access to schooling in the 20 to 39 years' age group. On a national scale, the percentage of literate persons over the age of 20 years increased slightly from 91, 9% in 2010 to 93, 4% in 2014.

According to Pretorius and Machet (2004: 47), literacy research in South Africa reflects that the reading skills of learners from primary school to tertiary levels are poorly developed. Howie *et al.* (2007: 218) report that only 13% of Grade 4 learners managed to reach the low sub-standard international benchmark for reading, compared to 94% of their international counterparts. From these statistics, we can deduce that learners lacked the requisite basic reading skills, a situation which can only be improved with the regular practice of reading, which will bring about a good reading habit. Furthermore, Benevides and Peterson (2010: 298) suggests that in an education system that shows signs of fragility, it is important for teachers to assess their teaching resources regularly in an attempt to improve the view that reading is a valuable resource in education.

In a press release on 28 June 2011 at the Union Buildings in Pretoria, the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs. Angeline Motshekga, indicated her concern over the standard of South African education as follows:

This is worrying precisely because the critical skills of literacy and numeracy are fundamental to further education and achievement in the worlds of both education and work. Many of our learners lack proper foundations in literacy and numeracy and so they struggle to progress in the system and into post-school education and training. (DBE, ANA assessment results 2011)

Habits and attitudes are both changeable variables that fluctuate from time to time, hence we can construe that with the appropriate sources of motivation; these variables can be developed positively. Against this backdrop, this study aims to investigate,

analyse and describe the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners in Eersterust towards English as a second language.

2.3 DEFINITION OF READING

Many a researcher has studied the concept of 'reading' over the years and this definition has developed over time. Today, the definition of 'reading' cannot be limited to one description only, but we need to consider the theories of various researchers to fully comprehend the rationalisation of 'reading'. To 'read,' means "to look at and understand the meaning of written or printed words or symbols" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2010: 1219). For this reason, reading can be defined as attaching 'meaning' to the written word or symbol. Hopper (2005: 115) accentuates the description of 'reading' as a complex and interactive activity that takes place between the reader and the text. No two individuals can interpret a text in the exact same way; therefore, reading can be explained as a unique humanistic processing activity of understanding and elucidating written or printed text, with the aim of increasing knowledge.

Van der Walt, Evans and Kilfoil (2009: 152) declare that research on reading throughout the 1980's, 1990's and 2000's highlights the activity as an interactive process that involves the learner's own knowledge and understanding at all stages of the reading process. Undoubtedly, reading can be regarded as a significant element in the growth of the South African population, not only on an individual basis, but also on a collective level, for South Africa's future development.

No child is born with the innate ability to read, but is taught the skill of reading and masters it through continuous reading and practice (Van Wyk, 2002: 30). This can then result in demonstrating good reading habits. Bohlman and Pretorius (2002: 205) relate that "reading" is one of the most basic skills of learning and if a learner cannot master this skill, his/her ability to achieve academic success on a life long journey will be impaired and he/she may be prevented from reaching his/her full potential. This statement is emphasised by Oberholzer (2005: 2) who asserts that reading is a basic

life skill and a cornerstone for success at school and throughout life. Subsequently, it appeared to the researcher that reading is the keystone underlying literacy building.

To quote Beekman *et al.* (2016: 29), “reading is power –the more informed you are, the less likely you are to make wrong decisions about the things that affect your life.” Hence, it appears that the more we read (referring back to our reading habits), the greater our knowledge capacity. In acknowledgement of the aforementioned explanations, we can thus describe reading as one of the literacy empowerment tools.

Grellet (1996:3), states that reading’ entails understanding a written text and extracting the required information from that text as effectively as possible. This statement is supported by Bohlman and Pretorius (2002: 1) who regard ‘reading’, as the ability to read rapidly and understand content critically for the purpose of academic progress. In relation to this assertion, reading can also be explained as an active and vital element with regard to the academic development and progress of school learners. When a learner demonstrates good reading proficiency, this indirectly emphasises that he/she has achieved the complete and complex skills of reading successfully which are:

- Recognition and identification of written symbols (words).
- Understanding of the meaning or message of the text.
- Reaction of the reader after completing the reading of a text
- Integration and interpretation of the complete text. (Dechant, 1969: 335).

Dechant (1982: 288) further summarises the process of reading by relating that reading requires word identification (visual discrimination of the word, and recoding or ability to pronounce the word), which is generally effected by configuration cues, phonic cues, morphemic analysis cues, and sometimes by picture and context cues. Secondly, reading requires comprehension (decoding or associating meaning with the symbols that comprise the words).

Van Der Walt *et al.* (2009: 152 -153) hypothesize that reading and listening constitute the receptive skills component, whereas speaking and writing represent the productive skills component of literacy. Research into what happens when we employ our receptive skills to listen and read, produced the schema theory, which explains that when we listen or read, we connect any new information to what we already know. The mental processes of what our minds engage in during the receptive operations are referred to as the top-down and bottom-up process. The top-down process of reading explains that we integrate background information and knowledge with new knowledge as we read, and thus we understand what we read in its totality, a complete text. With the bottom-up process of reading, the reader internalises individual sounds, letters, words and sentences one after the other, each process depending on the preceding one, such as word recognition and lexical items. The bottom-up process amalgamates the readers' knowledge of vocabulary, spelling, grammar, syntax to generate a detailed sense from the text.

Reading is defined by Dausat and Dausat (1981: 6) as "a process that involves mental activity embedded in other communication abilities and converts graphic stimuli (letters) into meaning". During the act of reading, the top-down, bottom-up cognitive processes occur almost simultaneously, automatically and rapidly, to qualify the ability of reading, a process which is confirmed by Pretorius and Machet (2004), who regard reading as a fundamentally cognitive-linguistic activity.

The bottom-up process integrates the readers' knowledge of vocabulary, spelling, grammar and syntax to generate a detailed sense from text. The bottom-up-top-down process occurs almost simultaneously, automatically and rapidly. Hence, the researchers Van Der Walt *et al.* (2009: 153) surmise that the act of reading over a text quickly for comprehension is called. In turn, intensive reading and critical reading are employed when you read to learn and this requires higher processing, as is the case with Grades 8 to 10 high school learners. Van Der Walt *et al.* further indicate that during the practice of reading, the learner needs to be able to recognise the word in order to retrieve its meaning from memory, integrate it into a mental representation of

the text and silently activate its pronunciation, the reader's speed in and accuracy with regard to both processes determines the reader's level of reading.

Therefore, relative to the above-mentioned, this researcher concludes that reading involves ways of understanding, interpreting, and communicating meaning with regard to written text. As a reader you communicate with the text and the text 'talks' to you. To be literate requires mastering a complex set of understandings, attitudes, expectations and behaviours (including habits and practices), as well as specific skills related to written language (McLane & McNamee 1990: 141). Consequently, when learners become literate, they demonstrate the art of mastery to read, interpret, question and critique societal concepts within human relationships. Accordingly, proponents of critical literacy advocate functional literacy, that is, literacy that works.

Learners' participation in reading activities (such as illustrating good reading habits) is deemed to improve self-motivation, concentration and a positive attitude, which contribute to positive academic performance. Therefore, it appears to the researcher that reading is the engagement between the reader and the text that is necessary to cultivate and extend individual knowledge, as well as contribute to the to the pool of knowledge on a platform of social interaction.

In view of the above and for the purpose of this study, we can concur with the American Academy of Paediatrics (2007:2) that regards reading as an interactive, critical activity in a socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic environment, whereby man requires high level literacy skills, to become a proficient reader in order to survive in a digital society. Regardless of the purpose, such as education, leisure purposes, administering medicine or simply just being able to voice your opinion on a topic of discussion, reading is an embedded and vital element in our daily lives.

2.4 READING PURPOSES

Reading is described by Hopper (2005: 115) as a complex and interactive activity that takes places between the reader and the text; hence, we can deduce that the

purposes of reading are multi-faceted. The purpose of reading differs from reader to reader, based on the background, experience, opinion and schemata of the reader.

Reading is a key element in the learning process of a learner and has become a universal concern globally. As human beings, we are all different; therefore, we pursue different paths to achieve different goals in life. Similarly, we all read different print materials to achieve different purposes of reading.

Reading is an act which is employed with the aim of achieving a goal or a purpose or a desired outcome. In the words of Doff (1997: 170): "We usually have a purpose in reading: there is something we want to find out, some information we want to check or clarify, some opinion we want to match against our own etc." Even before a reader embarks on the journey of reading a specific text, he/she normally has a purpose for reading that material and the purpose for reading serves as a guide for the readers' choice of reading material.

Palmer (1995: 10) refers to the much-quoted research results conducted by Gray and Rogers, who compiled a list of reasons why people read extensively. According to these researchers, it appears that "the habit of reading is based upon real human needs". Through research, they established that people choose to read for the following reasons:

- As a ritual, or from force of habit.
- From a sense of duty.
- Merely to fill in or kill time.
- To know and understand current happenings.
- For immediate personal satisfaction or value.
- To meet the practical demands of daily living.
- To further vocational interests.
- To carry on and promote professional or vocational interests.
- To meet personal-social demands.
- To meet socio-civic needs and demands (good citizenship).
- For self-development or improvement, including extension of cultural background.

- To satisfy strictly intellectual demands (academic purposes).

Based on the above, we can thus classify reading according to purpose and utility, into two main categories, namely academic reading and non-academic reading.

2.5 READING FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

Academic reading is when we act on an instruction to read, or a need to read in order to accomplish a particular goal such as compiling a report on a specific topic. Upon entering high school (Grades 8 to 12), it is assumed that the learner has already achieved a certain level of reading competency, because the development of reading skills are achieved in primary school (Grades R-7), where the foundation for reading skills is laid (Gunning. 2007: 3). The reading skills acquired in the primary school are extended and according to Dechant (1972: 14) the learner will be expected to understand more complex materials and learning tasks in high school. Schoenbach *et al.* (2000: 5) allege that many high school learners are unable to comprehend and interpret information extracted from curriculum prescribed books independently, as well as other reading materials and this inability prevents the learners from achieving the required academic benchmark successfully.

Therefore, when we read for academic purposes, the goal is to absorb and understand what we have read, internalise it with the purpose of reciting it back or using it on an academic platform. This is particularly relevant as a learner progresses through the schooling system by participating in various forms of assessments and examinations. It is then required from the learner to demonstrate that he/she understands the reading material and according to Grellet (1996:3), is able to extract the required information from the written text effectively, by providing answers to a range of questions. To quote Thomas and Collier (1997:43): “with each succeeding grade, academic work dramatically expands the vocabulary, sociolinguistic and discourse dimensions of language to higher cognitive levels).”

This purpose of academic reading is supported by Sekara (1988: 121) who observes that: “one of the most important activities, if not the most important activity, in

education is reading, reading not for pleasure, but for information that has been researched, organized, and documented in accordance with the rules of academic discourse.” Within the socio-cultural context of a school classroom, reading entails reading different types of texts on demand, decoding of words, comprehension and interpretation of the print text, as well as to relate the meaning of the text, not only in an individual capacity, but to perform some form of interaction with the text in a classroom context.

Bohlman and Pretorius (2002: 205) relate that “reading” is one of the most basic skills of learning and if a learner cannot master this skill, his/her ability to achieve academic success on a life long journey will be prevented from reaching his/her full potential. Schoenbach *et al.* (2002: 05) echo Bohlman and Pretorius by declaring that students, who perceive themselves to be poor readers, or even non-readers, avoid reading, whereas some create other means of distractions to hide their reading incapacity.

Reading is a permanent component of daily activities in a socio cultural environment and if learners do not display that they have mastered specific skills or tasks, such as reading literacy in relation to this study, regardless of the purpose for learning it is a problem. Rowling, in Lerner and Johns (2009: 381-382), states that the learner then requires appropriate and timely intervention programmes as remedial treatment of reading skills challenges.

2.6 READING FOR NON - ACADEMIC PURPOSES

Readers participate in non-academic reading (also referred to as leisure or pleasure reading) with the purpose of deriving pleasure and relaxation by employing their imagination, to enter a visualised world by means of humanistic senses. This understanding is supported by a quote from Hopper (2005: 115) “I always turned to books as the medium into which I was used to pouring my troublesome emotions.” Various researchers on the phenomenon of reading therefore, refer to non- academic reading by different expressions such as free voluntary reading (Krashen, 1993, Short, 1995), spare time reading, recreational reading (Manzo & Manzo 1995), independent

reading (Cullinan, 2000), reading outside of school (Anderson, Fielding & Wilson, 1988), and self-selected reading (Worthy, Turner, and Moorman, 1998)

Non –academic reading is the type of reading that engages a variety of fiction, non-fiction and digital text material such as: newspapers, novels, entertainment magazines, short stories, comic magazines and websites. Mullis *et al.* (2009: 11) refer to reading literacy as the ability to understand and use the form of written language as required and valued by society and the individual. Young readers can gather meaning from a variety of texts, especially, a text which depicts a context to which the learners can relate on a personal basis. They read to learn, to participate in communities of readers and for enjoyment. Non- academic reading is practised by the reader for the primary purpose of enjoyment. Leisure reading places no demands of reading outcomes on the reader. Csikszentmihalyi (1992: 2) confirms the aforementioned statement by depicting reading as resulting “a deep sense of enjoyment.”

Non –academic reading (also referred to as spare time; voluntary; leisure or pleasure reading) involves aspects such as:

- The mental manipulation of concepts.
- The positioning of thinking as pleasurable.
- The identification of the importance of patterns, likenesses, connectedness.
- The facilitation of concentration and involvement.
- The pursuit of an activity so pleasurable that it is undertaken for its own sake (Csikszentmihalyi.1992: 126).

Hughes-Hassel and Lutz (2006: 36) explain that leisure reading is an activity which learners choose to do, in contrast with the instructed reading assigned by educators. Worthy *et al.* (1998: 13) promote the notion that when children practise reading in their own time, their vocabulary expands and their attitudes and motivation regarding reading also improve as their basic reading skills develop. Further support for reading for non-academic purposes is given by Miller and Gildea (1987: 94) who account that

learners who participate in voluntary reading develop a larger vocabulary, opposed to those learners who read less frequently.

According to Anderson *et al.* (1988), there is a correlation between the successful academic performance in school and the practice of sound non-academic reading. To quote from Machet (2000:1), “a free voluntary reading program can improve children's grammar, reading and comprehension more than time spent on conventional language lessons.” This stance is shared by Cunningham and Stanovich (1991) who report that learners, who read outside of the classroom, specifically in their spare time, produced higher assessment results in all learning areas, as well as exhibited a more advanced level of content knowledge, compared to those learners that only read as per instruction in the classroom.

A learner that reads written material of his/her choice, who enjoys what he/she reads and who reads in his/her own time, will develop a passion for reading that will ultimately result in positive reading habits. When reading interaction allows the learner to experience enjoyment during the act, the learner will be stimulated and will therefore practise the habit of reading even more. The more learners read, the better they will read. According to the American Academy of Paediatrics (2007: 2) books, non-academic reading material in this context, are a road map to places, a teleportation of time and a window to imaginative people and events. Consequently, the greatest benefit of voluntary reading would thus be the pure enjoyment in the act of reading.

Reading is learning and learning is the acquisition of knowledge. As a result, even in the act of non-academic reading, or within the practice of reading for the purpose of enjoyment, personal knowledge is still increased, and concurrently, academic learning is supported and advanced.

2.7 DEFINITION OF READING HABITS

Reading is a vehicle for learning, and learning is a continuous process that requires continuous inter-action with the written text by understanding, interpreting and using the acquired information in an individual capacity, as well as employing the practice

of reading to contribute to society. According to Shen (2006: 560), a reading habit refers to how often, how much and what the readers read. In addition, an analysis of the reading collection of a reader can also validate his/her reading habit. Thus, the habit of reading alludes to efforts being made to practise the act of reading on a repeated or frequent interval. A repeated and purposeful attempt made by the reader to read. The Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary (2010: 671) defines a habit as “a thing that you do often and almost without thinking, a usual behaviour”.

Reading is not a passive skill. It requires, time, effort, frequent practise and active engagement in the act of reading. There must be an opportunity to read. In view of this; we can consider the term “reading habits” as an act that is practised on a regular basis, a repeat performance of reading, which is executed by the reader without effort and instinctively, to the point where it becomes a lifestyle practice. A good reading habit refers to habitual behaviour or a routine which is practised by the reader, sometimes without being aware that he/she is reading again. Furthermore, the practices of reading habits can be connected to the time spent on the act, the regularity of exercising the act of reading and the quantity of material read by the reader within a certain period.

2.8 THE IMPORTANCE OF READING HABITS

Breathing is vital to life. Accordingly, reading is crucial to education and socio-cultural success. Reading refreshes your mind, because through reading your thoughts are renewed and influenced. Reading is the window through which an individual learns and absorbs the world. It is an activity of engagement, an act of interaction with written or printed text, from which we can conclude that: “reading is alive.” To quote Van Der Walt *et al.* (2009: 149): “reading is a search for meaning that requires the active participation of the reader”.

Reading influences, the thoughts of the human species, thus the inference that we act according to our thoughts. As humans we become the brainchild of what we read. When we have a positive mind-set towards reading, it cultivates sound reading practices, and in the context of this study, encourages positive reading habits.

Through reading we expand our vision of life. Reading forms the foundation of our educational development. We read and then we imagine: what it was like, what it could be like? To quote Cole and Pullen (2010: 90): “The book as a communication technology brought modern people strangely close to distant and exotic places through the representation of those places in words and images on the printed page”

Reading is the key to unlocking a world of possibilities in order to experience a fulfilled life. Hence we can conclude that if reading is an essential element to a life of opportunities, the practice of good reading habits is vital to the skills of reading.

Why is reading important? Sometimes with deliberate purpose, other times involuntarily, the performance of reading is part of our daily lives. Sometimes it can be billboards along the road, sometimes it is the newspaper delivered in the post box, at other times it may be the magazines on the shop shelves, or perhaps just the label on the product we intend to purchase, accordingly, the act of reading is embedded in our daily lives.

To understand the importance of reading better, we need to reflect on our own reading experiences. What effect did the act of reading (or the lack thereof) have on our lives? The manner in which you learned the art of reading as a child may affect your adult reading practices. It thus appeared to the researcher that many South Africans, especially those who reside in rural areas within the country, did not grow up with a reading culture, and that is why the habit of reading and the awareness of the importance of reading are omitted from their lives.

Stahl and Hayes (1997: 136-137) comment that reading is all about meaning. As human beings differ in terms of appearance, so do readers diverge from one another in the way they read, the types of text that they prefer to read, the range of reading proficiencies, and ultimately, the interpretations of text. In addition, the reasons demonstrated by the act of reading vary from individual to individual, and so do the attitudes and motivation to read. Stahl and Hayes (1997: 137) continue to advocate that the different interpretations (different meanings) readers arrive at when reading, provides fresh and different perspectives of texts.

2.9 READING AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

There is a parallel relationship between reading and academic performance, since supplementary reading ultimately results in improved academic achievements. Research by Pretorius (2002) and Pretorius and Matjila (2004) reflect an obvious connection between academic achievement and literacy levels, which includes the skill of reading. In addition, Schmidt, Rozendal and Green (2002: 131) recapitulate that the skill to read is a crucial building block within the schooling programme and a poor reading ability by and large correlates with school failure. In contrast, we can thus conclude that if a learner demonstrates a good reading capability, it will correlate with successful academic achievements.

Cummins (1981, in Cooper, 2000:22), relates that many school learners can formulate meaning within their interactional practises in the primary school phase, as the meaning making of text is context-embedded. Hence, this researcher concludes, that at this level of schooling the reading material that is employed, allows the learners to relate to the context of a situation in a personal capacity and as a result, the learners can interpret the meaning of the situation. Learners enter the foundation phase of the schooling process, possessing a level of basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS), which according to Van Der Walt *et al.* (2009: 14) entails the language skills acquired through our daily social interactions, employing the usage of primary and additional languages. Due to the socio- cultural hegemony of English in South Africa, many parents prefer their children to be instructed in English, and consequently, most learners do not have a firm primary language education, which has created a number of academic challenges for learners.

The importance of literacy acquisition in the foundation phase is underlined by Vaughn *et al.* (2007: 11) who advocate that the act of learning to read is vital for learners in the first and second grades (referring to the foundation phase grades), as it will render these learners less likely to drop out of school, as well as being at risk of academic failure. Thus, the researcher construes that within the foundation phase (Grades 1 to

3); learners are taught how to make a distinction between the alphabet letters; how to sound the letters; how to combine letters to form different sounds; how to read high frequency words and how to read simple text. The foundation phase learning emphasises the skill of listening to the written word more than that of the skill of comprehension. Within this phase, the learner is also taught to read and write.

The researcher thus concludes that any further learning depends on the strength of the foundation of the literacy skills (which includes reading), acquired and learned within the early stages of schooling.

When learners enter high school (Grades 8 to 12), it is assumed that they have already achieved a certain level of reading competency, because the development of reading is achieved in primary school (Grades R-7), where the foundations of reading are laid (Gunning, 2007: 3). However, when the reading foundation in primary school is not properly cemented, a fragile reading ability will be carried over into high school grades, which will ultimately create some reading skill challenges as the learner progresses in school. At high school level, reading is viewed as a complex and cognitive development process whereby the learner needs to illustrate a certain level of text comprehension by means of understanding, interpreting and relating the meaning of the text. Grabe (1991: 380) further accentuates this view by declaring that learners in higher grades need to use higher order skills in processing the meaning of a text.

As previously referred to, in a South African academic context, many learners use English for academic purposes. The learners engage in learning tasks that require interaction and demand more on a cognitive level in terms of understanding language in the abstract, context-reduced forms by means of comparing, evaluating and inferring printed text. In accordance, Van Der Walt *et al.* (2009: 15) relate that Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) refers to English being used as language of proficiency in teaching and learning at high school level; which is a cognitively demanding process within the academic environment in which demonstrations; calculations; explanations; and experiments form part of the learning

content. CALP, according to Cummins (1981, in Cooper, 2000:22) draws on context-reduced language which is needed for the construction, interpretation, inference and dialogue of academic printed text, as well as the formal aspects of the classroom or academic environment. Thus, the researcher concludes that the BICS/CALP learning continues from primary school level into the high school phase of schooling, at which stage the learner reads to learn and internalise subject content to succeed academically.

Baatjies (2003: 1) identifies reading as the most critical element of literacy education. The Department of Education accentuates the statement by Baaitjies, when it acknowledges that reading is the most essential literacy skill that needs to be developed in learners (DOE, 2008 (a): 5). Pretorius (2002: 98) indicates that, as the learner progresses in his/her schooling career, the reading skill becomes more demanding; at the same time, it widens the gap between skilled and unskilled readers. Vaughn, Boss, and Schum (2000: 313) observe that learners who struggle to read, or master reading concepts in early grades, are often discouraged, and, eventually, drop out of school without mastering basic reading skills. Pretorius (2002: 174) further explains that the reading problem, as experienced by the South African learner, is concealed by the language problem. As such: "The South African learners are reading far below age appropriate expected levels" (DOE, 2008a:2).

The following is a statistical example of how reading correlates with academic performance: In 2002, Bohlman and Pretorius conducted a study which indicated that learners who obtained 50% and less in reading comprehension also did not pass mathematics. At this point in time, the low percentages achieved indicated that the learners did not understand what they were reading. However, when their reading capability improved, so did their marks for mathematics, clearly demonstrating the parallel relationship between reading and academic performance. On the contrary, the above mentioned example illustrates that if a learner experiences reading skill challenges, the learner will not be able to prosper academically (Bohlman and Pretorius, 2002: 15). Based on this, we can thus conclude that reading and academic

performance are interconnected, with academic performance depending on reading, as well as reading depending on academic performance, which is the ultimate outcome of education.

Balfour (2006: 67) provides the following explanations as some of the reasons for learners' insubstantial reading proficiencies:

- Learners cannot follow and execute written instruction, because they cannot read.
- Learners with a poor reading and comprehension capability experience do not do well academically and it has a negative effect on their self-esteem.
- Because they are conscious of their reading challenges, readers lack the motivation to display their own writing, conceptually, linguistically and structurally. Thus, it appears that reading skills challenges seem to prevent the learner from achieving academic success

As human beings, we are all different and our views of life are different. Furthermore, our characters are different as are our habitual behaviours. Furthermore, our levels of intelligence are different. Therefore, our reading behaviour and proficiency will also be different. Some learners may experience confusion when looking at letters or words, while other learners may find it difficult to infer meaning from the written text, thereby failing to develop the prerequisite skills of reading, which will enable them to become proficient readers, as argued by Martin. Martin and Carvalho (2008: 114).

A great deal of research has been conducted on the correlation between reading and academic performance and it cannot be over-emphasised. Research on the phenomenon of reading recognises that the challenge of reading practices needs to be addressed at school level, to ensure that all South African learners have an equal opportunity to improve their reading practices in order to achieve academic success.

In addition, we as educators need to ensure that we support learners with the act of reading. In view of the positive correlation between reading and academic performance, we can thus conclude that when learners do not practise good reading

habits, it will impact negatively on the academic performance of the learner and ultimately he/she will express an unenthusiastic attitude towards reading. In contrast, should a learner practise good reading habits, it will empower the learner academically and as a result, the learner will demonstrate an optimistic attitude towards reading, not only on an individual level, but also in a socio-cultural capacity by means of social interaction with others.

The promotion of good reading habits and positive reading attitudes may contribute to the improvement of reading abilities amongst high school learners. Against this backdrop, the researcher would like to investigate, analyse and discuss the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners towards English as a second language

2.10 THE EFFECTS OF READING HABITS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The habit of reading should be encouraged and inculcated in learners from an early age. As established in the previous section, the relationship between reading habits and academic achievement is important, as it determines the socio-cultural advancement of an individual.

Reading is not an automatic process. Reading is taught to the reader and it is best to introduce reading to a child at a young age, as is alleged by Van Wyk (2002:30). However, as mentioned previously, reading habits need to be introduced to and nurtured by the learner from a young age, in order to produce reading as a lifestyle habit.

When learners start their schooling journey and they start to read and decode words, little effort is made to assist the learner to make the transition from decoding to reading with comprehension (Pretorius 2002: 190). Exposure to reading material and the opportunity to read and the sustained practice regarding the act of reading are all contributing elements that will support the learner to develop a love of and a positive attitude towards reading. Therefore, it seems that, if a learner develops a love of reading; it will motivate the learner to read more and develop a reading habit. The practice of good reading habits will generally enhance the academic performance of

the learners. The more you read, the better you read and reading proficiency is a requirement for academic achievement.

2.11 READING AND MOTIVATION

Meek (1984: 44) describes an important step in learning how to read as the discovery of "the tune on the page." Even before children can read what is written, they take up this 'tune' - and make the book 'talk.'. Meek considers the part played by the emotions to be crucial to the development of this kind of knowledge, and contends that "first time" encounters with words are unique and powerful moments for young children because of the feelings that are an integral part of these encounters.

Baker, Scher and Mackler (1997: 70) maintain that the terms "motivation", "attitude" and "interest" are used interchangeably by researchers studying the phenomenon of 'reading'. Gardner (1985: 10) suggests that motivation is "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced by this activity." Terms such as "interest," "goals," "aspirations," "determination," "success" and "needs" are the linguistic terms, which are generally used in relation to the term "motivation." Britz (1993: 30) stipulates that motivation develops through the achievement of success, which enhances self-esteem and generates new aspirations.

'Motivation' is a concept which explains the behaviour of an organism or person; (Mwamwenda 2004: 231). Gouws, Kruger and Burger (2008:71) explain that the term "motivation" refers to the needs, goals and desires that spur an individual to act, and in the context of this study, the act to read. Tuckman and Monetti (2001:389) refer to "a goal" as something that a person is motivated to achieve, therefore, a goal is an element of motivation. For this reason, when a learner reads a book, he/she demonstrates goal-directed behaviour by either reading for academic or non-academic purposes. To develop a goal to read can cause a learner to move from the practice of not reading to a practice of good reading habits and positive reading attitudes.

Maslow (1970, in Woolfolk (2013: 396), advocates that human beings have a hierarchy of needs ranging from lower level needs, indicating the need for survival and safety (the need to live and be safe in life) and the higher level needs indicating intellectual accomplishments, as well as self-fulfilment. As a result, when learners read a book, they exhibit actions and purpose by either reading for academic or non-academic purposes, and in addition, it fulfils their higher level of intellectual needs and satisfies themselves (self-actualisation). In turn, according to the Oxford Advanced learner's Dictionary (2010: 396), a desire is, "a strong wish to have or do something."

Pintrich and Schunk (2002: 408) corroborate with this definition by stating that the will of a person is the part of the mind that reflects the desire of that individual, and is an innate source (a need to act) that urges that person towards achieving their goal. Accordingly, when a learner reads a book, the need to read for academic and non-academic purposes and self-actualisation is motivated by desire; in order to achieve a goal, such as good reading proficiency. Conclusively, needs, goals and desires are constituents of and can produce sufficient motivation that will incite us to read and learn, and when we taste the success of that effort, we will want to do it even more, which will result in a reading habit.

Gardner (1985: 50) explains that the concept of 'motivation' entails four aspects, namely, a goal, effortful behaviour, a desire to attain the goal and favourable attitude toward an activity. To quote Brown (1980, in Alatis *et al.*1981: 114), motivation refers to the willingness or interest or an inner drive, impulse or desire that moves a person to a particular action. The conative development is a growth phase within the adolescent (average age of a high school learner) that is characterised according to Huitt and Cain (2005) by motivation (intrinsic), aspirations, goal setting and making choices and which refers to the will, decision or strive to attain a goal (Pintrich and Schunk 2002:403).

Conation is explained by Huit and Cain (2005) as the mental process that causes an individual to act and it directs the action and the behaviour in order to achieve a goal.

According to Passer and Smith (2001), goal-orientated behaviour and the will to act upon something, the direction of the act, the persistence applied to that act and the enthusiasm display during the act, are all influenced by 'motivation'. According to this explanation, 'motivation' has two components: movement (implying action) and purpose (which determines the direction of the movement). The researcher would like to add that 'motivation' could also refer to the desire which determines the success of the movement. When learners develop the desire to learn or read; they will have an innate desire to read and to do so more frequently, which will result in a reading habit.

Hence, motivation is a source that energises learners to achieve particular goals, sustains behaviour and keeps them working on achieving more. The aforesaid is highlighted by Ormrod (2008: 384) who elucidates that motivation gets learners moving by firstly pointing them in a particular direction and secondly sustaining their movement. Motivation reflects in the learners' cognitive, emotional, and behavioural participation and commitment in school activities, such as the habit of reading.

The main sources of motivation, according to Woolfolk (2007:377), are both intrinsic and extrinsic. Both forms of motivation influence the (reading) behaviour of learners. Intrinsic motivation is the inner drive which urges an individual on to participate and engage in their interest or habitual act, with the intention to practise and master challenges, such as reading habits as best as possible. According to Reeve (2005: 134), intrinsic motivation develops spontaneously from intrinsic goals, psychological needs, personal curiosities and innate strivings for growth. In relation to this assertion, a learner that is intrinsically motivated will be energised to practise the act of reading at a regular frequency, with the purpose to enjoy the activity, as well as improve their reading proficiency, which, in turn, will further encourage the learner to read even more and consequently, achieve new aspirations. To quote from Gouws, Kruger and Burgeret *al.* (2008: 72) "Intrinsically motivated people want to perform because they

would like to ...and derives more satisfaction from success at studying (which includes reading), than from the idea, for example, that s/he will pass matric”.

In contrast with the abovementioned, extrinsically motivated people need to be impelled to act or perform an act. Extrinsic motivation occurs after a request to perform and the enticement of a reward for that performance (Reeve 2005:134). Therefore, extrinsically motivated individuals demonstrate no enthusiasm and must continually be encouraged to act.

In the context of this study, an extrinsically motivated learner needs continuous encouragement and support to participate in the act of reading. If asked, a learner that is extrinsically motivated, will tell you that they read because they have been instructed to do so. In the context of this study, (Reeve 2005:30) relates that if asked, a learner that is extrinsically motivated, will tell you that they read because they have been instructed to do so.

Gardner (1985: 51) also identifies two main types of motivation in language study, namely: integrative and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation in language study (of which reading is an aspect), emphasises emotional involvement with the primary community of the target language, with a personal interest in the people and the culture of the implicated target language. Instrumental motivation highlights the practical value and advantages of learning (which includes reading) a new language. According to the researcher integrative motivation, equates intrinsic motivation and instrumental motivation equates extrinsic motivation.

Furthermore, Lambert (1963b, in Gardner 1985), suggests two additional orientations of motivation called the manipulative (Machiavellian) motivation and the task motivation. According to Lambert, manipulative motivation is the learning of another groups' language with the intention to linguistically penetrate that community with the intention to exploit and manipulate the people within that community. Task motivation

is explained by Ellis (1986: 300) as the interest experienced by the learner when performing different learning tasks, such participating in reading out loud in the class.

A learner may possess the skill of reading, but may not demonstrate that skill until s/he is motivated to do so. Extrinsic motivation is only discussed within the periphery of the learner in the foundation phase, where they are supported in, encouraged and enticed to read. The teacher may reward reading with praise or a star in the book, whereas the parent may commend the learner in an alternative form. Accordingly, when there is no reward, motivation ceases. Ormrod (2008: 385) confirms this sequence of learning events by relating that extrinsic individuals want to get rewards, good grades, money or recognition from the activity in which they participate.

As the learner progresses from primary school grades to high school level, extrinsic motivation should gradually develop into intrinsic motivation. However, in reality the very opposite is in effect. According to Guthrie (2001: 3), the motivation for reading decreases as children goes through school because learners develop an inferiority complex, as they continuously compare themselves with their classmates. In addition, unhealthy competition, social comparison between learners and little interest in topic can lead to a decline in self-belief, therefore, a decline in intrinsic motivation.

When learners transfer from primary school to high school, they should possess intrinsic motivation; because the innate ability to appreciate the value of learning (which includes the practice of reading) and desire to achieve success in their schooling career should be present. They are thus self-motivated to learn; progress and achieve their personal and academic goals, which in turn stimulate them to accomplish even more in future. O'Donnell, Reeve and Smith (2005:153) proclaim that learners who are goal-orientated usually perform better than learners without goals. Intrinsically motivated learners believe in themselves.

Cullum (1998: 11) narrates that it is important that there should be interaction between learners of various grades and proficiency levels, which might improve reading

comprehension and which will promote genuine enjoyment, increase a positive interest, which will ultimately encourage motivation to engage in more reading activities. The following table illustrates the concept of motivation to learn, with reading being an aspect of learning:

Table 2.1: Building a concept of motivation to learn

(To read is also an aspect of learning)

Source of motivation	Characteristics of motivation to learn	Characteristics that decrease motivation to learn
Type of goal set	Intrinsic (personal factors)	Extrinsic (environmental factors)
Type of involvement	Learning goal (personal satisfaction in meeting challenges)	Performance goal (desire for approval for performance in others' eyes)
Achievement Motivation	Motivation to achieve: mastery orientation	Motivation to avoid failure
Likely attributions	Success and failure attributed to controllable effort and ability	Success and failure attributed to uncontrollable causes
Beliefs about ability	Belief that ability can be improved through hard work and added knowledge and skills	Belief that ability is a stable and uncontrollable trait

(Source: Woolfolk 2013:418)

Every individual is unique in appearance, in speech, in life achievements, in daily practices, in the act of reading, and as such, every individual is uniquely motivated. Not all high school learners are intrinsically motivated, not all learners are extrinsically motivated. For the purpose of this study, motivation is a source of force that maintains, directs and sustains reading behaviour towards a goal and can be either intrinsic (when a learner reads for internal satisfaction and development) or extrinsic (when a learner reads on instruction).

Ellis (1994: 513) asserts that internal motivation, such as a good self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward reading, has been shown to be strongly related to L2 achievement, and serves as a predictor of success in formal academic contexts, such as the classroom. Internally motivated readers read “because of personal interest and desires to learn, relax, escape, or empathize,” as explained by Block (2003: 82). Learners, who are internally motivated, are more active in class, and less likely to drop out.

From a socio-linguistic approach, considering both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in reading, this study will investigate, analyse and describe the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners toward English as a second language.

2.12 DEFINITION OF ATTITUDE AND READING ATTITUDE

According to the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2010: 80), an attitude is defined as the way that you think and feel about something. Ellis (1986: 293) describes attitude as the perception that a learner has about the target language (English in the context of this study) and their own culture. Accordingly, learners' attitudes have an effect on their proficiency level in acquiring of the target language. Attitude is defined by Guthrie and Knowles (2001: 161) as: “... affective responses that accompany behaviour of reading initiated by a motivational state”. Attitude is an opinion which, according to Du Toit and Kruger (1994: 60), can be consciously or unconsciously acquired, and are usually lasting.

McKenna (2001: 136) characterises attitudes as follows:

- Attitudes are often viewed as affective in nature (yet consisting of cognitive elements)
- Attitudes indicate behaviour (even though an attitude does not necessarily result in a behaviour)
- Attitudes are acquired on the basis of experience.

Guthrie and Greaney (1991: 87) state that people's attitudes to reading are resultant from "perceptions" acquired from past reading experiences, regarding how pleasurable and valuable reading is. Day and Bamford (1998: 23-24) declare that the attitude of a learner towards reading in the target language, whether positive or negative, is transferred from the attitude and experiences in the first language. Attitude as explained by Ellis (1994) is the way in which a learner views the target language, which then motivates the learner to engage in learning and surmount the challenges in the target language. Ellis continues to stipulate that learners perceive different attitudes toward the target language, the particular uses of the target language, the speakers thereof, the target language culture and the social significance of the target language compared to themselves as members of their own culture.

Consequently, it appeared to the researcher that when a learner embraces a positive attitude towards a target language, that learner will be successful in learning that language, which will in turn reinforce the positive attitude. On the other hand, when a learner has a negative attitude towards a language, that learner may not be successful in learning the target language, and the lack of success will emphasise a negative attitude. The researcher thus concluded that a consistent wave of a positive attitude could breed more positivity, whereas negativity breeds more negativity. This aforementioned correlation is thus illustrated by the researcher as follows:

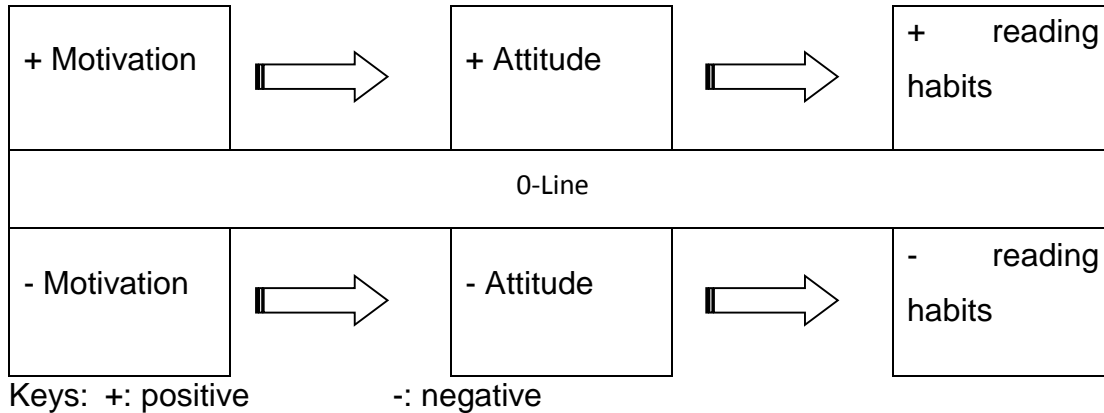


Figure 2.1: Correlation between motivation, attitudes and reading

Relative to the above, reading attitude is explained by McKenna (2001: 136) as “a system of feelings related to reading which causes the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation”. Reading attitudes refer to the feelings and beliefs an individual has with respect to reading. The reading attitude reflects the reading experience of the learner which can change as the learner advances through the school programme. According to PIRLS (2006, in Mullis *et al.*,2007; 139-142), the learners who obtained the highest reading scores, are those learners who express positive attitudes toward reading, as well as consider themselves to be proficient readers.

McLane and McNamee (1990: 90) assert that there is a connection between purposes of reading, the uses of reading and the act of reading as a daily practice. McKenna (2001: 125 -145) revealed the following about reading attitudes:

- As the learner develops and advances through life, other activities and leisure options seem to compete with positive reading attitudes, which cause positive reading attitudes to decrease over time.
- Attitudes decline much faster for low and moderate reading achievers, yet the reading attitude of the high reading achiever does not easily decrease. This is why the difference in reading attitudes between proficient readers and the poor reader is quite observable and audible.

- Girls tend to embrace a more positive reading attitude than boys, due to societal beliefs and expectations.
- Ethnic group membership, cultural beliefs and norms strongly relate to and can contribute to positive or negative attitude toward reading.

Abromitis (2000: 42-49) has studied and discusses reading attitudes and distinguishes between different attitudes toward reading as follows:

- Positive reading attitude: Learners with a positive attitude toward reading enjoy reading various text materials, frequently practise the act of reading, spend much time reading, visit the library regularly, talk about reading and share books and reading material with other learners. The focus is reading for enjoyment.
- Neutral reading attitude: Learners with a neutral attitude toward reading read often, however, they do not voluntarily engage in optional reading practices. The focus is reading on instruction.
- Negative reading attitude: Learners with negative attitude toward reading choose not to read often and are undecided about their feelings toward reading.

A study conducted by Pretorius (2005: 790) proved to be groundbreaking in investigating the reading practices, attitudes and problems of five first year tertiary students, who volunteered to participate for a three-month interview session in which they worked with the researcher in what she refers to as a “read and probe” procedure. These students were poor readers, lacked good reading practice and were reluctant to use new strategies due to bad reading experiences. However, as the study progressed, the reading confidence of the learners increased and they developed a positive attitude due to the reading techniques which they successfully developed from the sessions with the researcher (Pretorius, 2005: 809-810).

Reading can be influenced by many factors, therefore it is important the formation of positive attitudes towards reading be supported and encouraged in learners from a young age. Children develop habits, including the habit to read from an early age in

life. As the child matures, the desire and motivation to read will increase a positive reading attitude, which can result in voluntary reading. This is illustrated in Figure 2.2: The model of reading attitude acquisition.

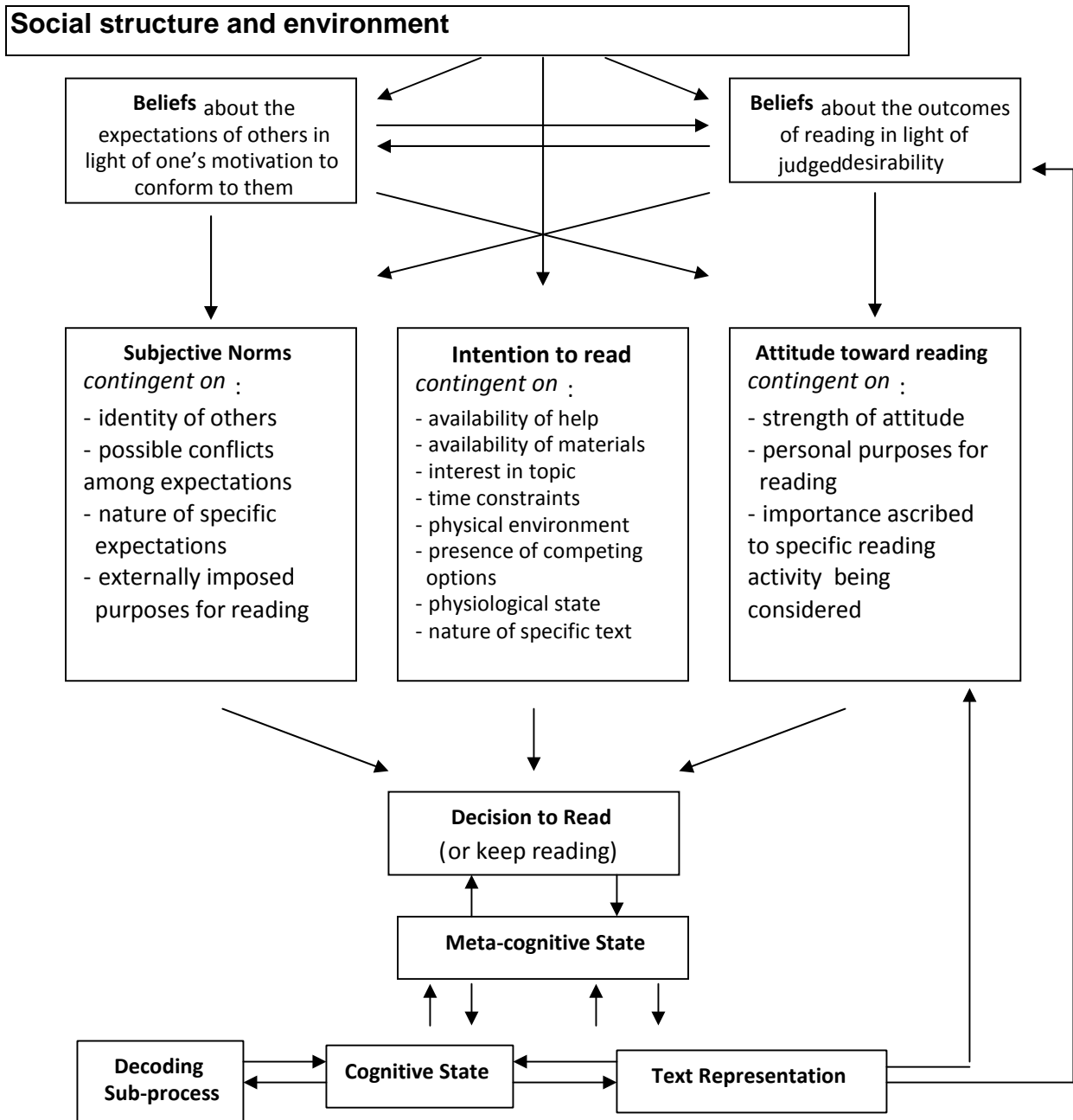


Figure 2.2: Model of reading attitude acquisition

(McKenna 2001: 140)

2.13 SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING AND ITS IMPORTANCE

Any language learnt after the first language can be regarded as a second or additional language. Accordingly, second language learning (English L2, in this context) refers to any language which is learned after one's first language (Afrikaans L1, in this context). Researchers, such as Yamashita (2002: 81), explored whether L1 reading abilities must first be well developed, in such a way that it surpasses the inception level of the L2 of the learner, in order for L1 reading skills to transfer to L2 reading ability. This researcher's view is that both L1 reading ability and L2 ability contribute to L2 reading ability. Thus, a good L1 reading ability and L2 ability complement one another for the highest level of L2 reading ability.

To acquire a language, a person must be able to read that language, and be able to understand and share the interpretation of what we have read. Van Der Walt, Evans and Kilfoil (2009: 6) suggest that, learning a language in school only, with limited or no exposure to the language outside of the classroom is considered as a second additional language. Krashen (1981) pronounces that the quantity of input and output a second language learner takes in and produces are respectively dependent on the frequent use of the target language in the various social platforms within the community. Second language acquisition and second language learning, according to Van Der Walt, Evans & Kilfoil (2009: 10-14) are influenced by a number of internal and external factors, which also play an important role in L2 reading and interpretation.

Gardner (1985: 2) regards second language learning (which includes reading) as a social psychological phenomenon, for which it is significant to study the conditions in which learning takes places, and, in addition, consider the elements that influence second language learning. According to Krashen (1985: 2), reading is one of the most important skills in an educational situation. Using the acquisition-learning distinction hypothesis, Krashen suggests that language acquisition happens, because of the subconscious process of obtaining a language, similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. It requires meaningful interaction in the target

language (natural communication), whereby speakers do not concentrate on the form of their utterances, but in the communicative act.

On the other hand, language learning is the result of formal instruction, much like what one experiences in school, and it comprises a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge 'about' the language, such as the knowledge of grammar rules and vocabulary of that language. According to Krashen, 'learning' is less important than 'acquisition' of a language. Thus, because learning a second language is less important, it may be possible that it has an impact on the reading habits and attitudes demonstrated by ESL language learners.

2.14 THE IMPACT OF ATTITUDES ON SECOND LANGUAGE READING

Gardner (1985: 40-42) proposes that attitudes can be seen reflected in relationships between the attitude measures and achievement in a second language. Research literature indicates that, in order for a learner to successfully learn a second language, they must be intrinsically (internally) motivated, which is a result of a positive attitude toward the target language, its speakers, and within the communication environment. The instrumental (external) motivation is a positive opinion of the value of learning and knowing the target language. As postulated by Brown (1980), in Alatis, Altman, and Alatis, (1981: 113), "The process of learning a second language is one that involves a total physical, intellectual and emotional commitment from the learner, to be able to achieve positive linguistic learning results".

Gardner (1985: 105-6) suggests that there are there are different experiences associated with second language learning which can have an impact on a learners' attitude and motivation to read, which are: Bicultural excursion programmes which refer to the short term interactions which a language learner have with the target language community in their own environment with the purpose of cultivating a positive attitude towards that target language group (Gardner 1985: 85).

Regular language courses and intensive language training to which Gardner (1985: 8) adds, is that regardless of the positive or negative attitude of learners, skilled

language teachers can generate positive attitudes in the learner by being sensitive towards their feelings and present learning content in an informative and interesting manner. Thus it appears to the researcher that, when teachers are not attuned to their feelings; and not linguistically knowledgeable in the target language, learners will not develop a positive attitude towards the target language.

For this reason, the researcher concludes that if a learner portrays a positive attitude in the learning of a language, that learner will be successful in the practices of reading that language, which will increase a positive attitude and motivate to achieve even more success in the second language.

2.15 INTERNAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT INTEREST IN READING

There are a number of factors that influence the reading interest, ability, and consequently, the reading habits of an individual. A factor is defined by the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010: 526) as one or several things that cause or influence something, whereas internal is defined (2010: 785) as connected with the inside of something. As a result, when we investigate the internal factor that affects reading interest, we need to examine the innate factors which a learner brings to the reading situation and which can have an effect or can influence the act of reading.

2.15.1 Personality

Vaughn *et al.* (2000: 37) relate that innate factors which constitute the personality of an individual, such as self-concept, motivation, desire, personal aspirations, personal capabilities and perception of success are all influential factors in the learners' reading ability, and willingness to read. Gouws, Kruger and Burger (2008: 64) are in agreement with Vaughn *et al.* (2000: 37) when they pronounce that people with a positive self-concept are enthusiastic and successful in the approach to their studies, whereas, a negative self-concept induces in a poor academic performance.

Mwamwenda (2004) reports that the self-concept of a learner can be used as an indicator to predict academic achievement. Thus, the researcher deduces that learners with a low self-concept will perform poorly in an academic environment and have a negative attitude towards success.

Sadker and Sadker (2005: 36) insert that emotions, tolerance, perseverance and the willingness to take risks are factors that can have an effect on the act to read and thus, on the reading habits of the reader. Lerner and Johns (2009: 153) refer to self-confidence and emotional adaptability as vital elements in reading readiness, and in addition, they will be influential elements in the cultivation of the reading habits of the reader

2.15.2 Personal interest

Grades 8 to 10 high school learners (specifically average ages ranging from 14 to 17) are adolescents who, according to Gouws, Kruger and Burger (2000:5-6) develop on a physical, cognitive, social, emotional, moral and religious echelon and development aspects constantly influence and depend on each other for a comprehensive operation within the individual. It is within this process of development, that the 'interest' of the adolescent also matures.

Ainsley (2010: 238) describes 'interest' as an energising source that is associated with the selection and persistence with information processing activities. A learner will therefore say: "I really want to read" and when this happens, the individual is intrinsically motivated to read. Thus, the learner expresses an interest in the act of reading. In contrast, when a learner says: "I read because I have to", like in a situation in which the reader is instructed to read, the learner displays a lack of motivation to read. Therefore, the learner expresses a lack of interest in the act of reading. Eggen and Kauchak (2010: 309) assert that learners are evidently more motivated to read and study topics they find interesting, and teachers often try to capitalise on learner interest in their subjects.

Ainsley (2010: 238) pronounces that there are two types of interest namely: personal interest, which refers to the ongoing attraction or liking for a subject area, topic or activity such as the habit of reading. Personal interest develops developed gradually, can persist over time and increases knowledge. Situational interest however, is evoked by something in the immediate environment, refers to a person's current enjoyment, pleasure or satisfaction of certain kind of event, such as the act of reading, but it does not last.

Learners who have a well-developed interest are often prepared to participate in activities and are as a result probably motivated to learn, and in the context of the study, practise reading as a habit. When a learner is interested in an activity, that learner will create opportunities to engage in that activity. It is important to differentiate between catching a learner's interest and holding that interest long enough for learning to be effective. Brophy (2011: 54) argues that learners need to perceive school activities (such as reading), as interesting, meaningful and worthwhile and appreciate its purpose to life outside of school, in order to be motivated to learn.

In relation to the above, it is evident that a learner needs to express and display interest in an idea, topic or activity, to be motivated and willing to do it on a voluntary basis as frequently as possible. For the purpose of this study the learner needs to demonstrate an interest in reading and be willing to read for academic and non-academic purposes, in order to practice reading as a lifestyle, or rather a habit.

2.15.3 Culture

Culture is delineated by Ormrod (2008: 24) as the behaviour and system of belief that characterise a social group of which, of which the child is a member. Ormrod (2008: 111) continues to explain that, with the practice of globalisation, which continually unites people from various cultures, cultures exist under the umbrella of time with continuous change, in terms of generating and incorporating new beliefs, values,

practices, ideas and perceptions. Eggen and Kauchak (2007:106) summarise culture as the knowledge, attitudes, values and customs that characterise a social group. Historically, culture was defined as the acquired knowledge (which is obtained through reading) that people used to interpret their experiences, as well as practice social behaviour, as is mentioned by Mushi (2004: 181).

According to Van Der Walt *et al.* (2009: 159) printed text, at the time it is written, reflects a more permanent report of the values and beliefs practised by a community. Across the globe there are many countries, each with a dominant culture (macro culture) and within those countries co-exist many different cultures (micro cultures) characterised by the diverse national languages, traditional practices, moral values, behaviours and belief systems, knowledge and attitudes as exercised by a particular cultural group. The fact that people interact on a continuous basis, enables culture to be in a state of evolution, in order to accommodate an ever increasing global community.

People from different cultures influence each other, resulting in individuals having multiple-cultural identities by means of their nationality, religion, ethnicity, gender and other affiliations. Learners also vary in terms of language, culture, economic privilege, personality, knowledge and experience. The needs, goals, interests and beliefs of the individuals, also differ from person to person (Woolfolk 2013:403). These individual identities generate internalised cultures that, according to Salili and Hoosain (2007: 4) direct the thoughts and feelings, and thus the interest (motivation) of a person. These researchers further elaborate that every individual possesses a dominant culture (also known as macro culture) which is shared by all, such as within a school environment. Opposed to that, the culture in which members believe in the same rules, values behaviours are known as the micro culture. Learners differ in terms of language, culture, economic privilege, personality, knowledge and experience. They also differ in terms of their needs, goals, interests and beliefs (Woolfolk 2013:403).

Through the awareness of the diversity of cultural practices and the differences among cultures, educators will be able to: motivate learners in a positive direction, better understand the habits and behaviour of the learner and effectively resolve conflicts in (Campbell 2009:71) the macro and micro cultural domain. Mushi (2004: 180) relates that a comprehensive understanding of the diversity and interaction of cultures will enable educators to transfer knowledge and ensure that effective learning transpires within the classroom. However, there are times when the culture of the learner (a micro culture) and the school (a macro-culture) do not meet and consequently result in resistance of cultures. Resistance cultures are often minority groups who have experienced a history of low status, discrimination or separation. Members of resistance cultures normally reject attitudes and behaviours that can lead to school success such as doing homework, reading, and participating in class and of which the outcome is often low grades, motivation problems, absenteeism and high dropout rates (Eggen & Kauchak 2010:98).

Motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, is an essential component of successful education and learning. Positive learning experiences (with reading forming part there-of) need to be created so that learners, according to Salili and Hoosain (2007: 7) can maintain personal and cultural identity and values, as well as succeed in achieving their educational goals.

Educators need to adapt their teaching styles to the extent that it adds value to the cultural traits of the learners, as well as contribute to the relevance of the lesson content. This will encourage learners to, as alleged by Wood (2005: 37-38) capitalise on their cultural knowledge and it will increase positive motivation to learn and achieve academic success.

From the above, it can be deduced that when the macro and micro culture of a learner is in agreement, the learners will display an interest (motivation) to learn, which includes the engagement in the practice of reading. On the other hand, when the macro and micro cultures are in conflict, there is resistance to learning (which includes

the act of reading), which will ultimately lead to loss of interest (motivation) to succeed in school.

2.15.4 Language

Language is the tool through which we communicate internally in thoughts, externally with the sound of words and through the display of understanding with the written word. We need the foundation of language acquisition and learning in order to read. Most schools (including the sample site schools) offer English as a language of instruction, which confirms the assertion by Hinkel (2005: 566) that a reader needs to be proficient in a language for second language reading to have effect. Passer and Smith (2001, in Gouws, Kruger and Burger 2008: 64) posit that thoughts are not resolved by language, however, language does influence what and how effectively learners think, and in turn language influences the thoughts a learner possesses about reading and reading habits.

2.15.5 Educational background

The skill of starting to read at a very young age can ultimately continue into adulthood, according to Hopper (2005: 113) and therefore, the researcher claims, that when the habit of reading is introduced to a learner at an early age, that reading habit continues into adulthood. Educational background, along with socio-cultural and socio-economic status in the home environment of the learner, is some of the influential factors affecting learning, which includes the act of reading. Therefore, not all, but most, non-reading adults are those individuals that were reluctant child readers. To use the words of Meek (1984: 25) "Learning to read in the early stages, like everything else a child has come to know, is an approximation of adult behaviour with a genuine, meaningful function. The child's guarantee that he will be successful is that he has already mastered an even greater task; that of talking and making speech express his meanings".

Background education refers to the knowledge, skills and concepts that the learner brings to the learning situation. Learners, whose parents are educated, normally

expose their children to books, which motivate them to read and as a result have an increased level of knowledge, compared to the learner who is only introduced to the benefits of the written word at school entrance level. Geske and Ozola (2008: 72) suggest that learners who are guided and supported by their parents display good reading abilities and habits, opposed to learners whose parents are not well educated. These learners will display little or no interest in books.

Learners who have acquired general knowledge and experience are in a more advantageous position to develop a new language and engage in reading practices than those learners who have not. When a learner starts the schooling programme, s/he already possesses a wealth of experience which was absorbed through interaction and observation at home and in their communities. New content are then carefully added to the learners' existing knowledge. Booyse and Du Plessis (2008: 8) narrate that learning experiences (which includes reading) should build on each other, so that learners are able to understand the connection among learning activities.

Van Der Walt *et al.* (2009: 159) claim that the act of reading is an interaction between the education background of the reader, the text and the frames of reference, also known as schemata. Inadequate background knowledge of text may result in impaired comprehension. The educational background and experiences of a learner influence the learners' interest in learning, and as a result, the reading of the learner. Learners are inclined to have an interest in activities which left them with a sense of success, and for that reason learners are inclined to engage in activities they are good at, because it stimulates the need of achievement.

Educators should assist learners to build up positive educational experiences, in order to increase their interest. A higher value of interest in a book will result in the learner making effort to read the book. Effective learning occurs when learners are interested in the learning content and participate in the lesson activities. The researcher thus concludes that children that come from a home environment where there is a high level of educational background as support structure, which allows them to develop

an interest in the act of reading, will evidently practise reading habits, as well as perform better academically than learners that come from a home environment, where there is a lack of educational background.

2.15.6 Age and gender

2.15.6.1 Age

Second language learning (and in the context of this study), second language reading is influenced by the age of the learner. In most language learning situations, L2 learners start to learn to read at approximately the time they start to learn the language. However, L1 are normally about three or four years orally conversant before they start to read the language. Children in South Africa use English as a language of instruction, and although they may be academically successful, they may still use their first language for social interaction.

Children that already have solid literacy skills (which include the skill of reading) in the L1 are in an advantageous position to effectively learn and read a new language. Minskoff (2005: 25) observes that literacy skills, such as reading skills and concepts, can only be successfully transferred to the L2, when the learner has mastered it in the first language (L1). In other words, learners should first master the skills of reading in their L1, and thereafter, use it to strengthen their L2 reading skills and strategies. As a result, positive reading habits and attitudes of reading in the first language can be transferred to English L2, and assist learners to demonstrate, amongst others, reading skills that allow them to critically interact with a wide range of texts, challenge perspectives, and identify values, and power relations, embedded in the text.

Ellis (1986: 110) observed that children appear to have more success in the pronunciation of a learned language, because they are motivated by the requirement of a native sounding accent in order to be accepted by the target language community. Children also seem to achieve greater fluency when communicating, since they are

exposed to the target language for an extended time period, as well as proficiency competence within the peer group interaction situation.

2.15.6.2 Gender

Over the years, gender differences, through means of the situation at home, at school and in society has had an impact on the participation in educational activities by male learners (boys) and female learners (girls). The early gender bias experiences that children encounter can shape their:

- Attitudes and beliefs related to their development of interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships;
- Access to education equality;
- Participation in the corporate work world, as well as
- Stifling their physical and psychological well-being (Hendrix & Wei, 2009).

As humans, we are not born with the knowledge of gender, yet gender difference is the most observable and most significant difference between human beings. According to Dong (2014: 92-96) gender and age differences are social phenomena, because men and women play different roles in a socio-cultural context, and use language (in its different varieties, contexts and forms) differently, as a tool to communicate with each other. Gender differences in language is clearly evident in the interactional behaviour of boys and girls, which reflect the socio-cultural power relations between male and females, even the hegemony of language, in which males traditionally enjoy conversational dominance and women step into a respectful and accommodating role and use of language.

Dong (2014: 92-96) continues by mentioning that gender also has an academic significance by increasing our individual knowledge competence and our knowledge about the world around us. Passer and Smith (2001) make mention of intelligence tests which indicate that the level of intelligence connoted by both the male and female gender is equal, except for the fact that they demonstrate different levels of aptitude

in specific domains. This report is supported by Gouws, Kruger and Burger (2008: 64) who point out that girls demonstrate a better ability in verbal skills test than boys, such as reading, which assess fluency and comprehension. On the other hand, boys illustrate an advantage in spatial orientation tests and mathematics. In addition, Hopper (2005) suggests that boys' achievement in technology exceed that of girls. These gender differences conform to the expectations of society as mentioned by Hendrix and Wei in the previous paragraph.

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) administered by UNESCO and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) conducted a, "Literacy Skills for the World of Tomorrow" study, which suggests that girls read better than boys through to the age of 15 years. The report also suggests that boys read less fluently because of "a lack of engagement." Statistically, 56 percent of the boys read only to get information, compared with 33 percent of the girls. Indirectly, the report highlighted the different gender performances as reflecting the reading habits of the learners. Furthermore, the report details that 45 percent of the girls said they read for at least thirty minutes a day, compared to 30 percent of the boys. In mathematics, however, males tend to perform at somewhat higher levels in most countries. The statistics clearly indicate that on a universal platform, more needs to be done to engage the learner, the male learner in particular, in reading practices.

2.15.7 Cognitive ability

Cognitive ability refers to human capabilities called intelligence. Woolfolk (2013: 30) states that cognitive development relates to the changes in the adolescent's ability to think; reason and make decisions. Adolescence is explained by Husen *et al* (1994: 83) as the period within the lifespan when most of a person's biological, psychological, and social characteristics are changing from what is considered childlike to what is considered adult. Language changes continuously according to the human development process of continuous increasing abilities. The concept of cognitive theories, according to Rueda and Chen (2005: 212), is the learners' internal learning

ability which is developed by what they think about their task, their ability to perform the task and the effort required to perform the task.

Woolfolk (2013: 35) continues by suggesting that: “the cerebral cortex accounts 85% of the brain’s weight in adulthood and it allows for the greatest human accomplishment, such as language and complex problem solving”. During adolescence, this includes learners in high school, changes in the brain occurs rapidly and allow the young individual to learn to control their behaviour, so that it be more purposeful and organised. According to Sadker & Sadker (2005: 36) learners have different ways to perceive, to organise and to retain and recall information. Some prefer to learn by reading and looking, others can listen and still recall information, some learn best kinaesthetically, others focus intensively and others pay attention to many things at once. Gouws, Kruger and Burger (2008: 6) mentions that the cognitive ability of the adolescent is linked to their sensory perception, as well as their communication with other people and their ability to process information through the use of reasoning skills.

Vaughn, Bos and Schumm (2000: 347) proclaim that intellectual impairment causes challenges in all spheres of learning for the learner and that learners affected in this way, show a low performance in all aspects of language learning, of which reading is included. To quote from Woolfolk (2013: 39) “Reading is a complex integration of the systems in the brain that recognise sounds, written symbols, meanings and sequences and then connect with what the reader already knows.

Reading instruction in primary school grades is primarily the development of a skill, thus primary school learners learn to read. However, in high school, learners read to learn and therefore reading should become more of behaviour to learn. Adolescents are developmentally on a journey to become proficient and regular readers by the end of the journey and reach their destination, or they do not reach their destination by losing reading interest and thus they do not practice reading habits. When learners

lose interest in reading, there would hardly be any prospects for them to develop into lifelong readers at a later stage.

2.15.8 Academic performance

As discussed previously, the ability to read is a requirement to progress through school and achieve success in life, as Elley (1991) states, reading is attached to academic success. Bohlman and Pretorius (2002: 205) suggest that reading is a pivotal element for learning (both inside and outside the classroom) and learners who do not conquer this skill will experience academic challenges in the learning context. Gunning (2007: 3) alleges that reading is essential in the process of learning, because it provides the learner with a tool to access information on a universal scale.

Research indicates that learners with a low reading ability are normally the learners that are low academic performers (Stanovich, 2000). Chall (2000) asserts that poor reading skills produce low academic achievement in both L1 and L2 learning, which includes the act of reading. Schmidt *et al.* (2002: 131) support the before-mentioned statement in pointing out that the ability to read is a vital skill to acquire for school success and that there is a parallel relationship between poor reading proficiency and school failure. Vaughn *et al.* (2007:11) proclaim that learners who do not acquire reading skills in the primary school grades are at risk of academic failure. As a result, the researcher concludes that academic performance and/or success depend on literacy skills, which include the ability to read. Therefore, the emphasis on the need and the value of reading cannot be accentuated enough.

To develop reading comprehension, according to Machet and Pretorius (2003), a reader needs to acquire the ability to connect information and various key concepts in the text, use background information to comprehend and contextualise the text, read the hidden text, make inferences about the text and make predictions about the text. Indeed, reading is a complex task and that is why Pretorius (2000: 35) decrees that

students need to become able readers, with the purpose to “read to learn”, which will generate academic success, and ultimately professional growth.

According to Pretorius (2000), Stanovich (1986: 285-298), introduced the metaphor of “Matthew effects” within the field of reading in order to explain the development of individual differences in reading. The name of this metaphor of reading was derived from the “rich get richer and the poor get poorer” discussion in the Gospel according to Matthew. Therefore, it can be construed that according to the metaphor of the “Matthews effect” when a learner does not take pleasure in the act of reading, it can lead to the learner reading less. Consequently, it seems that when learners experience reading challenges, it has the potential to disrupt the advancement in their schooling career and result in a negative learning spiral, in which the learner loses reading interest, tipping off the Matthew’s attitude influence model effect. As a result; poor readers will read even less, prohibiting the complete development of the linguistic and cognitive mechanism, and as result, lack comprehension ability which is a crucial element for high school progress. To quote from Pretorius (2002: 189) learners who experience reading challenges are part of a “negative cycle of failed reading outcomes and academic performances”. On the other hand, when a learner enjoys reading, it is possible that the learner may engage in the act of reading more, which can result in a positive reading habit.

In 2004, the Department of Education (DoE) acknowledged reading literacy as one of the most essential components in education. Since then the DoE has embarked on and promoted various reading programmes and campaigns, with the purpose of creating awareness about ‘reading’. Regardless of the continuous effort to alleviate the reading dilemma, there are still reports about low reading literacy rates among South African learners. For example: The third successful Annual National Assessment (ANA) 2014 was administered on more than 7, 3 million Grades 1-9 learners in all public schools. 2014 saw the first wall-to-wall implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in South African Schools, and for the first time ANA included the General Education and Training Phase (GET) Band

(Grades 1-9). However, grades 7 and 8 were included as pilot studies only. ANA 2014 indicated that the performance of learners in Mathematics and Languages is below the minimum promotion levels of 40% and 50% respectively. The average performance in Grades 4, 5, 6, and 9 for First Additional Language (also referred to as second language, which refers to English in the context of this study) at a national level is as follows: Grade 4: 41%; Grade 5: 46.7%; Grade 6:45.4% and Grade 9: 34.4%. The marks are all still below average. Compared to previous ANA assessment in 2012 and 2013, the 2014 results indicate an overall improvement in First additional language averages, but more still needs to be done to assist learners to improve their reading habits and attitude toward English. The following table in the Annual National Report (2014: 43) illustrates the first additional language averages over the years as follows:

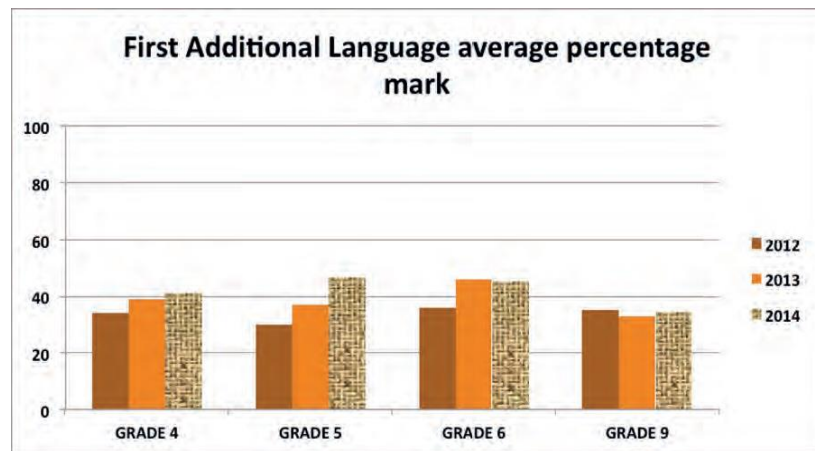


Figure 2.3: First additional language average percentage mark

Source: The Annual National Report (2014: 43)

Although the above table indicates an improvement in first addition language learning, the results are still below the average mark, which requires more efficient and immediate action to again produce an overall improvement with the next assessment period.

According to the ANA report (2014: 13), the analysed statistics for language learning in 2013 and 2014 indicated that learners, grade 9 in particular, experienced the following challenges:

- Learners experience challenges when they have to summarise a text in their own words.
- Learners lack the required editing skills when writing letters.
- Learners are unable to interpret a text. The reading deficit by South African learners is comprehensive attested to in (DOE, 2012: 5), where it indicates that the most striking weakness is the inability of learners to read with understanding.

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) implementation process which commenced in 2012 with the grades R-3 (Foundation phase) and grade 10, in 2013 it was extended to grades 4 to 6 (Intermediate phase) and grade 11 and the process was completed in 2014 with grades 7-9 (senior phase) and grade 12. Gouws *et al.* (2008: 146) explain the national qualifications framework by illustration of the following table:

Table 2.2: National Qualifications Framework of Education

NQF1	General Education and Training Band	
	Pre-school	Grade R
	Foundation phase	Grade 1-3
	Intermediate phase	Grade 4-6
	Senior phase	Grade 7-9
NQF levels 2, 3,4	Further Education and Training Band	
		Grades 10-12
NQF levels 5,6,7,8	Higher Education and Training	
		Tertiary Education

Source: Illustration by Gouws *et al.* (2008: 146)

The purpose of CAPS is to provide the educators and learners with support regarding guidelines on content areas to be covered in each quarter of the school year. To date, according to ANA report (2014: 20), results for language learning show a noticeable improvement in learner performance since the commencement of CAPS in 2012.

The South Africa Country Progress Report: South Africa (2013: 15) accounts that since 2002, an average of about 96% of South African learners between the ages 7 to 15 years have been absorbed in the schooling programme. In 2013, the report recorded that an average of 99% of the South African learners are part of the schooling programme. It is important that every South African learner is provided with a solid academic foundation for an opportunity to a lifelong journey of learning, which is a building block for academic success and professional growth. Learning leads to reading, and reading leads to learning.

Hugo *et al.* (2005: 210) suggest that South African learners lack language and reading skills and ability, which need to be improved on, if academic accomplishments and professional growth is to be achieved. In reference to this study, all learners should be taught how to read (and to practice reading) at an appropriate level of difficulty, as alleged by Shanker and Cockrum (2009: 2), with the aim to cultivate effective and successful academic performance.

2.16 EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT INTEREST IN READING

Oxford advanced learner's dictionary (2010: 519) defines 'external' as connected with or located on the outside of something. As a result, when we investigate the external factors that affect reading interest, we need to examine the factors outside of a learner, which can have an effect or can influence the act of reading.

The environment in which learners develop and the learning opportunities it avails to the learner to engage in, need to be discussed in order understand the reading habit and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 high school learners toward English.

2.16.1 The environment

The environment is a primary contributor to language acquisition and learning, because, as children grow up they use the language which they acquire and which they hear and interact with in their immediate environment first. The environment, according to Sigelman and Rider (2006: 05) refers to: “all the external physical and social conditions and events that can affect us ... from social interactions with family members, peers, and teachers, to the broader cultural context in which we develop”

The environment consists of physical factors such as over-populated classes, family background, poverty, stress and anxiety. These are all factors that influence the development of the reader which can result in learning success or failure.

Learners need the incessant support and encouragement of parents and the community in order to learn, because literacy goes beyond educational precincts. Although the classroom remains the main learning area, the environment beyond the classroom also contributes greatly to the cultivation of a reading habit as a lifestyle practice.

2.16.2 The community

South Africa has many schools that are situated in disadvantaged communities. Graves, Juel and Graves (2001: 23) found that the reading proficiency of learners attending schools in disadvantaged communities is lower than that of learners who attend school in advantaged communities. Scientific research by Cummins, Brown and Sayer (2007: 19) serves as evidence that social inequalities deposit negative influences on the reading development of learners; however, intervention at the social level can significantly improve achievement among learners from low-income families.

The social element of learning enhances the role of literacy in the community, as literacy is which is effectively explained by Pretorius and Machet (2004) in saying that

language and literacy are learned through social interaction with others in a community, which help the learner to develop an understanding on the function and purpose of reading. Pretorius (2002: 170) further elaborates by stating that socio-cultural factors credit reading practices with meaning and value, as well as the situations in which reading occurs within the community.

2.16.3 The home environment

The home environment influences the reading ability of the learner, as well as the attitude towards reading. The aforementioned statement is evident in the PIRLS 2011 findings which reflected a strong positive relationship between students' reading proficiency and their early learning experiences. Students whose parents reported that they themselves were readers and indulged in early literacy activities with their children, such as reading books and telling stories, had higher reading achievement.

Trelease (1990) asserts that parents who engage their children in the act of reading, assist in improving the reading ability of the child, as well as encourage good reading habits. It is very likely that children who see their parents practise good reading habits, will develop a positive attitude towards reading, and therefore also demonstrate sound reading habits. Home support for the school can reinforce the learners' overall learning experience and as a result parents then become stakeholders in the educational process of their children. One of the heartrending realities in the South African family structures is that many children have been orphaned due to the brutality of HIV/AIDS and may not have family support. Clark and Rumbold (2006: 24) affirm that parental involvement in the child's learning experience and practices are in many incidences a more potent force than other family orientated variables such as social class and the level of parental education.

The PISA study (OECD 2003: 8) reported that the reading practices and habits of a learner is a more trusted predictor of the learning performances of a learner than his

socio-economic background, indicating that a learner's reading interest can assist the learner to defeat home disadvantages.

Parents and family members who interact with children in reading practices and activities show support and encourage the children to read. Meek (1991) attests that reading is an important family literacy practice, which can generate a positive attitude and motivate the learner to practise reading as a habit.

2.16.4 Resources

To obtain reading material is for the greater part dependent on financial resources. Many parents are unemployed and can therefore not afford to financially invest in reading material. Poverty within a family can have a negative influence on the learning performance of the learner in school. A learner who is hungry, according to Sadker and Sadker (2005: 36) will not perform at optimal level. From experience, the researcher asserts that many South African learners stay in over-crowded and inadequate houses, and therefore do not have a quiet place where they could read. The lack of electricity in many homes also hinders reading development.

According to Statistics South Africa (P0318: 20) 23, 5% of learners cited a lack of money as the main reason for not attending an educational institution while 17, 7% reportedly fell out due to poor academic performance. Although 11, 6% of individuals left their studies as a result of family commitments (that is, getting married, minding children and pregnancy); it is noticeable that females were much more likely to offer this as reasons than males (21, 8% compared to 1 and 0%). Approximately 9, 4% of individuals reported that education was useless.

As a result, it is unlikely, not impossible, for learners who emerge from poverty stricken houses to deliberately engage in voluntary reading, which is most likely to occur at home. The absence of resources can thus have a reverse influence on the

development of positive attitude toward reading and the implementation of good reading habits.

2.16.5 School environment

School is the place where most learners learn to read and write. Literacy is developed within the social context of classrooms, which allows for the interaction of teachers and learners as a social practice. The social and the cultural context of the school environment interrelate. According to Sigelman and Rider (2006:45) children are social beings and through their interactions with parents and teachers they develop and learn about the world around them.

In a school every classroom has its own learning culture which is then further developed by the individual literacy experiences and abilities of the learners. Applegate and Applegate (2004: 556) suggest that teachers create a classroom environment that encourages the growth of reading in learners. Therefore, it is important for teachers to recognise that learners originate from diverse background, speak various languages, and possess different experiences and many levels of intelligences, which all need to be acknowledged and valued within the socio-cultural context of the classroom.

Learning goes beyond the school and classroom boundaries, thus the researcher concluded that it is important to not only focus on teachers and learners on the academic purposes of literacy and learning, but it should also encourage non-academic purposes of reading, so that learners can relate to literacy not only in the classroom, but practise reading habits in other areas of their lives.

Teachers are a vital piece to the literacy learning puzzle. Hart (2002: 04) asserts that teaching is a complex activity which needs not only professional skills, but also the ability to relate to the learners on a personal level, which requires qualities such as imagination, creativity and sensitivity to stimulate, support and encouragement of

reading and learning inside and outside classroom. In relation to the role of parents, Irving (1980: 9) narrates that teachers play an important subsequent role to introduce, support and motivate learners into the mysterious world of reading, not only based on their pivotal role in the classroom of knowledge transmission, but because their attitude towards the learner and reading is directly and indirectly transferred to the learners.

Teacher-based factors that can impact on the learning outcomes of the learner, according to Pretorius and Machet (2004) include teacher education, qualifications, training and experience, classroom management and discipline, instructional approaches to reading, and the personality of the teacher and his attitude to learners. A negative attitude towards reading and a low reading ability, as well as reading difficulties will be experienced by learners if the method of teaching is not diverse and learners are not sufficiently supported. This also includes the negative attitude of teachers towards inclusive education, parental involvement, resistance to curriculum innovation and moral degeneration (DoE, 2008:28), hence the poor reading level of learners.

Pretorius (2002: 190) alleges that most teachers realise that reading is important, however they make little effort to increase the limited attention reading receives after Grade 4, as reading is then regarded as a leisure-time activity and free reading periods used as a homework period (Pretorius 2002: 190). In addition, many teachers do not know how to teach reading and use limited methods of teaching. When the teaching style of the teacher does not support the learning style of the learner, the learner may end up experiencing reading challenges. Hugo (1999: 93) alleges that the teacher's training programmes in South Africa are not adequately developed to enable and equip the trainee teachers to use principles of language acquisition, and therefore the transmission of language teaching is hampered, and ultimately the language learning process, which includes the act of reading, is compromised. A study by Mangieri and Corby, in Harris and Sipay (1990: 670), found that it is not likely for teachers to sustain the interest of learners with relevant material, since teachers lack knowledge of their

learners' interest, and this can result in the learners adopting a negative attitude toward learning, reading in particular.

Applegate and Applegate (2004: 554) remind us that teachers who are intrinsically motivated to engage in reading, impact on learners increased reading ability and text comprehension, which can lead to greater academic success. When teachers do not acknowledge reading as a valuable practice and show a lack of reading for pleasure; it contradicts their encouragement for learners to read, Applegate and Applegate (2004; 554) refer to this contradiction as the "Peter Effect," a term derived from the Biblical Apostle Peter, who was unable to give money to a beggar, because "he could not give what he did not have". Therefore, teachers need to participate in reading activities, portray a positive attitude and use interesting available learning material in the classroom, in order delicately persuade and support learners in the act of reading.

It is evident that parents, teachers, librarians and care givers can all contribute to foster a love for reading among learners. Parents, teachers, librarians, care givers and learners all need to work together in order to introduce constructive reading practices in the classroom and develop positive attitudes towards reading, not only with the aim to produce successful academic results, but also for the purpose of enjoyment and to increase general knowledge.

Peer group influence is another element which affects the reading attitude of learners. Learners can encourage each other during interactive activities inside and outside of the classroom. As learners develop and grow older, peer group influence plays a crucial role in the socialisation of the young adult. As stated by Gouws *et al.* (2008: 90), adolescents share a lot with one another as they go to school together and discuss matters of interest to them and consequently they influence each other. For example, when the peer group view reading as a time wasting exercise, the learner most likely, in order to conform to the group, will share this view and therefore develop a negative attitude towards reading, which will disrupt the will to read. According to Gurthie and Knowles (2001: 172) a group of learners is unlikely to positively motivate

each other to participate in the act of reading, when the members of that social group are not able to listen, interact and value each other's thoughts, opinions and efforts.

2.20.6 Libraries

A library is seen as a key player in the circle of reading literacy, because it has a role in almost all literacy factors, such as to provide room to practice and conduct reading acts and habits, access to reading materials, to educate people on how to employ various reading sources, and to continuously promote reading and the habit of it. Research conducted by Krashen (1998: 12) found an optimistic relationship between a measure of the number of books in the school library and reading achievement. A library can also be referred to as a socio-literacy institution, because it has an impact on society by providing information services within the communities in which it operates. Salter and Salter (1991: 51) theorise as such in the following quote: the library "must have full partnership in the Learning Society that will have to be brought to life if we are to be competent, knowledge citizens in the Information Age".

The IFLA/UNESCO Public Library manifesto (2010: 14) refers to the public library as: "the local gateway to knowledge, providing a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision making and cultural development of the individual and social groups". Similar to public libraries, a school library refers to a literacy institution which operates within the education and school structures. Salter and Salter (1991: 61) assert that the purpose of the school library is to support and further facilitate classroom activity by means of teaching library skills, to provide additional and supportive reading materials, reinforce teachers' programmes, and offer casual reading material for learners.

Libraries are managed by librarians that are professionally trained to know their book collections as well as their digital media resources (referring to technology) and can introduce readers to books through advice, guidance and assistance. In addition to professional knowledge and skills, library staff need to ensure that all children have

access to books and other print or new literacy materials regardless of their age, socio-economic status, health, gender or population group, to promote reading, and to bring the child and the right book together are some of the primary duties of a librarian, as surmised by Elkin and Lonsdale (1996: 66).

According to the South African Schools Act of 1996 (DOE, 1997), each school receives a financial allowance from which they must provide for the operation and maintenance of their teaching and learning programmes, which should therefore include school libraries. However, the Schools Act makes no mention of libraries (Hart & Zinn 2007: 92). To date, due to historical difference and inequalities, many schools still lack library facilities, or as established by Rasana (2006) others have redundant collections of library materials, which are organised by untrained teachers. In the case of school libraries, Van Der Walt *et al.* (2009: 175) say: “The maintenance and extension of the school library is dependent on the language teachers’ enthusiasm and efforts to keep the library open and functioning properly”.

The operational success and the future of libraries depend on the number of literate population who frequent and utilise the services provided by libraries. The role of libraries with regard to the promotion of literacy and reading is largely construed as marketing reading material and the physical and virtual experience of reading; in order to convince people to read and use these materials. Accordingly, libraries can also be described as institutions that exist to create opportunities to read and practise the habit of reading.

2.17 THE INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY AND READING RESOURCES ON READING HABITS

2.17.1 Technology

The digital age of today represents technological evolution in which a world of instant and unlimited information is available at the touch of a button, or the sound of a voice. The Internet, cell phones, computer games and the television are all forms of information sources that produce access to print information that require little effort from the reader. Many South African learners have constant access to one, if not all of these facilities. On the other hand, the traditional form of reading and the practice of good reading habits require effort from the learner. Meek (1984: 29) substantiates the aforementioned statement in saying that reading requires time and effort, whereas, watching television and 'surfing' the Internet is easier, yet even more time consuming, as the user can spend hours accessing these sources.

Books are not the only reading material, argue Johnson-Smaragdi and Johnson (2006: 521), and therefore, digital multimedia presents the reader with the alternative of plenty print text, such as e-books, online magazines and newspapers and computer based media. Hopper (2005: 116) depicts technology as part of the new and developing literacies, which is an easily accessible source of attractive and entertaining information. Trelease (1982: 29) contends that "no study of reading habits or use of leisure time fails to reflect on the role of television . . . television has become the major stumbling block to literacy in America. For all its technological achievement, television's negative impact on children's reading habits - and therefore their thinking - is enormous." In addition, Palmer (1995: 20) posits that many learners fail in the ability to practise sound reading habits by reading books that interest them, because the interest in television exceeds the interest and appreciation levels of reading proficiency levels.

Over the years, literacy has become more technologically oriented and the continuous pace of evolving technology is a reality which offers the adolescent too much information too easily. Add the fact that on a global scale, a cost-cutting and green

environment is being endorsed, which includes promoting a paperless situation, will ultimately result in less printed text. Libraries are now media centres at which books and journals can be obtained on CD-ROM. More and more schools offer prescribed school text books in electronic form, called e-learning, and teachers now incorporate technology in their teaching methods. The learner now learns in and outside of school through the use of electronic media. It is for this reason that Hall and Coles (2002) advise that the usage of the computer and the supportive function it can have in the promotion of reading should be accepted and embraced as bringing a new dimension to education.

2.17.2 New media, new learning through technology

The continuous evolution of technology advances every day and it even affects and is changing the face of education with the acceptance and implementation of 'new media'. Cole and Pullen (2010: 88) refer to new media as: "a range of information and communication media using digital technologies, including technologies for the creation and storage of text, still and moving images of sound and the distribution of this content through local computing systems and the Internet". How will new media transform education? New media will allow the educator to teach and the learner to learn old information through the use of technology. Schools now have to provide learners with electronic resources, teachers need to acquaint themselves with new technology and the teaching opportunities it offers, and learners need to adapt to a new way of interaction and mediated activity to complete school work. Johnsson-Smaragdi and Jonsson (2006: 520) relate that there is a trend in the reading of visual and digital media and that it would surpass the reading of books, as computer-based media actually generate reading curiosity and interest in the print word.

The advent of technology changed human thoughts through the overflow of information, and therefore human behaviour, and reading is a form there-of. Access to technology affords the reader the opportunity to read more on a wide variety of topics of interest with little effort, at any time. Accordingly, the practice of reading from

computer-based platforms can also, just like traditional reading, increase knowledge and therefore, using technology can contribute to good reading habits and a positive attitude toward reading among high school learners.

2.18 READING RESOURCES

Research (Elley, 1991; Pretorius, 2002) indicates that access to reading material and the regular practice of reading improves reading ability, vocabulary skills, as well as academic performance. Rasana's (2006: 175) research findings disclose that the gap between learner reading preference and the reading matter available at school is continuously increasing. When schools limit learners in their choice of reading material, Worthy, Turner and Moolman (1999: 15) advise that those learners will either (a) read something in which they have no interest, (b) obtain their reading material of choice themselves or (c) they will abstain from the practice of reading. Mchet, Olen and Chamberlain (2001: 140) found that high school learners have no alternative but to read English books, since there is limited reading material of preference that is of interest available in their first language (home language).

A significant investigation into reading resources is a study which was conducted by READ, which examined the black learners' reading preference according to Brindley (1991) the. READ Educational Trust, donates books to schools. Each class typically receives a number of high interest books, which are sorted in a book box in the classroom (READ Educational Trust 1999). The study used 100 popular titles, of which all the books tested had a message value and were listed in READ's 'Top Twenty' reading Cards for grades 8 to 11. Findings from this investigation disclosed that the greater number of learners is keen to read provided that they have access to and preferred reading material such as enjoyable story books written in straightforward language and which are of interest to them.

Research by Rasana (2006) on the reading preferences of Grade 11 English Second Language learners confirmed that learners' exposure to reading material, which is

dependent on reading resources, is very limited and reflects that most learners are not familiar with any other reading material than the prescribed printed information that are available to them at school. Furthermore, the study conducted by Rasana (2006) established that many schools lack library facilities and that those that do have a library are furnished with redundant print material or an inadequate selection of reading matter that does not interest the learner. The deficit of financial resources is another factor that negatively affects the functionality of school-operated as well as communal libraries, especially those libraries situated in townships, such as the area in which this study was conducted.

As mentioned before, reading enhances knowledge and knowledge allows the individual to make informed decisions on an individual level, as well as contribute to decision-making on a socio-political, socio-economical and socio-cultural platform. When school learners have no choice in selecting their preferred reading material, their interest in the practice of reading will dwindle and as a result they will not develop good reading habits.

2.19 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was informed by the socio-cultural theory of literacy (Street, 2001), which includes literacy as social practice, multi-literacies, and critical literacy. This will be supported by the attitude-influence model of reading by Mathewson (Ruddel and Unrau, 2004).

2.19.1 The socio – cultural theory of literacy

The socio-cultural theory of literacy (Street, 2001: 430) proposes that “an understanding of literacy requires a detailed, in-depth account of actual practices in different cultural settings,” because literacy is a social practice that exists between people, within groups and communities and the daily practices of society. Thus, the

reading habits and attitudes of learners can be influenced by our social practices, which can advance, or reduce, the reading ability and proficiency of learners.

Literacy as social practice theory, according to Perry (2012: 53), is based on the multiple ways in which people use literacy, which includes the use of multi-literacies and critical literacies, such as reading various types of text for various functions in their daily lives. In relation to what Perry says, the researcher states that the skill of reading is a requirement for an individual to successfully interact in, and with, society and also to execute functions which require a higher cognitive processing. In support of this theory, Vygotsky, in Sigelmann and Rider (2006: 45) alleges that the development of higher cognitive learning is dependent on the social interaction with others. On this point the researcher construes that reading as a form of reader–text interaction can also amplify the learners' higher cognitive skills development. Thus, such as in the classroom (a socio-cultural context), reading literacy can be understood, in terms of motivation, beliefs, attitudes, intentions, conventions, and habits, that the learners exhibit when reading; hence, reading literacy research should start from the insights and experiences of the learners themselves.

Pretorius (2002) observes that the act of reading occurs within a socio-cultural context which assists to confer meaning to the text and to reading practices and values. In other words, reading is a form of human behaviour and different cultures may attach different values and functions to the act of reading. For that reason, Pretorius argues, the socio-cultural context should be considered in any discussion of reading (2002: 170-171).

Gee (2003:15) states that multi-literacies (the multiple ways in which people use literacies) also include knowledge about how social practice involves recognising various distinctive ways of acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, knowing, and using various objects and technologies that represent social practice.

Multi-literacies, according to Cope and Kalantzis (2000: 4-5), explore two aspects of language use: (1) the changeability of language connotations in different cultural, social and domain-specific contexts in communication and media environments; and, (2) literacy consists of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, which is to be extended to, and include, digital technologies in the communication milieu.

Purcell-Gates (2007: 3) states that school literacy, such as reading within the frame of literacy, is only one component of the many literacies in the social and cultural contexts of the academic community. Thus, multi-literacies refer to the various literacies and literate practices of applying knowledge and comprehension appropriately in all facets of life as a whole.

Freire (2001: 173) states that literacy is more than a cognitive skill, and that the important point is “to understand literacy as the relationship of learners to the world”. To read the word in print is to read the world. Critical literacy associates it with social justice, and empowerment. To quote from Beekman *et al.* (2016: 29), “reading is power”; to put it in another way, “literacy empowers.”

Critical literacy consists of ways of understanding, interpreting, and communicating meaning with written text. To be literate, requires mastering a complex set of understandings, attitudes, expectations, and behaviours, as well as specific skills, related to written language (McLane & McNamee, 1990: 141). Consequently, when learners become “critically literate, they demonstrate the art of mastery to read, interpret, question, and critique societal concepts within human relationships. As such, proponents of critical literacy advocate for functional literacy, literacy that works.

If learners do not display that they have mastered specific skills, or tasks, such as reading literacy, in relation to this study, Rowling (in Lerner & Johns, 2009: 381-382) states that the learner then requires appropriate and timely intervention programmes as remedial treatment of reading skills challenges.

As this researcher observed, it appears that many ESL high school learners in Eersterust were experiencing reading difficulties, which call for further investigation into the reading habits and attitudes of the learners, which can be addressed with correct and timely identification, and remedial action.

2.19.2 The attitude-influence model of reading

Another model of reading that this study may tap into is the attitude-influence model of reading (Ruddel and Unrau, 2004: 1431-1448). G.C. Mathewson's attitude-influence reading model explains the roles of affect and cognition in reading comprehension. The model explains that a reader's whole attitude toward reading, such as prevailing feelings, and evaluative beliefs about reading, and action readiness for reading, will influence the intention to read, and, in turn, influence reading behaviour. Accordingly, variations, such as reading habits and attitude, motivation, attention, involvement, prior knowledge, comprehension, and purpose, are all viewed as affecting the attitude-reading relationship, by influencing the learners' intention to read ESL material.

Attitude, such as external motivators and internal emotional state, are components that influence one's intention to read, as well as the will to continue reading. External motivators, comprising of incentives, purpose, norms, and settings outside of the reader, form part of the model. Internal emotional components work on one's intention to read and/or continue reading. Without this positive attitude-influence aspect, extensive reading remains wishful thinking for the individual. This model brings about some balance in one's understanding, in the exploration of reading habits and the attitudes of grades 8 to 10 learners toward English.

2.20 SYNTHESIS

Reading is not only about achieving the basic skill of how to read, but reading is a lifelong activity; a lifestyle habit. When learners have acquired the skill of how to read, it is important for that skill be practiced on a frequent basis. However, for learners to even consider the practice of reading as a habit, they need to be motivated, therefore interested to read, thus portraying a positive attitude towards the act of reading. Consequently, reading appears to be a challenging activity of engagement for the brain, but at the same time it should be an activity of interest for the learner.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A research methodology is defined by Rodolo (2008: 15) as “a study of a research process in all its broadness and complexity.” It could therefore be argued that the methodology phase of a research project provides a comprehensive, but detailed outline of the research approach. The aim with this case study approach, with an interpretivist-positivist world view, was to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8-10 learners toward English L2 in two high schools in the Eersterust area of the Tshwane south district, with a view to suggesting how to improve their reading habits and attitudes.

The review of related literature in Chapter two provided background information in order to investigate the habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners towards ESL reading within the theoretical framework of the study.

Both quantitative and the qualitative research methods, techniques and data collection instruments were used in the study. The rationale that lies behind the use of the case study approach, the limitations of each method and instrument, and the effect of methodological preference on the type of data analysis employed and the consequential interpretation of findings will be discussed. The researcher used various data collection instruments, as used in the mixed method design, to investigate, describe and analyse the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 English Second Language learners in Eersterust.

3.1.1 Paradigmatic perspective

Lincoln and Guba (1985: 15) note that world views (paradigms) represent our thoughts about the world (but cannot prove it), and our actions in the world, which cannot occur without reference to those paradigms. Maree (2007: 51) theorises that the essence of qualitative research is in describing and understanding phenomena within their natural context (also referred to as naturalistic context), so as to understand the meaning of

that phenomena as explained by the respondents in terms of “seeing through the eyes of the participants”. As the study of a phenomenon intensifies and progresses, world views (paradigms) may change and be shaped by new experiences, new thoughts, new theories, new inventions, new statistics and continuous research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:21)

According to Maree (2007:81), the study of the nature of reality and human behaviour, thus also referring to a social reality such as reading habits and attitudes, which can be studied objectively from the outside, is called ontology. White (2005: 81) is of the opinion that the quantitative researchers’ perspective on ontology relates to reality as objective and independent of the researcher. White continues by saying quantitative research is normally based on a positivist philosophy, and Neuman (2000: 66) captures this point when he posits that researchers using a positivist approach generally prefer accurate quantitative data, acquired by conducting experiments and surveys. McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 14) add the element of interpretivist (also referred to as constructivist) to the research paradigm framework, by asserting that interpretive researchers use systematic research procedures to study multiple, socially constructed realities, which make provision for the researchers’ professional judgements and perspective to be considered in the interpretation of data process, as is the case with this study.

Epistemology, as explained by Maree (2007: 55), provides researchers with a way of getting to know realities which occur in the natural environment of the research participant. These realities refer to assumptions, values, attitudes, beliefs and intentions of people who have lived through the experience, and, which permits the researcher access to a more holistic view of the participants’ behaviour in their natural, cultural world environments by means of face-to-face interaction.

The pragmatist world view was used in this study, as it focuses on real-life challenges (such as the reading habits and attitudes) being investigated, using mixed-method research. The pragmatist research methodology enabled the researcher to combine deductive and inductive approaches by mixing quantitative and qualitative methods of research in the form of triangulation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007: 23). Pragmatism,

according to Maree (2007: 265), argues that the mixed methods study allows for quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (text) data to be combined within the same study, to collect and analyse data with the purpose to address different aspects of the same research problem and provide a more complete understanding of a real life situation of phenomenon.

In order to achieve the aim of this study, many internal and external factors need to be considered in the process of developing good reading habits and positive attitudes toward ESL, which requires continuous research and ongoing discussion, debate and redefining of this contemporary phenomenon called reading.

In summary, the researcher employed the pragmatist world view with interpretivist-positivist perspectives. For this reason, the researcher was able to apply certain acquired information from the case study (qualitative element) in such a way that it assisted to understand and substantiate the results obtained from the questionnaire (quantitative element). The researcher acquired information on the reading practices of the participants by investigation of (questionnaire survey and interviews) and providing a detailed description and analysis of the reading habits and attitudes of learners in the specific socio-cultural environment, by means of listening to their narratives on the topic under investigation.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2.1 Case study approach

A case study approach was used for this study. McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 371) declare that the case study provides insight into a specific theme or issue. Thus, as applicable to this investigation, a case study can be quantitative and/ or qualitative.

According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2004: 41), a case study, is conducted to gain a holistic, in-depth and greater understanding of a phenomenon. Maree (2007: 5) elucidates a case study as a multi-perspective analysis whereby the

researcher considers not only the opinion of one or two participants, but also the perspective of other relevant participants, as well as their interaction with each other. Babbie (2005: 306) claims that the primary purpose of a case study is to study or describe a particular case, which can provide an explanation into the insights of the case.

Accordingly, the case study was selected by the researcher as the best suited approach, because it provided a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners in the Eersterust community. Babbie (2005: 306) asserts that the curtail of attention to a particular situation of study is an important element of a case study, therefore the researcher focused only on the of reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners in the real life socio-cultural context of two high schools located in the Eersterust Township, which is the area in which the researcher resides.

3.2.2 Mixed methods design

Rugg and Petre (2007:61-62) define a research design as a plan about finding things out systematically and which is then used to answer a research question. Research design is explicated by Mouton (2005: 55), in turn, as a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct research, whilst Fouche and Delport (2002: 81) say: "Most authors agree that in real life, human sciences research uses both quantitative and qualitative methodology, sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously." The research design therefore outlines the method for conducting the study by indicating who will be involved, when, where, why and how the study will be performed and under what conditions the data will be obtained. Furthermore, the research design signifies what methods of data collection are used and how the research participants will contribute to the study.

To achieve the outlined aim of this study, the mixed-methods design was employed. The purpose of the mixed-methods design was to collect and analyse data on the same phenomenon separately, by confirming and corroborating quantitative results

with qualitative findings, after which the data are converged, as suggested by Creswell (1999).

Creswell (2003: 154) also maintains that the purpose of a survey design (a quantitative component seeks to collect numeric information) is to “generalise from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about some characteristic, attitude or behaviour of this population”. Based on the aforementioned information, the researcher utilised the questionnaire survey design to obtain data from various learners in the sample population to determine the reading habits and attitudes of the learners. The researcher utilised the case study approach by means of various interview designs (qualitative component seeks to collect text information) in order to understand the social phenomenon of reading.

3.2.3 Triangulation

Creswell *et al.* (2003, in Maree, 2007: 268) proclaim that a researcher uses quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection to best understand a phenomenon of interest, such as reading habits and attitudes in the context of this study. Triangulation is most suitable when the researcher wants to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, about a single situation or phenomenon at the same time, with the aim to compare and contrast the different findings to produce well-validated conclusions.

To achieve the aim of this study, the researcher found the triangulation mixed method design best suited to investigate, describe and analyse the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to10 ESL learners in Eersterust. The triangulation design allowed for the concurrent collection of quantitative and qualitative data, it indicated the general trends of the learners’ reading habits and attitudes, and in addition the researcher could compare the findings to determine how it did or did not correspond with each other.

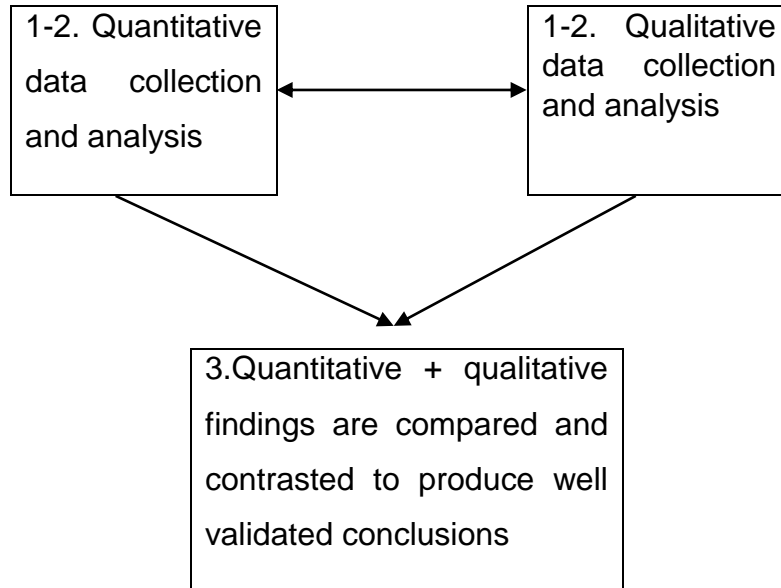


Figure 3.1: Triangulation mixed methods design (Maree, 2007:269)

The goal of the researcher was to be able to understand and explain the reading habits and attitudes as experienced and interpreted by secondary school learners and their teachers; as well as to describe in detail and analyse the impact of their opinions and perceptions.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

The researcher preferred to employ a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of investigation, as it provided a realistic and cohesive view by recording commonly shared reading behaviour and challenges, as well as provided in-depth knowledge of research participant's attitudes, in relation to the social phenomenon called reading.

For this study, the researcher used a survey questionnaire (quantitative method) and semi-structured interviews (qualitative method) conducted with the English L2 teachers, as well as focus group interviews with the selected learners, to investigate,

describe and analyse the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners in Eersterust.

To achieve the aim of this case study (that is, ESL learners in different grades from 8 to 10, from two different high schools) was used, employing different data collection methods. The data collection process was completed over a three-week period, as from 12 August 2016, the date on which the first school principle granted me permission to conduct research at the school, until 02 September 2016, the date on which I conducted the last focus group interview.

3.3.1 Quantitative method: Survey questionnaire

Seliger and Shohamy (1989: 172) affirm that the administering of the questionnaire survey is beneficial, given that it can collect data on phenomena “which are not easily observed, such as attitudes, motivation, and self-concept”

A questionnaire is one of the methods that were used in this study. It can be used to obtain information by distributing it to a large number of respondents, and ensuring their anonymity (White, 2005: 130). McMillian and Schumacher (2014: 211) explain that the advantage of the questionnaire is that it is cost effective, can ensure anonymity and puts the same question to all participants. As the researcher, administering the questionnaire allowed me to collect data from a large number of Grades 8 to 10 high school learners of English L2, which added to the understanding of the reading literacy habits and attitudes of the learners. Vockell and Asher (1995: 124) concur that the questionnaire survey refers to any data gathering instrument in which the respondents directly provide their answers to a succession of questions.

The researcher used the questionnaire to investigate the Grades 8-10 ESL learners (a sample population) in Eersterust, to determine their reading habits and attitudes. The survey questionnaire tool was administered on 100 Grades 8-10 ESL learners from both high schools. Fifty questionnaires (25 males; 25 females) were distributed at School A, and fifty were issued at School B.

Table 3.1: Questionnaire distribution table

SCHOOL A						
Grade	8		9		10	
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F
Number	8	8	8	9	9	8

SCHOOL B						
Grade	8		9		10	
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F
Number	8	8	8	9	9	8

With the guidance of the Grades 8 to 10 ESL teachers at both schools, the researcher distributed parental consent forms to the learners. The researcher only worked with those learners whose parents signed the written consent for them to participate in the study. Prior to the learners' participation in the questionnaire survey, they also provided the researcher with their own written consent to indicate their voluntary contribution in the research project

The questionnaire consisted of opinion statements / closed questions which were rated on a Likert scale and were kept short, relevant and precise so that every learner could understand. Intensity scales were used, which provided more uniformity of response, as well as simplified the data processing procedure.

The reading activities and attitudes indicated by the learners on the survey can be explained as the reading habits that the learners were engaged in at the time the questionnaire was administered. This information was pivotal to my research project, as it provided me with the data to discover whether the learners in fact practised reading habits at the time of the study or not.

The design and selection of questions for the questionnaire attempted to facilitate some understanding of the reading practices and attitudes of learners, such as reasons for reading, when they read, their choice or avoidance of reading activities,

their opinions of print text, access to reading facilities, influence of parents, friends, mentors and teachers, and, finally their reading experiences

The questionnaire survey (See Addendum I) was divided into:

Part A: Demographic information and language repertoire- Questions 1 to 5
School; age; gender; racial affiliation and language usage

Part B: Reading habits- Statement questions 1 to 10

The reading habits statement questionnaire provided information on the reading habits of the learners

In the home environment, indicating family involvement, at school and reading practices that could affect the learners' reading proficiency.

Part C: Reading attitudes -Statement questions

- Statement questions 3.1 (1 to 5)

The statement questions in this section of the questionnaire offered information about the type of reading material learners preferred

- Statement questions 3.2 (1-9)

The learners' response in this section assisted the researcher to establish the learners' feelings in relation to what material they read, where they read, with whom they read and their perspective of English as a second language.

- Statement questions 3.3 and 3.4(1 to 5) and (1 to 4)

This section of the survey questionnaire assisted the researcher to determine how the learners felt during their reading engagements and how confident the learners perceived themselves to be when reading.

During the questionnaire data collection process, the researcher remained aware of the limitations of the instrument, as indicated by Maree (2007: 157-164)

- Answers are simple with no detail

- The researcher has limited control over what happens in the field
- The answer that the respondents want to give may not be part of the options
- It is easy to indicate an answer to any question, even those that are misunderstood

Apart from the high return rate advantage of the questionnaire data collection instrument, the researcher increased the reliability, validity and authenticity of the instrument along the guidelines as provided by Maree (2007: 160):

- The researcher administered the survey with all the learner groups
- The language used in the questionnaire was easy to understand and clear
- Negative and hypothetical statement questions were avoided.
- In instances where a learner still did not understand the statement question, immediate assistance was provided

Administering the questionnaire allowed the researcher to collect data from a large number of ESL Grades 8-10 learners, to elicit information about and which provided a realistic picture on the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners in Eersterust. Vockell and Asher (1995:124) state that data collection by means of a well-constructed questionnaire is significant in that it probes for and produces relevant information.

3.3.2 Qualitative method: Interviews

An interview, as stated by Tuckman, in Cohen and Manion (1998: 243), “provides access to what is inside a person’s head, makes it possible to measure what a person knows (information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs)”. As Leedy and Ormrod (2001:159) point out, interviews in qualitative research are seldom structured and prepared and Maree (2007: 87) adds that the purpose of qualitative interviews is to observe the world (or the topic under investigation) through the eyes and views of participants. Creswell (2008: 46) characterises qualitative research as an educational research form in

which the researcher, by means of asking questions collects verbal information from, and then depend on the views and perceptions of the research participants, in order to make a finding on the subject of investigation.

According to White (2005: 143), one of the advantages of using the interview data collection method, is that it will assist the researcher in providing qualitative information in an efficient manner and the credibility of the data can be verified immediately, qualifying it as a reliable data collection method by:

- Repeating questions when the response indicates that the respondent misunderstood the question
- Probing the participant for more specific answers and
- Being present to observe the participant's non-verbal behaviour

Additionally, the researcher applied the following interview strategies mentioned by McMillian and Schumacher (2014: 224) to ensure the effectiveness and success of the individual interviews, as well as the focus group interviews. As was applicable to this study, the researcher:

- Assured the participants of confidentiality
- Asked clear, single, brief open-ended questions one at a time
- Sequenced the questions and funnelled them from the general to the specific and allowed the participants to do most of the talking.
- Avoided interrupting the respondents
- Repeated key questions and used simple probes
- Kept respondents focussed by ending the interviews within an appropriate time frame.

The rationale for the researcher to conduct interviews served a dual purpose. Firstly, the interviews with the learners and the ESL teachers provided the researcher with more information about their reading habits and attitudes, especially the in-depth and personal experience information, which could not be obtained through a questionnaire survey. In addition, the researcher used the

information attained through the interview discussions to corroborate the results from the questionnaires survey. The interview schedules used for two types of interviews are included (see Addenda M and N).

The researcher initiated each interview session with the same approach, using the same schedule of questions. As the interviews progressed, the researcher was able to introduce certain questions that elicited more valuable information from the respondents in such a way that it did not disturb the flow of discussion. The researcher made use of audio recordings during the interviews, so that meticulous reflection could be done during the data analysis process.

3.3.2.1 Learners' focus group interviews

Maree (2007: 90) explains that within a focus group, the participants are in a position to provide the researcher with in-depth and detailed views by building on each other's comments and perceptions, which then allows the researcher to explore unexpected comments and perspectives on the topic of investigation, which can add more value to a study. Babbie (2010:322) and Denscombe (2007: 178) agree that focus groups consist of small groups of people (five to fifteen) who are brought together by the researcher because they share certain common characteristics such as attitudes, perceptions, feelings and ideas about a specific topic, which the researcher wants to explore.

In view of the above-mentioned rationalisation, the researcher decided to conduct semi-structured focus group interviews, because it provided the opportunity to obtain various views and perceptions about the reading habits and attitudes of the learners by generating a free-flow discussion on the topic amongst them, which provided information that was real and valuable. The semi-structured interview style was used in order to extract relevant information from the focus group participants, as the participants were not constrained, and were free to express their experiences, which as a result added value, reliability, and richness to the collected data. Ultimately, the researcher was provided with a detailed view of the participants' reading behaviours,

in terms of habits, attitudes, and experiences about the research topic, as mentioned by De Vos, *et al.* (2003: 302)

The researcher conducted two focus group interviews, one at each school, including two learners per grade per school. Three females from the Grades 8 to 10). The two focus groups were thus equally split along gender and the participants knew each other and were comfortable and confident to speak in each other's company, which increased the reliability and validity value of the information that the participants provided. These learners were part of the questionnaire respondents:

Table 3.2: Focus group sample population representation

Focus group 1						
Grade	8		9		10	
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F
Number	1	1	1	1	1	1

Focus group 2						
Grade	8		9		10	
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F
Number	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 3.3: Focus group 1 learner profiles:

	Grade	Gender	Age	First language
Learner M1	Grade 8	Male	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner F1	Grade 8	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner M2	Grade 9	Male	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner F2	Grade 9	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner M3	Grade 10	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner F3	Grade 10	Male	13-19	Afrikaans

Table 3.4: Focus group 2 learner profiles:

	Grade	Gender	Age	First language
Learner PM1	Grade 8	Male	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner PF1	Grade 8	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner PM2	Grade 9	Male	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner PF2	Grade 9	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner PF3	Grade 10	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner PM3	Grade 10	Male	13-19	Afrikaans

According to Maree (2007: 90), the purposeful sampling of participants is important to the success of a focus group. With the guidance of ESL teachers, the researcher requested volunteer participation in the focus group interviews, to the learners who participated in the completion in the questionnaire, in order for learners to be comfortable and provide valuable information. Maree (2007: 90) advises that when conducting a focus group, the researcher needs to consider a complete representation of the target group in terms of age, gender, race, social class, literacy level, socio-economic status and demographics. It is along this guideline that the researcher ensured that the focus group participants represented the Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners in age, language use, gender and demographics.

The researcher visited the two local high schools, as per appointment with the learners, to conduct the focus group interviews, using an audio verification device to record the responses of the learners, in relation to their reading habits and attitudes. All six the focus group participants gathered in an unused classroom at a pre-arranged time to participate in the discussion.

The researcher requested the voluntary participation of learners who participated in the completion of the questionnaire and for whom parental consent to participate in the interview had already been obtained. The researcher compiled a set of pre-

determined questions on an interview schedule (see Addendum M) to guide the researcher in conducting the interview.

According to Maree (2007: 91), the “funnel structure” is a popular focus group interview format whereby the researcher introduces the participants to the discussion with a broad set of questions, working towards a narrow, more structured ending, to provide answers to the research questions. McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 222) state that the interviewer should be thought of as a neutral medium through which information is exchanged. In view of this the researcher acted as a facilitator for the discussion, remaining in the background and allowed the participants to express their views. With every focus group, the researcher informed all the participants of the purpose of the interview. Furthermore; the researcher assured the participants that the information they provided would be used for the purposes of the study only and that names would not be used during the interview and also not appear in the research document, as the study and the results that it generates are confidential.

The researcher steered the discussion in such a way that it encouraged interaction from all the participants, which produced valuable information and extended on the various viewpoints and opinions, which allowed the researcher to collect in-depth qualitative data, with the goal to answer the research questions.

3.3.2.2 Semi-structured Interviews with ESL Teachers

As stated by Borg and Gall, (1979: 313), the semi-structured interview allows the researcher to obtain valuable information by combining objectivity and depth, by allowing the respondent freedom and flexibility when answering a question. The researcher engaged five ESL teachers, two from school A and three from school B, in conversation by means of semi-structured interviews. At school A, the researcher approached the selected ESL teachers with the guidance of the deputy school principal and at School B; the ESL teachers who participated in the semi-structured interviews were approached with the guidance of the head of the department (HOD)

of English. The same questions were put to every teacher in a one-on-one conversation, who then freely responded to it in a manner they preferred.

Table 3.5: ESL teacher profiles:

Profiles	Currently Teaching Grade	Gender	Age	Number of years teaching Experience	Number of years teaching ESL	Academic qualification(s)
Teacher i1	Grade 10	Male	51yearas	27 Years	27 years	Honours degree in History; HDE-English; PGDE
Teacher i2	Grade 9	Male	38 years	15 Years	3 years	Higher diploma in education
Teacher i3	Grade 8	Male	54 years	30 Years	1 year	BA degree in education.
Teacher i4	Grade 9	Female	45 years	23 Years	5 years	BED Honours languages
Teacher i5	Grade 10	Male	52 years	22 Years	10years	BA degree, PGDE and MA degree

Maree (2005: 87) explains that semi-structured interviews are employed in studies to substantiate the data obtained from other data collection instruments. Hence, in the case of this study, the information emerging from the semi-structured interviews with ESL teachers can also be used as an instrument to verify information obtained from the learners' focus group interviews, as well as the questionnaire survey, to ensure that it is reliable and authentic.

The researcher decided to use the semi-structured interview style with the ESL teachers in order to elicit additional descriptive information and insights about their perceptions on the reading habits and attitudes of learners, which aided the researcher to understand the social reality of reading among high school learners.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001, in Maree, 2007: 296), states that the advantage of conducting a face-to-face interview, is that it enables the researcher to establish a relationship with the interviewee, which will put them at ease to cooperate and thus generate valuable information for the study. In view of this, the researcher made an appointment to meet with educators to instigate a relationship and explain the purpose and process of the interview, and then follow it up with the interview appointment.

Before the commencement of the interview with the ESL teachers, the researcher assured them of confidentiality and obtained a research consent form (see addendum H) from the participants to indicate voluntary participation to the study, and they were given the opportunity to withdraw their response to the interview at any time. The researcher compiled a set of pre-determined questions on an interview schedule (see addendum N), which the researcher used to guide the progression of the interview in such a way that it elicited information from the respondent to answer the research questions.

The interviews with teachers covered the perceptions the teachers had about the reading proficiency, the reading habits, attitudes and the motivation to read of the learners toward English as a second language. The semi-structured form of the interview, allowed the interview respondents the opportunity to narrate their perceptions about the reading habits and attitudes of the learners, and as a result, provide more information than what was collected during the questionnaire phase (quantitative element) of the study.

The researcher used an audiotape to record all interviews with the permission of the interviewees and made handwritten notes to corroborate the recordings, and to bring into account the non-verbal responses of the interviewees.

3.4 QUALITY CRITERIA

3.4.1 Validity

The Oxford advanced learner's dictionary (2010: 1648) defines "validity" as the state of being officially acceptable, logical and true. Research validity, according to McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 354) refers to the degree of correspondence between the descriptions and explanations of the studied phenomenon, and the experienced reality of the studied phenomenon. The researcher used the literal statements and quotations of the research participants, in order to report findings honestly and accurately by means of an audio recorder, which also provided more credibility to the findings.

The questionnaire survey items were also constructed in such a manner, that it could reflect the reading habits and attitudes of the studied population logically and irrefutably and thereby address the research questions effectively. The researcher also repeated a number of questions used in the questionnaire survey during the interview processes, which further improved the validity level of this study. White (2005: 196-197) categorises the measuring of the validity of a questionnaire into four types, which are: face, criterion, construct and content.

Face validity: Do the items on the instrument "look" as if it will measure what it is supposed to measure according to the research questions? Relative to this study, the instrument "looked" as if it probed the habits and the attitudes of learners, which are the main variable indicated in the lead question.

Criterion validity: Do the instrument in reality measure what it is intended to measure and do the score of the instrument relate to other measurements indicated by other instruments in the same study? Relative to this study the questionnaire data collection instrument directly established the reading practices of learners and as a result the researcher could answer the research questions and accomplish the aim of the study.

Construct validity: How well do the items cover the content (addressing a range of immeasurable or latent factors such as the meanings included with the concepts) they

were projected to measure? Relative to this study, the statement questions remained focused on the concepts of measuring the reading habits and attitudes of learner from different socio-cultural perspectives (with their underlying meaning), which all proved to be relevant information in order to better understand the topic under investigation.

Content validity: Do the items measure the content to the extent in which it includes a range of behaviours that is represented by the theoretical concept being measured? Relative to this study, some of the items in Part C, namely, 3.2; 3.3 and 3.4 of the questionnaire (see Addendum L) measured the different reading behaviours of the learners in relation to the topic.

Furthermore, Durrheim and Wassenaar (2002: 64) assert that credibility is the assurance that the researchers' conclusions stem from the data; therefore, by applying triangulation of data (analysis of questionnaire scores, individual interview transcripts and focus group interview transcripts) in this study, the researcher further enhanced the quality of the validity of the research project. In addition, Maree (2007: 39) advocates that triangulation also reduces chance associations and bias by combining the employment of variety of data collection methods.

Accordingly, during each interview, when this researcher was not sure that she understood what the participant had said or to what he she was referring, she immediately sounded out her understanding of the information obtained, for the participants to verify whether her interpretations of what they had said was correct. To further increase the validity value of the study, after transcribing the interviews, she went back to the individual interview participants (ESL teachers) to present them with the transcribed interview formats, with the purpose of them verifying the dialogues in written form, as well as to give them the opportunity to correct any errors of fact that might have occurred during the transcribing process.

For this study, the researcher made every effort to produce findings that were true and reliable, including contradictions and inconsistent findings, which increased the credibility of the study.

3.4.2 Reliability

Reliability, according to White (2005: 200), refers to the elimination of casual errors that can influence the results of the study. For the purpose of this study, different research instruments in the mixed-methods research design were employed, which allowed this researcher to corroborate the collected data, and present an accurate representation of the studied population. The application of crystallisation data analysis further elevated the reliability level of the study. Durrheim and Wassenaar (2002: 64) explain that “dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher says they did.” To enhance the dependability of the study, the researcher triangulated all the data collected, which were the results of the questionnaire, the focus group interviews and the individual interviews, in order to identify the presence of common patterns and themes to provide reliable findings. Through the continuous reflection of the research process, the researcher managed to limit bias in the study.

3.5 SAMPLE POPULATION AND SIZE

3.5.1 Sample population

Eersterust is located 15kilometres east of the Pretoria city centre. This area was established in 1962 by the apartheid era government, who located and relocated people of coloured ethnicity on a farm called Vlakfontein, which later became known as Eersterust. The term “Coloured” refers to people of mixed genetic backgrounds that became a politically imposed ethnicity, which spoke and is still today, mostly an Afrikaans speaking people. The lingua franca of this community has been and still is predominantly Afrikaans (77.5%), although other languages, including English (10.5%) are also used on a lesser frequency scale (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Nonetheless, since 1994, the Eersterust community has now grown from a previously disadvantaged coloured community, to a diverse multi-cultural and multi-lingual community. Therefore, all schools (primary and secondary schools) in the Eersterust community, admit learners from every ethnic group in South Africa.

The residents of Eersterust did not escape the negative impact of the social ills of segregation. The consequences of the group act are still experienced on a daily basis and the community is plagued with problems such as severe poverty, inadequate infrastructure, crime, a high level of substance abuse, soaring teenage pregnancy numbers, family instability and an increasing figure of HIV /Aids and a high rate of unemployment, as indicated Penzhorn (2006: 95).

The rising unemployment rate is one of the worst socio-economic deficiencies faced by the South African society. The illiteracy percentage weighing in at 55% amongst previously disadvantaged groups (including the coloured population) can be named as one of the causes of this void, as indicated by Gouws, Kruger and Burger (2008: 151). Hence, in relation to this study, elements related to poverty afflicted areas such as Eersterust, are the absence of after-school literacy activities, under-resourced library facilities, over-crowded classrooms and a high rate of school dropouts.

As researchers, we cannot study a whole population; therefore, we draw samples from that population. Sampling is related by De Vos (1998: 191) as the process of studying a subset of individuals in such a manner that they become representatives of a larger group or population from which they are selected. The population from which this study was sampled is Grades 8 to 10 learners and ESL teachers in the two high schools in Eersterust.

3.5.2 Sample site information

School A is approximately twice the size of School B, with an enrolment of 1,440 learners, and 62 teachers. School B has an enrolment of about 723 learners, and 36 teachers. Both schools are supported by government funding, in addition to the school fees paid by learners. Both schools are quintile 4 schools on the Department of Basic Education ranking of 1-5 (well-resourced to poor) scale. This means that the schools are in a disadvantaged area, but are not at the bottom of the ranking ladder.

For the purpose of this study, purposeful sampling (sometimes called purposive sampling) was used. McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 152) stipulate purposive

sampling as the selection of particular subjects with needed characteristics from a population in a manner that is representative or informative about the research topic. McMillan and Schumacher (1997: 397) explain purposive sampling as “selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study, such as case studies. The aim is to have and understand a phenomenon through the experiences of the cases, without generalising”. Furthermore, purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling approach, as referred to by McMillian and Schumacher (2014: 151). They also state that purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling used by researcher in qualitative studies when there is access to subjects who may represent certain type of characteristics.

Purposive sampling was used for this study, because based on the researchers’ knowledge about the population; the researcher selected case study subjects that provided the best information in order to address the research questions and achieve the research aims. The only two secondary schools in Eersterust were sourced, with the focus on learners who use Afrikaans as a first language and study English as a second language. The researcher selected these schools because they are located in the Township in which the researcher resides, hence, it minimised the financial expenditure and time-consuming factors of the study. The accessibility to the schools, and consequently access to the sample subjects, assisted the researcher to obtain a high participation rate and receipt of relevant information.

3.5.3 Sample size

Sampling, according to Kerlinger (1986:110), "is taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe."The researcher conducted and completed the study confined to the Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners and teachers (the sample population) of these indicated grades, within in the selected schools.

Before the commencement of the data collection process phase of this study, the researcher had to apply for permission to conduct research at these schools from the National Department of Education, after which authorisation also had to be obtained from the regional office, the Tshwane South District Office of Education, before the researcher could approach the schools. The researcher then approached the school

principals to ask for their voluntary participation in the study. The research purpose, methodology and ethics considerations were explained to the principals and permission for the research to commence was granted from all the required stakeholders to use these two schools as research sites.

In qualitative research, the researcher studies a small representative sample, with the objective of extracting in-depth and enriched data from the samples, as is explained by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007: 112). The researcher studies an individual or selection of individuals in such a manner that they can best provide the necessary information by means of them having experience of the researched phenomenon. In addition, the selected individual(s) represent(s) a larger group or population.

The research sample for this study was drawn from Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners and teachers at two high schools in Eersterust. At school A, the principal guided the researcher to identify 2 ESL teachers over the three grades to participate in the study. A third teacher voluntarily participated because of being interested in the topic of investigation. At school B, the deputy principle appointed the ESL subject head to assist the researcher and identify two ESL teachers across the Grades 8 to 10, who would be willing to participate in this study. The researcher eventually interviewed five Grades 8-10 ESL teachers for this study.

The sample selected for the questionnaire survey consisted of 50 learners per school; from Grades 8 to 10, totalling 100 learners accumulatively from the two high schools in Eersterust. However, not all the learners' parents provided consent, nor were all the learners willing to participate and only 73 learners (across the three grades from both schools) eventually completed the questionnaire. McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 154) suggest that with quantitative research it is advisable to obtain as many subjects as possible to obtain a credible result.

3.5.4 Data collection procedures

The questionnaire was administered with the learners in various grade specified groups, at a previously arranged time with the ESL teachers. The ESL teachers were also present at this time and an element of familiarity made the learners feel at ease during the questionnaire completion process. Although every learner who completed the questionnaire had their parents' consent to do so, the learners were again assured of their anonymity and information confidentiality in the study and re-assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time, should they not want to continue to participate. The purpose and procedure of the questionnaire was explained to the learners. The questionnaire was in English, but the difficult words were clarified to learners in their mother tongues. A structured questionnaire with closed questions only, was administered to the learners, for which they only had to indicate the correct answer with a tick (√).

The researcher engaged the help of the above mentioned ESL teachers in the two high schools to identify two learners (one boy and one girl) per Grades 8 to 10, per school, who would be approachable and willing to participate in the focus group interview. These learners were part of the learner groups that completed the questionnaire survey. The researcher therefore conducted two focus group interview sessions (one group per school) with five learners participating per focus group session.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The Oxford advanced learner's dictionary (2010:46) defines an analysis as the detailed study or examination of something in order to understand more about it. The definition is echoed by De Vos (2002: 333) who describes data as the systematic procedure of merging collected data in its entire context in terms of order, structure and meaning.

For this study, the data which were collected and analysed consisted of:

- The questionnaire response

- The audio recordings of the individual interviews with ESL teachers
- The audio recordings of the focus groups with Grades 8 to 10 ELS learners

3.6.1 Quantitative data analysis

As explained by Creswell & Plano Clark (2007: 130-131), the researcher analysed quantitative data and calculated the data distribution. This process determined if data were normally or non-normally distributed, in order to choose the appropriate statistical analysis.

In quantitative data analysis, descriptive statistics are generated for all major variables and variability will be used to describe the values in distribution. White (2005: 98) asserts that descriptive research is non-experimental, with the purpose of analysing and providing accurate descriptions of variables that affects the topic under investigation, in regard to practices, beliefs, relationships, effects, as well as developing trends.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part of the questionnaire was based on the demographics and personal information of the sample. This division also included a language repertoire table, in which the respondents had to indicate their mastery of languages in a descending order, which also reflected their reading and listening skills (the receptive skills), as well as their speaking and writing skills (the productive skills). Recording of this information proved to be essential, for the reason that the background of respondents possibly could have influenced the analysis of the data collected by means of the questionnaire survey. (See Addendum L- part A)

The second part of the questionnaire presented was structured to determine the reading habits of the learners by using closed question statements. The habit determining statements were compiled according to literature on ESL reading materials; ESL proficiency of learners, and other topic related documented information. The third part of the survey, learners' attitudes and motivation to read were established, by providing them with options to self-assess and rate their own behaviour towards reading. For the second and third part of the questionnaire, the

learners responded to each closed question statement, which was encoded by the allocation of numbers and then computerised.

The data collected by the questionnaire instrument were analysed statically by a research psychologist and then summarised by the researcher using frequencies and percentage scores.

3.6.2 Qualitative data analysis

The purpose of qualitative data analysis according to Babbie (2005: 287) is that it provides the researcher with relationship patterns and assists with the discovery of underlying meanings of the topic under investigation. McMillian and Schumacher concur that qualitative data is for the most part an inductive process of organising into categories (by using codes) and identifying patterns and relationships among the categories.

Analysis of qualitative data proceeds from quantitative descriptive analysis to inferential analysis by:

- Coding the data.
- Dividing the data into small units, themes or patterns
- Assigning a label to each unit, theme or pattern, according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007: 132).

Creswell and Plano Clark furthermore explain that the most important element in qualitative data analysis is the coding process, which is when evidence is grouped or categorised and ideas, units or themes are labelled in order to reflect broader perspectives.

According to McMillian and Schumacher (2014: 398), data coding is the identification of small pieces of data, such as words or phrases, that stand alone and we refer to it as segments. Data segments relate one idea or pieces of relevant information for which a code is provided. A code, as explained by McMillian and Schumacher (2014: 399) is thus a name (label) or a phrase that is used to provide meaning to the segment.

The coding process is explained by De Vos *et al.* (2003: 243) as division of the text data into text or image segments, labels the segments with codes, examines the codes for redundancy and overlap and then collapses these codes into broad themes. Creswell (2008: 248-252) states that themes are similar codes, combined to form one minor or major idea and themes, then interconnected with each other. This coding process forms a core element in qualitative data analysis. McMillian and Schumacher (2014: 398-404) provide guidelines to identify and refine data codes, which I then accordingly implemented for this study.

With the permission of the participants, the researcher made sure that the responses of the participants were preserved verbatim by audio-recording the discussions. The researcher used a professional transcriber to transcribe the interviews verbatim. Upon receipt of the transcripts, the researcher added important non-verbal cues in the transcript, as non-verbal actions are important factors of a conversation which add meaning to it.

The researcher implemented the qualitative data analysis process according to White (2005:186), which follows the sequence of reading data to get acquainted with the information, to identify code words and concepts which are categorised into groups, and to classify these coded groupings into themes. The researcher then interpreted the organised data with a descriptive discussion.

Accordingly, upon reflection of the interviews, the researcher wrote the main thoughts and ideas down, which were deducted from the interviews; this process is known as memoing. Maree (2007: 104-105) describes memoing as writing down any reflective ideas emerging from the data, which include one's reflective notes on what you have learned from the data. The researcher executed the memoing process by reading through each transcribed interview carefully, asking questions and then writing down the main ideas, concepts and thoughts that came to mind in a few words. Codes, according to McMillian and Schumacher (2014: 399) "can be activities, quotations, relationships, context, participants' perspectives, events, processes and explanations

that are distinctive to the setting or people”. This researcher then made a list of all “in vivo” codes (the use of participants’ words) and then consigned those codes that were similar, together into a group in order to encapsulate the meaning of the text segment accurately. The redundant codes were omitted.

According to Attride-Stirling (2001: 387), thematic network analysis is a way of seeking to discover the themes significant in a text at different levels with the aim to facilitate the structuring and describing of these themes in a web-like network. In relation to the explanation by Attride-Stirling, this researcher then created themes for the grouped codes that emerged from the discussions and employed the crystallisation style of data analysis (McMillan & Schumacher (2014: 396). The findings were then discussed within the theoretical framework of the review of related literature (Chapter 2) which simplified the crystallisation analysis style process.

McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 396) states that when the researcher collapses coding, categorising and pattern seeking into an extensive process of “reliving each field experience and persistently questioning the data for subtle nuances of meaning, it is referred to as the analytical crystallisation style. The memoing process of scrutinising the interview transcripts made the researcher relive each interview, in search of answering the research questions. I concluded this process by interpreting the organised data, which then completed the qualitative data analysis phase for the study with a descriptive discussion.

Consequently, the researcher amalgamated both quantitative and qualitative data that provided the detailed, authentic and absolute analysis of the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8-10 learners towards English second language in Eersterust.

3.6.3 Crystallisation of data

The researcher combined the qualitative and quantitative data in order to achieve the triangulation element of the study

Data crystallisation, according to Ellingson (2008: 2), combines multiple forms of analysis of data and various fields of representation of data into a coherent text,

building a rich and openly partial account of a phenomenon that problematic in its own construction, highlighting the researchers' position in the study and makes claims about socially constructed meanings. Richardson (2000: 934) says that "Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colours, patterns, and arrays, casting off in different directions."

Crystallised studies cover multiple points on the qualitative research scale in order to analyse and represent data, while also being self-referential in partiality. Accordingly, for the data collection process of this study, the researcher embraced several of methods and perspectives that allowed for the implementation of data crystallization to the research aims and objectives in order to provide a deep and complete holistic understanding of the topic.

Crystallisation manifested in the study of: Reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8-10 learners toward English Second Language in Eersterust, according to Ellingson (2008) in that it:

- Offered deep, thickly described, and complexly rendered interpretations of meanings about the experiences of the sample population on the phenomenon of reading.
- Utilised more than one genre of writing (for example: questionnaires, interview transcriptions) and other mediums (for example: audio recorder for interviews). Crystallisation depends upon including, interweaving, blending, or otherwise drawing upon more than one way of expressing data.
- Include a significant degree of reflexive consideration of the researcher's self and roles in the process of research design, data collection, and representation.

According to Finlay (2002: 531), being open about research processes demonstrates the researchers' integrity and consciousness that "through the use of reflexivity, subjectivity in research can be transformed from a problem to an opportunity" for dialogue.

Therefore, within the data crystallisation process, the researcher acknowledged the importance of the participants' voices and respected and considered valid accounts

of the reading practices and experiences of the participants. As a result, the researcher incorporated the participants' perspectives into the data analysis process, representing them in ways that honour their perspectives on: Reading habits and attitudes of ESL Grades 8 to 10 learners in Eersterust.

3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

The concept of 'ethics' is defined by Strydom (1998: 24) as follows:

Ethics is a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students.

This researcher was honest with the participants from the start, disclosing all the relevant information, as well as the purpose of the study, before conducting the study. She informed the research participants about the procedures that would be followed to complete the questionnaire, and did the same with the interview respondents. With regard to acting in accordance with certain moral responsibilities this researcher

- Obtained the necessary written authorisation from the Gauteng Department of Education, as well as the Department of Education, Tshwane District. (Addenda C and D)
Obtained the permission of the school principals of the schools selected for the study (Addenda E and F)
- Protected the research participants from emotional harm. The study did not pose a physical threat.
- Obtained a parental consent form from the parents/guardians of the Grades 8-10 ESL learners who participated in the study, giving permission for the participation of their under-aged children. (Addendum F)
- Obtained an informed consent form of participation from all research participants. (Addenda H and I)

- Assured the research participants of anonymity and confidentiality, in order to protect their identities.
- Assured the research participants that the information shared by them will be treated as confidential, and will not be disclosed without their permission.

Strydom (1998: 27-28) regards privacy as the right of the individual “to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent his or her attitudes, beliefs and behaviour will be revealed”. McMillian and Schumacher (2014: 133) allege that the researcher should ensure privacy by using: anonymity, confidentiality and appropriate storing of data. De Vos *et al.* (2003: 61), refer to confidentiality and anonymity as two vital factors of ethical responsibility during research, whereby participants have a right to expect the researcher to protect and respect the information which they provide, as well preserve their anonymity.

The privacy of the participants in this study was ensured as follows: On the questionnaire (Addendum L) the names of the schools appear, but it was guaranteed that the information would be treated as confidential. Neither the names of learners, nor that of the ESL teachers, were used on the questionnaire, nor were they mentioned during the interviews in order to protect the identities of the research participants. In addition, I respected the participants’ right and privacy and anonymity by using codes and labels of alphabet letters and numerical numbers. Apart from the researcher and the research supervisors, no one has access to the data of the study, nor the names of the participants.

McMillian and Schumacher (2014:131) advocate that harm of risk to participants includes revealing information that may result in embarrassment or danger to home life, school performance, friendships and like, as well as direct negative consequences in the social science is primarily of an emotional nature. During the carrying out of this study the researcher assured the participants of the minimal risk involved according to the Guidelines for Ethics as used by the Tshwane University of Technology Research Ethics Committee (see Addendum A)

McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 3) refer to informed consent in research as “obtaining permission from individuals to participate in research before the research begins”. The researcher used the information leaflets and research consent forms (Addendum F, G and H) to inform the participants that participation in the study was voluntary. Through these documents participants (and their parents where learners were involved) were made aware that they could choose to stop and withdraw their participation from the study at any point. Furthermore, written consent was requested for participation in the study, which also protected and served as evidence that the researcher obeyed the most correct conduct towards research participants.

The researcher honoured all the commitments made with regard to confidentiality and anonymity.

3.8 FIELD PROBLEMS

Maree (2007: 152) refers to the research conditions as ecological external validity, and McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 128) sees it as the extent to which the results of research can be generalised to other conditions and situations of research. These authors assert that the conditions include “factors such as the nature of the independent and dependent variables, physical surroundings, time of day or year, pre-test or post-test sensitization and effects caused by the presence of an experimenter or treatment.”

The researcher encountered the following challenges in the research field. The researcher distributed 100 questionnaires (equally spread between the two schools, across the three grades and evenly divided among the male and female learners). However, only 73 learners eventually completed the questionnaire. A number of parental information leaflets and consent forms were returned by the learners, blank, with the verbal excuse that their parents declined their participation in the study. Many learners simply repeatedly forgot to give the parental information leaflet and consent form to the parents, which excluded them from participating in the study. Another

factor to consider was that some learners were absent at the pre-arranged time of the completion of the questionnaire.

The interviews (individual interviews and focus group interviews) were conducted as per pre-arrangement with ESL learners and teachers in vacant classrooms on the school premises, as this was the most suitable location for the respondents. However, at times the high level of noise which penetrated from the outside, proved to be a bit distracting during the interviews. This was profoundly evident during the last focus group interview. During the interview sessions with two of the individual interviews with ESL teachers, the ringing sound of cell phones also interrupted the flow of the dialogue.

McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 23) indicate that educational research relies on having relationship with professional practitioners. Relative to this study, in the researcher's capacity as a teacher, she developed positive relationships with the teachers involved prior to the commencement of the study, in which they consented to participate, in advance. Yet, at the time of data collection, it appeared to her, that the behaviour of one of the participating teachers became "not as enthusiastic" as at the time when s/he consented to part take in the study. This resulted in her making numerous visits to the school, and waiting long for the teacher to continue with their pre-arranged appointment. It also extended the duration of the data collection process by an extra week. McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 128) refer to the "tendency of people to act differently simply because they realise they are subjects in research" as the Hawthorne effect. At this point, she realised in order for this study to be effective and report the truthful perception of this particular teacher, she had to make a concerted effort to prevent the outcome of this study from being compromised.

This resulted in her explaining the purpose of the study to this particular teacher, patiently and repeatedly; emphasising that the study was not about the teacher, but about the reading habits and reading attitudes of the learners. In addition, she communicated carefully how the experienced opinions and insights of teachers may

add value to the study. As from this point onwards she noticed that the teacher went the extra mile to assist with the progression of the study. This researcher's observation was confirmed during the data analysis process, whereby she had to acknowledge the relevant significance of the information which was supplied by the particular teacher. Furthermore, when she went back to the particular teacher to verify the transcribed interview, the teacher expressed great interest in the outcome of the study, acknowledging the importance of research in education, in order to provide teachers with guidelines on how to improve on the teacher-learner relationship.

In spite of the field problems experienced, the study nonetheless helped to assist with the further understanding of the issues under study, and as a result, provided the researcher with valuable information to generate a report that explains, describes and analyses the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners towards English second language in Eersterust effectively.

3.9 SYNTHESIS

This investigation was pursued out of the researcher's concern for the poor reading literacy demonstrated by high school learners in Eersterust. This research approach enabled the researcher to collect significant and reliable information, which differentiated this study from other studies, focussing on reading literacy habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners.

The review of the related literature indicates that the reading habits and attitudes of learners are influenced by many role players, different variables; as well as internal and external factors, which determine whether the learners will cultivate; or refrain from developing good reading practices.

This chapter has provided a description of the research approach, design and data collection methods and instruments that was selected for this study. Furthermore, it provided justification for the selection and the functioning process of each element employed in the methodology phase of this study.

In addition, the chapter also includes a discussion of the employed ethical considerations, the validity and reliability of the study. As a final point, the chapter provided a framework for the transcription and analysis of the data procedure, which is to be discussed in chapter four.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the research results and the findings, which were obtained in an empirical study, using both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments as outlined in Chapter 3, which were:

- The questionnaire
- The individual interviews with ESL educators and
- The focus group interviews with Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners

For the purpose of this study, the quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (text) data were analysed and interpreted together, by applying the process of triangulation.

The information that was collected was analysed and discussed with the aim to address the following lead research question:

What are the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners toward English as a second language in Eersterust?

The first phase of the findings is based on the questionnaire's investigative statements which emanated from the two themes of the research questions, firstly, the habits of the Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners and secondly, the attitudes of the Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners. Only the results of the questionnaire are presented in statistical format.

The second phase of the report focusses on the responses from the interviews based on the reading habits of the learners; the reading attitudes of the learners obtained in focus group interviews and teachers' perceptions of the learners' reading habits and attitudes from the individual interviews with ESL teachers. The results of both categories of interviews are presented jointly; based on a thematic network analysis

structure, which uses the main themes that emerged from the individual and focus group dialogues.

The third phase employs the crystallisation style of data analysis, which is explained in section 3.6.3 as combining the findings from the questionnaire and the findings elicited from both the individual and the focus group interviews.

This study applied the empirical case study approach with an interpretivist-positivist world view, which enabled the researcher to introduce the crystallisation style as the third phase of the data analysis process, by reporting on the differences, correlation, comparisons and interweaving between the emerged thematic data obtained through the questionnaire and interview acquired information in discussion format.

4.2 FINDINGS BASED ON THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Learners' questionnaire

Qualitative data was gathered by means of a questionnaire, which was distributed to 100 learners between the two high schools (50 questionnaires at school A and 50 questionnaires at school B) located in Eersterust.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts:

- Part A: Demographic information
- Part B: Reading habits of the learners
- Part C: Reading attitude of the learners

4.2.1 Part A: Demographic information

This section provided the following information: demographic information, which included personal information about each learner, such as the learner's age, gender, racial affiliation and language use repertoire; which are presented below:

Age range of learners in questionnaire sample

The age sample of the population was 13 to 19 years. Most of the learners were 14, years old, meaning that they were expected to have achieved a certain level of reading competency, as is described in Chapter 2.5.

Table 4.1: Gender of learners in the research sample

Gender	N	%
Male	36	49.3
Female	37	50.7
Total	73	100

Keys: N = number of learners % = Number of learners indicated in percentage scores

An almost equal number of male learners (49.3%) and female learners (50.7%) participated in the completion of the questionnaire; hence the results are representative of both genders in this sample population.

Table 4.2: Racial affiliation of learners in the research sample

Racial affiliation	N	%
Black	2	2.7
Coloured	71	97.3
Total	73	100

Keys: N = number of learners % = Number of learners indicated in percentage scores

The racial sample group investigated consisted of a large number of learners from the Coloured racial group (97.3%) and learners (2.7%) from Black racial groups. The 2014 mid-year race population distribution statistics in South Africa was: Black 80.2%; Coloured 8.8%; White 8.4 and Asian 2.5% (Stats in brief 2014: 10). Consequently, it

can be deduced that the sample population used in the research project is not representative of the broad population in South Africa.

Language repertoire

South Africa is a country with eleven official languages and an individual may be conversant in many of these languages. A repertoire table of up to six languages was provided in which students provided, in descending order of mastery, the language(s) they had mastered.

Table 4.3: Language repertoire of learners

Languages Used	Listening		Speaking		Reading		Writing	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1.Afrikaans First Language	70	98.6	70	98.6	69	97.2	68	95.8
2.English First Additional Language	68	95.8	65	91.5	60	84.5	61	85.9
3.Sesotho	2	2.74	3	4.11	0	0	1	1.37
4.Tswana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.isiZulu	2	2.74	0	0	0	0	0	0
6.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Keys: N = number of learners % = Number of learners indicated in percentage scores

It was important to ascertain the second language use of the learners in order for the elicited information to be relevant and address the research questions, as well as provide depth to the analysis of the data gathered from the sample participants regarding the reading habits and attitudes toward English as a second language.

The majority of the learners (98.6%) indicated that they used Afrikaans as a first language and 68 of 73 learners (95.8%) inscribed English as a second language, which was an important determinant, as the study is focused on Grades 8 to 10 learners that use English as a second language.

4.2.2 Part B: Reading habits

It is argued in the literature review chapter of this study that reading is a vehicle of learning, which requires time, effort and frequent and regular engagement in reading practices. This part of the questionnaire aimed to investigate the reading habits of the learners in the sample group.

Table 4.4: Reading habits

		Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Very often
	Item	%	%	%	%	%
1	I read English every day.	9.6	1.4	71.2	13.7	2.7
2	I only read English at school.	4.1	13.7	38.4	27.4	13.7
3	I read English at home.	24.7	11.0	43.8	16.4	2.7
4	I only read books in my first language in my leisure time.	16.4	12.3	37.0	13.7	16.4
5	I read English during my leisure time.	19.2	15.1	38.4	16.4	4.1
6	I would be bored without a book.	49.3	16.4	21.9	4.1	4.1
7	Do you read outside the class?	45.2	6.8	32.9	5.5	2.7
8	I read with friends.	39.7	15.1	26.0	8.2	4.1
9	I read with my family.	43.8	8.2	27.4	5.5	8.2
10	I read social media platforms on my cell phone	13.7	6.8	20.5	23.3	32.9

Keys: N = 73 learners

% = percentages score

The majority of the learners (71.2%) indicated that they *sometimes* read English every day, with 38.4% of learners specifying that they *sometimes* read English only at school. 43.8% was the highest percentage score of the learners that reflected that they *sometimes* read English at home, while 24.7% evinced that they never read English at home. This could be because there was a lack of reading materials at home, or maybe the learner simply was just not interested in reading when s/he was at home, or the environment at home was as such that it did not encourage the practice of reading.

Only 2.7% revealed that they *very often* read English at home. In addition, the statistics reflected an analogous pattern between leisure time reading, being bored without a book and reading with friends on *very often* frequency, by respectively indicating an identical percentage score of 4.1%. This translated that from the total sample, only three learners indicated that they *very often* read in their spare time; only three learners *very often* demonstrated boredom without a book and only three learners *very often* read with friends.

Out of a sample group N=73 (100%), 37.0% marked that they *only* read books in their first language in their leisure time. This result revealed that although the learners studied ESL at school, there could be learners that were more comfortable in engaging in leisure reading by using of their first language. Furthermore, the result could have been an indication that learners were not very proficient in ESL reading, which validated the option to only read books in their First Language. Extracted from N=73 (100%), 38.4% was the highest percentage recorded for learners that indicated that they *sometimes* read English during their leisure time.

With regard to the statement “I would be bored without a book.” 49.3% of the learners pointed out that they would *never* be bored without a book, whilst only 4.1% percent marked that they would *often to very often* be bored without a book. This result could be attributed to the fact that learners rather participated in other activities which they enjoyed, more willingly than in the act of reading,

To further establish the reading habits of the learners, the data depicted by Item 7 flagged the fact that 2%-4% signaled that they *often* to very often read outside of class, paradoxically to 45.2% of the learners who marked that they *never* read outside of class. This relayed that from the total number; only 2% to 4% indicated that they performed reading as a habit by committing to it *often and very often*. The percentages indicated that only a few learners participated in the practice of reading as a habit. With reference to reading with friends and family, the review of literature explained in chapter 2:20:4; adolescents (such as a group of friends) share a lot with one another as they go to school together and discuss matters of interest to them and consequently they influence each other. As confirmed by experts in the mentioned section, parental involvement in the child's learning experience and practices were in many incidents a more potent force of inspiration to read, than other family orientated variables such as social class and the level of parental education.

The data revealed that the highest percentage of the learners revealed that they *never* read with their friends, was 39.7% and 43.8% of the learners indicated that they *never* participated in reading with their families. The highest percentages recorded for the practice of reading with their friends and their families were still below the average mark of 50%. These results could be ascribed to the fact that when neither the parents, nor the friends of a learner modeled reading, the prospect for that learner to do reading as a habit would be minute, if not non-existent.

The majority of the learners, namely, 56.2% of the respondents, indicated that they *often to very often* utilized their cell phones as a source of reading. This data corresponded with assertions by experts on reading mentioned in chapter 2.17.1 of the related review of literature; that books were not the only sources of reading, but that image and computer-based reading presented the reader with an alternative reading source, consisting of various print texts.

In addition, it might be that learners preferred reading on their cell phones because it required no effort and a variety of print text were available at the press of a button.

4.2.3 Part C: Attitudes and motivation regarding reading

4.2.3.1 Reading materials

Table 4.5: Reading materials

I like reading this English material:	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Item	%	%	%	%	%
Schoolbooks	4.1	11.0	47.9	20.5	15.1
Magazines	13.7	9.6	41.1	23.3	9.6
News papers	20.5	13.7	38.5	13.7	11.0
Novels	26.0	13.7	31.5	21.9	1.4
Internet	5.5	11.0	30.1	19.2	30.1

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

The learners were requested to indicate their likes for the various types of reading materials. The results pointed to a high rate of Internet use (30.1%) in terms of *very often* frequency use, followed by school books (15.1%) and newspapers (11.0%). 15.1% of the learners indicated that they liked to read their schoolbooks *very often*, compared to the 4.1% of learners who marked that they *never* liked to read their school books. It was interesting to note that the highest percentage of learners (47.9%) signified that they *sometimes* liked to read school books, however, *sometimes*, was not a clear determinant of their attitude towards the reading of school books. This result might be attributed to the fact that learners spent a considerable amount of time on reading to progress in school and achieve their academic goals.

The evidence revealed that 23.3% of the learners *often* participated in reading magazines, and again, the majority of the learners (41.1%) remarked that they *sometimes* read magazines, with 13.7% signifying that they *never* liked reading

magazines. Apart from the pictures used in magazines, which might have evoked the learners' curiosity to read, the reading content in magazines many times entailed real life stories to which the learners might have been able to relate and as a result, 23.3% disclosed that they *often* participated in reading a magazine.

With newspapers informing and recording real time daily happenings, it was interesting to note that 20.5% recorded that they *never* liked to read newspapers, and 38.5% noted that they *sometimes* liked to read the newspaper. In view of the fact that the purchasing of newspapers and magazines would implicate financial expenditure to learners, it might be the reason that 13.7% (in terms of magazines) and 20.5% (in terms of newspapers) expressed that they *never* liked to read these reading materials.

With regard to novels, 26.0 % replied that they *never* liked to read novels, 31.5% marked that they *sometimes* liked to read novels, with 21.9 % signifying that they *often* liked to read novels.

Interestingly, the data revealed that only 30.1% indicated that they *very often* like to read on the Internet, with 30.1 % and 19.2% respectively indicating that they *sometimes* and *often* liked to read on the Internet. With the growth rate of technology in South Africa, it was expected that more learners would be inclined to prefer reading on the Internet.

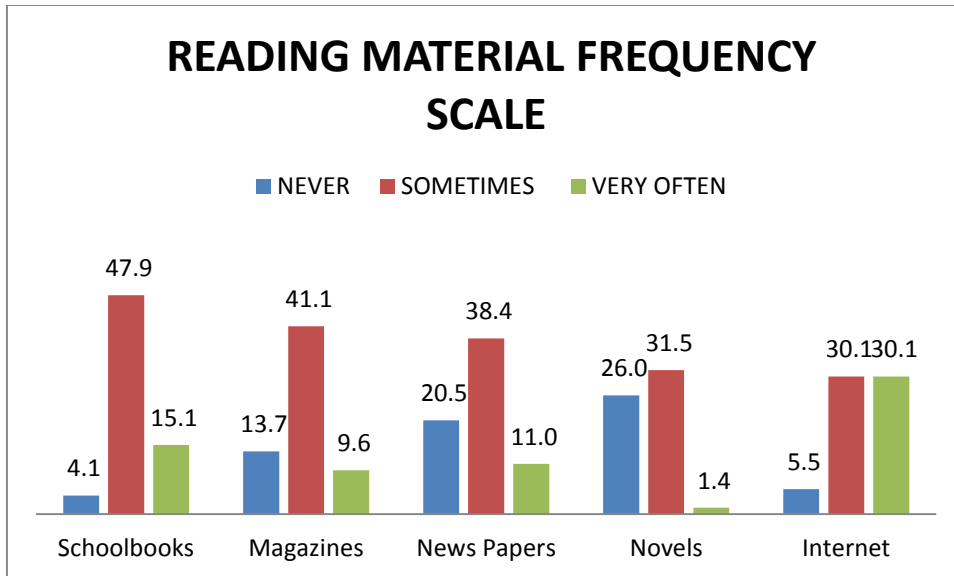


Figure 4.1: Reading material frequency scale

Using the three frequency indicators, *never*; *sometimes* and *very often*, learners indicated that the print material that they least liked to read *very often* were novels with a 1.4% score and they most liked to read on the Internet, indicated as very often with a result of 30.0%.

The Internet reading platform gave consistent results with the two frequencies (*sometimes* and *very often*), both indicating a score of 30.1%. Apart from the Internet reading option, the majority of the learners indicated that they liked to read all reading materials *sometimes*, which did not present a clear indication of which materials learners liked to read most.

4.2.3.2 Reading attitudes and motivation

With reference to Chapter 2.11 in the review of the related literature, researchers claim that the terms “motivation,” “attitude” and “interest” can be used by substituting one for the other in the study of the phenomenon of ‘reading’. This section of the questionnaire sought to establish the participants’ own expressions on their attitudes toward ESL reading.

Table 4.6: Reading attitudes

		1	2	3	4	5
	Item	%	%	%	%	%
1	I enjoy reading English books	5.5	6.8	15.1	34.2	38.4
2	I like reading school text books	8.2	17.8	23.3	32.9	16.4
3	I like spending time in a library	28.8	20.5	15.1	17.8	13.7
4	My friends like reading	19.2	15.1	27.4	13.7	21.9
5	My parents like reading	9.6	12.3	17.8	19.2	39.7
6	Listening to music is more fun than reading	15.1	9.6	17.8	17.8	37.0
7	I would rather do something else than do English reading	21.9	12.3	28.8	16.4	19.2
8	I like watching English movies	5.5	2.7	2.7	11.0	76.7
9	I like watching English television programmes	8.2	2.7	2.7	12.3	74.0

Frequency keys: 1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Not Sure 4: Agree 5: Strongly Agree

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

The data revealed that 34.2% of the learners *agreed* that they enjoyed reading English books and 38.4% *strongly agreed* that they enjoyed reading English books, and to support the mentioned statistics, 32.9% of learners *agreed* that they liked reading school textbooks. The results therefore displayed a high level of English reading enjoyment.

Even though 72.6 %of the learners indicated that they *agreed to/ strongly agreed* that they enjoyed reading English books, a percentage of 49.3% of the learners expressed that they enjoyed reading school textbooks.

Furthermore, more than a quarter of the total number of the learners, that was 17.8 % of learners that *agreed* and 13.7 % who *strongly agreed* that they liked spending time

in a library. On the other hand, 28.8% indicated that they *strongly disagreed* to spending time in the library. In order to cultivate a positive reading attitude, learners needed to be encouraged to frequent reading institutions such as libraries more, it provided room to practise and conduct reading, as well as promotes acts and habits of reading.

27.4 % of the learners conveyed their opinion that their friends *sometimes* liked to spend time reading and 21.9 % strongly agreed that their friends liked to read, whereas 19.2% of the learners *strongly disagreed* to their friends liking the act of reading.

With regards to parents liking to read, 39.7 % of the sampled learners indicated that they *strongly agreed* that their parents liked reading, which was in direct contrast with the 9.6% who indicated that they *strongly disagreed* that their parents liked to read. The impact of the parents' participation in the act of reading could be seen as reflected by the 72.6% of learners who conveyed that they enjoyed reading English books.

The researcher expected that the outright majority of more than half the learners would indicate that they *strongly agreed* that listening to music was more fun than reading. However, this was not the case.

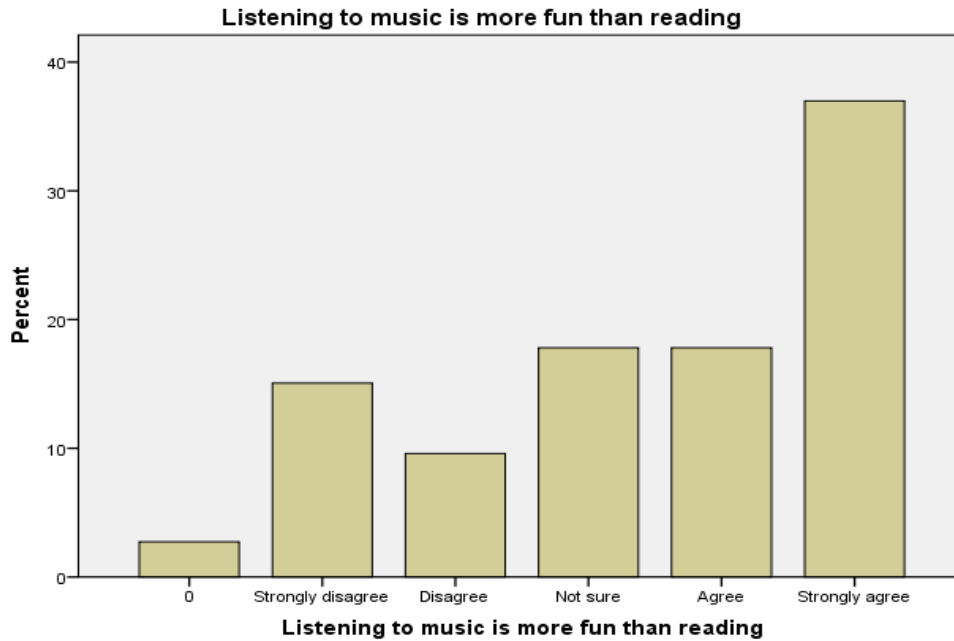


Figure 4.2: Listening to music compared to reading

Even though 54.0% revealed that they *agreed to strongly agreed* that listening to music was more fun than reading, 24% reflected that they *strongly disagreed* with this impression. 17.8% of the learners noted that they were not sure whether listening to music was more fun than to read. The results thus indicated that most learners preferred to listen to music than to read. The results could support listening to music rather than reading because many young learners were involved in making music as a channel to express their emotions and talk about their life experiences, which resonated with the greater adolescent population.

In relation to the item which states: *I would rather do something else than do English reading*, 16.4% of the learners revealed that they *agreed* and 19.2% signaled that they *strongly agreed* that they would rather do something else than to read. Interestingly, 21.9% of the sample population indicated that they *strongly disagreed* that they would rather do something else than English reading.

Table 4.7: Reading or watching television?

		1	2	3	4	5
	Item	%	%	%	%	%
8	I like watching English movies	5.5	2.7	2.7	11.0	76.7
9	I like watching English television programmes	8.2	2.7	2.7	12.3	74.0

Frequency keys: 1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Not Sure 4: Agree
5: Strongly Agree

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

Scores of 76.7% and 74.0%, respectively, convincingly illustrated that learners had a positive attitude towards watching English movies and watching English television programmes. The finding that the majority of learners liked to watch English movies and television programmes, could be because of the fact that it required no effort to watch television, or that the visual images were more entertaining than books, or because it was an activity which was modeled to learners by family and friends, hence everybody could part-take in it at the same time.

Additionally, it could also be that television was more accessible than print materials. Almost every house had a television, but not every house had books to read. Furthermore, the majority of the South African youth idolise international music and television stars, and the results could also be an indication that learners found English television more interesting, because it showcases these celebrities. On the other hand, it could be that learners found watching English television more informative than reading.

Table 4.8: Reading attitudes

		1	2	3
	Item	%	%	%
1	I find English reading difficult.	12.3	60.3	26.0
2	I feel anxious when I read English.	16.4	39.7	43.8
3	I like visiting the library	16.4	47.9	35.6
4	I enjoy reading out loud in class	34.2	31.5	34.2
5	I think that learning English is important in life.	72.6	11.0	15.1

Frequency keys: 1: Always 2: Sometimes 3: Never

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

60.3% of the learners suggested that they *sometimes* found English difficult to read and 39.7% communicated that they *sometimes* felt anxious when they read. It is interesting to note that, 43.8% disclosed that they *never* felt anxious when reading English. The enjoyment of reading out loud in class was quite evenly spread with 34.2%, 31.5% and 34.2 % respectively, indicating that they *always, sometimes and never* enjoyed participating in this activity.

35.6% of the learners conveyed that they never liked to visit the library, as opposed to only 12% that marked that they always liked visiting the library. However, by and large, 72.6% agreed that learning English is important in life, compared to only 11% that signified that they never thought that English was important in life.

Table 4.9: Reading motivation

		1	2	3
	Item	%	%	%
1	Being able to read English is important to me.	76.7	12.3	9.6
2	I feel that other learners can read better than I do.	13.7	57.5	27.4
3	I am afraid other learners will laugh at me when I read out loud in class.	27.4	32.9	39.7
4	When I read, there are many words that I cannot understand.	19.2	72.6	8.2

Frequency keys: **1:** Always **2:** Sometimes **3:** Never

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

76.7% of the learners indicated that the ability to read English was *always* important for them, contradicting the finding that 9.6% of the learners *never* regarded an English reading ability as important. In this regard, 8.2% of the learners answered that there were *never* many words that they could not understand when they read, 19.2% marked that there were always many words that they could not understand and, 72.6% expressed that *sometimes*, when they read there were many words that they could not understand. These results thus connected with the bottom-up process of reading (refer to Chapter 2.3), which delineates that a reader internalises individual sounds, letters, words and sentences one after the other, each process depending on the preceding one, such as word recognition and lexical items. Hence, it appeared to the researcher that the practice of good reading habits might ultimately improve the learners' word recognition processing.

Regarding the statement: *Being able to read English is important me*, 76.7% of the learners expressed that English was important to them, in contrast with the 16.4% who conveyed that they *often to very often* enjoyed reading English. (See item 1 in Table 4.2.2.1: Reading habits).

In section 2.16, the researcher referred to reading experts who suggested that the motivation for reading decreases as children go through school because learners develop an inferiority complex, as they continuously compare themselves with their classmates. Accordingly, the learners' confidence when reading English revealed the following: Just over half of the learners felt that *sometimes* other learners could read better than they do, with 13% of the learners *always* felt like this and 27.4% *never* shared the notion that other learners could read better than they did. 39.7% were *never* afraid to be laughed at by other learners when reading, while 27.4 % of the learners *always* felt afraid that other learners would laugh at them when they read out loud in class, which could intensify a negative attitude towards reading.

4.2.3.3 Correlation of reading habits and attitudes with factors of influence

Correlation is defined by the Oxford advanced learner's dictionary (2010: 328) as a connection between two things in which one thing changes as the other does. In order to measure the strength of a linear relationship between two quantitative variables we use correlation.

The Spearman correlation coefficient principles were applied in this study to determine the correlation between A: reading habits (dependable variable) and a number of independent variables and B: reading attitude (dependable variable) and a number of independent variables. The researcher decided to measure the reading habits and reading attitudes only as dependable variables with other reading related factors, to be in a more advantageous position to respond accurately and appropriately to the research questions.

To measure the correlation between the variables the researcher employed Spearman's correlation coefficient to determine the following:

- Is there a relationship between two indicated variables, referring to the relationship between X (the independent variable) and Y (the dependent variable)?

- The direction of the relationship, referring to: does Y (the dependable variable) increase when X (the independent variable) increases, this will result in the Spearman correlation coefficient being positive. However, when Y (the dependent variable) decreases and X (the independent variable) increase, the correlation coefficient is negative. (MacMillan and Schumacher; 2014; 182)
- The strength of the relationship; referring to a Spearman correlation ranking of zero (0); which indicates that there is no tendency for Y to either increase or decrease when X increases, thus there is no significant relationship. When X and Y are perfectly monotonically related, the Spearman correlation coefficient becomes 1, indicating a strong and significant relationship.

The researcher used a scatterplot to illustrate the correlation between the variables, because McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 180) describes it as the “most fundamental measure of relationship”, thereby depicting it as the best visual display tool for comparing two quantitative variables.

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.10: Spearmans’ correlation with habits as a dependable variant

	Perceived reading ability	Habits	Internal influences	External influences	Attitude	Nonacademic reading	Technology	Second language reading	Second language attitude	Printed material
Correlation Coefficient				.582**				.593**		.674**
Sig. (2-tailed)				0.000				0.000		0.000
N				73				73		73

The researcher used the Spearman's' correlation coefficient technique to determine whether a correlation existed between reading habits:

- Perceived reading ability.
- Internal influences.
- External influences.
- Attitudes.
- Non-academic reading.
- Technology
- Second language reading.
- Second language attitude.
- Printed material.

(a) Using Spearman correlation coefficient techniques the researcher identified the following findings:

(1) A relationship between two indicated variables, referring to the relationship between X (the independent variable) and Y (the dependent variable).

The formula confirmed that there was a relationship between the following two variables:

- i) Reading habits and External Influences
- ii) Reading habits and Second language reading
- iii) Reading habits and Printed material

(2) The direction of the relationship, referring to: does Y (the dependable variable) change in the same direction as the X (the in-dependable variable)?

The Spearman correlation coefficient number indicated a positive vertical-inclined relationship between the following two variables:

- i) Reading habits and External Influences
- ii) Reading habits and Second language reading
- iii) Reading habits and Printed material

(3) The strength of the relationship. The Spearman correlation coefficient generated and indicated the following significance:

- i) Reading habits and External Influences – 0.582 (close to 1)
- ii) Reading habits and Second language reading – 0.593 (closer to 1)
- iii) Reading habits and printed materials– 0.674 (closest to 1)

The findings generated by the Spearman correlation coefficient for these three relationships, all produced a significant correlation with the connection between reading habits and print material producing the strongest relationship.

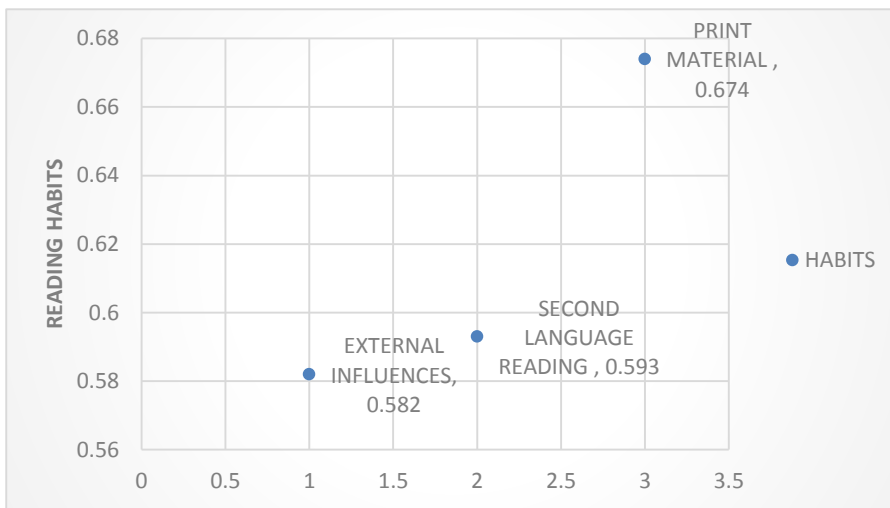


Figure 4.3The reading habits and significant correlating factors.

Table 4.11 Spearman's correlation with reading attitude as a dependable variant

	Perceived reading ability	Habits	Internal influences	External influences	Attitude	Non academic reading	Technology	Second language reading	Second language attitude	Printed material
Correlation Coefficient								.395**	.691**	
Sig. (2-tailed)								0.001	0.000	
N								73	73	

The researcher used the Spearman's correlation coefficient technique to determine whether a correlation existed between reading habits and:

- Perceived reading ability
- Internal influences.
- External influences.
- Attitude.
- Non-academic reading
- Technology
- Second language reading.
- Second language attitude.
- Printed material.

(b) Using the Spearman correlation coefficient techniques the researcher identified the following findings:

1) A relationship between two indicated variables, referring to the relationship between X (the independent variable) and Y (the dependent variable).

The formula confirmed that there was a relationship between the following two variables:

- i) Reading attitude and the second language attitude
- ii) Reading attitude and the second language reading (significance of a lesser value)

2) The direction of the relationship, referring to: does Y (the dependable variable) change in the same direction as the X (the in- dependable variable)?

The Spearman correlation coefficient number indicated a positive vertical-inclined relationship between the following two variables:

- i) Reading attitude and the second language attitude
- ii) Reading attitude and the second language reading (significance of a lesser value)

3) The strength of the relationship. The Spearman correlation coefficient generated and indicated the following significance:

- i) Reading attitude and the second language attitude – 0.691 (close to 1)
- ii) Reading attitude and the second language reading (significance of a less value- 0.395)

The findings generated by the Spearman correlation coefficient for these two relationships produced a significant correlation with the connection between reading attitude and second language attitude; however, it indicated that the relationship value between reading attitudes and second language attitudes was of less value)

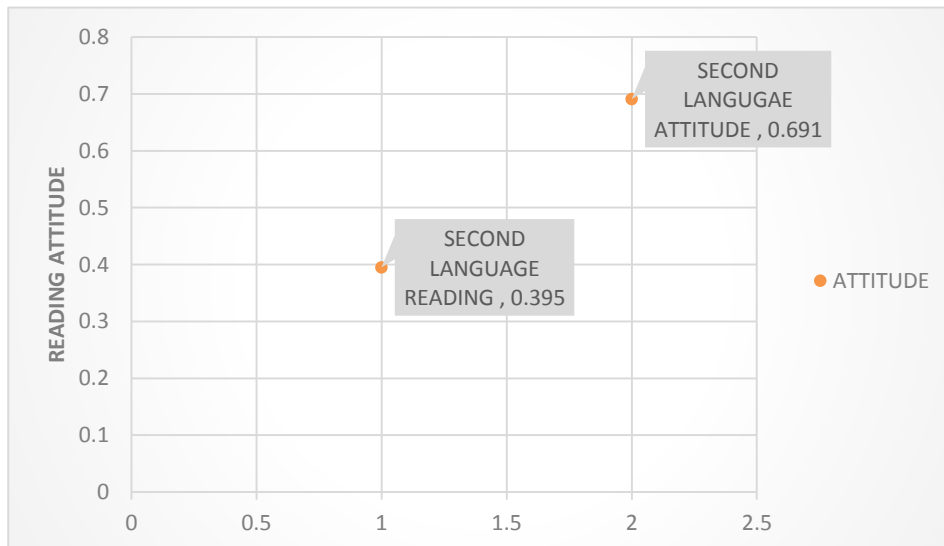


Figure 4.4The reading attitudes and significant correlating factors.

The statements in the questionnaire were constructed in such a manner that it could

generate findings in order for the researcher to establish what the current reading habits of the Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners were, as well as what the attitude was that learners had toward ESL reading.

4.3 FINDINGS BASED ON THE INTERVIEWS

Individual interviews and focus group interviews

For this study, this researcher employed a case study approach and data was collected through two focus group interviews with grades 8-10 learners from the two high schools in Eersterust. Two learners per grade per school participated in the focus group interviews. Individual interviews were held with five Grades 8 to 10 ESL teachers. The data were collected, transcribed, organised and categorised /grouped into themes for analysis. The direct words were extracted from interview to accentuate; compare or contrast the findings in accordance with the themes. The following table provides examples of the process of memoing:

Table 4.12 Example of data categorising

THEMES	CODES	MEMOING
2. Reading habits and reading material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of reading • Preferred reading material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't read much • Not enough reading • Force them to read • Must read at home • Current topics • Social networks • Phasing out books
3. Reading attitude and motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings when reading • Will / lack of will to read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of interest • Feel bored already • Lax attitude • Read what they like

The above table illustrates the data organisation process as it is explained in Chapter 3.6.2, by doing memoing. The data were then grouped into codes and then categorised into themes. The selected themes emerged from the collected data in such a manner that they addressed the research questions

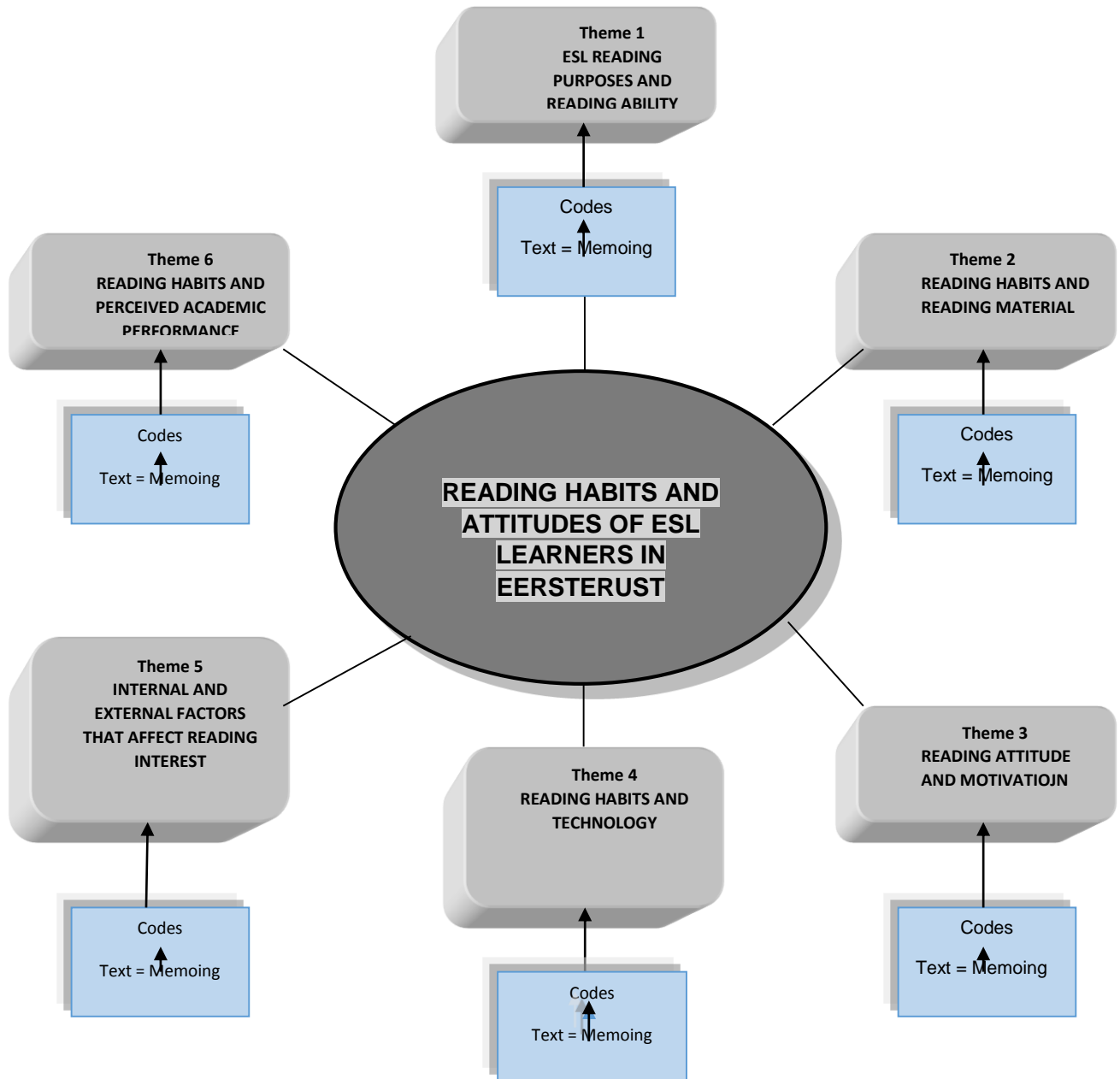


Figure 4.5: Interview questions (individual and focus group) findings

4.3.1 Theme 1: ESL reading purposes and reading proficiency

Theme 1 refers to the teachers' perception of why learners read and the reading ability of the learners, which is then substantiated or contrasted by the learners narrative of their reading experiences.

Can you give a brief background on the ESL reading ability of the learners for the grade(s) that you are currently teaching English as a second language?

4.3.1.1 Individual interviews with teachers

The teachers reported that there were learners who illustrated average to above average reading ability, but they were swift to acknowledge that there were learners who were challenged in terms of reading. Teacher I3 and Teacher I5 ventured as far as to imply that there were learners (in Grades 8 and grade 10) who were unable to exhibit basic reading ability. The words "... lapses in concentration"; "struggle to write"; "do not understand what is expected" and "problems with their vocabulary" "spelling mistakes" were codes giving evidence that were used to support the perception that some learners were not yet at their grade appropriate level of reading proficiency.

The following interview extracts support the above:

R: They are reading quite well, but there are a few children who struggle with the reading, you can see it especially when they write essays, and they write uh... they have to answer especially comprehensions. You see there are some lapses in concentration and also see there are some problems with their vocabulary. Which indicate to me that they don't read very... very much. (Teacher I1)

R: Sjo, um, look, where, I just want to add on this. We have learners that struggle. I can tell you they struggle. [I, simultaneously: Struggle to read? Struggle to write? Struggle to speak? Struggle to read, struggle to write, struggle to speak. All three of them. This adds to their, this adds to the difficulty in all the other subjects. (Teacher I2)

R: It varies, from excellent readers, to, some learners that [pause]... has no basic knowledge of reading (Teacher I3)

R: The ability of the learners [pause] Uh, reasonably well, uh, overall, reading capabilities. But there are some learners we identify that really cannot read (Teacher I5)

How would you rate the current reading performance of the Grade 8 to 10 ESL learners whom you teach?

Although the teachers concurred that the current reading performance was on an average level, the fact that Teacher I5 commented on the high failure rate of Grade 10 learners was an indication that learners might be challenged by the act of reading.

The following interviews extract support the above:

R:the Grade 10s I don't know. Really. And seeing that there is a huge failure rate in the Grade 10 level, cause of the OBE, stopping at the old system, uh, allowing the Grade 9s to pass and the Grade 10s to bottleneck in their grade, because of not being able to start with the new FET system where the exam system is. And they are failing and are discouraged and, uh, maybe that's the reason why the ... of the learners are grouping in the Grade 10 stage where we identify them as not being able to read properly. (Teacher I3)

R: Even though it is moderate, but it is way above [pause] 50%. (Teacher I4)

R: The Grade 10s I think it's... their reading ability is, overall I would say it's average. (Teacher I5)

4.3.1.2 Focus group interviews with learners

What language do you use at home?

- All the learners, from both groups confirmed that they used Afrikaans as a first language.
- Do you speak any English at home?
- Most of the participants from both groups indicated that they spoke English at home, but only sometimes.

From both groups there was only one learner that indicated that he did not speak English at home.

- Do you read any English books? Why?

The participants from group 1 provided answers which were diverse in terms of some of them saying that they did not really read, one learner indicated that s/he only read English because textbooks were in English, some learners indicated that they only read sometimes, whereas one learner indicated that s/he always participated in English reading, because English was easier to understand than Afrikaans.

Responses from focus group 1:

R: No, not really. Because I have other things to do.

R: Sometimes.

R: Always. Because I find it more exciting. [I: OK.] And I understand it better.

R: I love reading English books, because it helps me and it, I understand it better than my own language.

Interviewer: You understand English better than Afrikaans?

R: When I read it, it's better. I struggle more with Afrikaans than English.

R: No, I don't agree, but when, the reason why I read English books is because most of them, when I study, um, uh, the work that, like business, Business Studies, my parents bought me some business books. But it's in English so I have to read it so that I can understand.

The responses from focus group 2 also produced various answers, such as reading once in a while and sometimes. However, in this group more learners reported to 'love' English reading with the underlying motivation that English is a language that is understood by most South African cultures.

Responses from focus group 2

R: starting simultaneously: Once in a while.

R: Sometimes, when I'm in the mood for reading. Ja.

R: I love English because English is a better language. Because more people speak English.

R: English, because when you get like in future you have to know, you have to speak English. You have to, like, understand English.

I: So you all prefer English even though Afrikaans is your mother tongue? [General agreement]

R: Because, no, not all of us ... and, like, we are a rainbow nation, not everyone can speak Afrikaans, Sotho, Tswana, Sepedi [General agreement from other respondents]. We, like, in KwaZulu-Natal they speak their own language, um, Cape Town, they speak their own language, and I think most of the people like Afrikaans.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Reading habits and reading materials

Theme 2 related to the the opinion of teachers in terms of how they viewed the behavioural relationship that learners displayed towards reading and what type of reading material, according to their observations, learners seemed to enjoy. The learners added their experiences to relate when they read, what they read and for how long do they read.

4.3.2.1 Individual interviews with teachers

As an ESL teacher, what do you think the reading habits of the grades 8 to 10 ESL learners are?

The teachers noted that there were those learners that read for the enjoyment thereof, as well as relaxation, but that those learners were in the minority. During all of the interviews with ESL teachers, a strong notion of agreement came through that most learners did not participate in after-school reading practices. Teachers were of the opinion that most learners only read per instruction in the class and for assessment purposes. Outside of school learners did not read.

The following interviews extract support the above:

R: .. .their habits is, we read in class because we must read. For most of them. Uh, we read when it is necessary to read. But, for some of them, there is this habit to take a book for enjoyment, and for relaxation. They, there are very few that are into those habits...that they read for just enhancing their..., their skills and for the betterment and just for enjoyment. (Teacher I3)

R: [pause] They only read when they are supposed to read in class, and they never read after that. They only do it when they're in class. R: (referring to when

do learners read) Yes, exactly, it's on request only. I, simultaneously: So there's... And only for marks. If it's not for marks, they won't do it. (Teacher I4)

R: Uh, really not good. Reading, I'm struggling to force my learners to read. To read, uh, on their own at home and then start to read, uh, start to force the habit of reading and trying to have them. I even asked them to read when they go to the toilet. And sit and just read something for that half an hour, 15 minutes they spend there. And that's where you acquire that ... and they don't even do that. They don't even do that. They don't even read newspapers, they don't, they're so into the new system of technology ... and networking and so on, social networks and they are so busy with that they rather go with their phones to the opportunity to read and not to read books and magazines and stuff. (Teacher I5)

Do you think the reading habits and attitudes of learners influence their learning experiences?

The teachers agreed that the reading habits and the attitudes of learners did influence their learning experience, with one of the teachers emphasising that it was important for learners to be able to read in order to understand and appropriately answer the questions put to them. Teacher I2 conceptualised the influence on reading habits and attitude of learners on their learning experience by pointing out that: “the more you read, the better you do in your test’.

The following interviews extract support the above:

R: Definitely. If they are not able to read, they will not be able to study. So studying is out. They do not study, and they take shortcuts, every mind map or everything they can try out without reading. And that is where our problem and our learners do not have enough content to show in answering their questions (Teacher I5)

R: Of course it does. The more you read, the more, the better you do in your tests, in your, in your, anything else. But, uh, if you don't read, if you don't have a good habit, the, that's the reason for the marks being so low. (Teacher I2)

R: It does. It does. Even though we are aware of the technology and everything, their question papers are still [phone rings], their question papers are still written in a formal language, they have to read so that they are able to answer questions. If they are unable to read, then they won't be able to answer questions, which will lead to them failing. Not failing because we do not know, but failing because they do not understand what is expected of them when the exam comes. (Teacher I4)

Teacher I4 suggested that learners sometimes failed because they did not understand what was expected of them (due to their reading ability) and Teacher I5 articulated that if learners were not able to read, they could not study. This opinion interlinked indirectly with Meek (1984: 25) who postulates that: Learning to read occurs in the early stages, like everything else a child has come to know. Thus, in the secondary school grades, the learners need to read to study.

4.3.2.2 Focus group interviews with learners

Non-academic reading is the type of reading that engages a variety of fiction, non-fictional and digital text material such as: newspapers, novels, entertainment magazines, short stories, comic magazines and Websites. The participants of the focus group stated that they did read for leisure purposes sometimes and the type of leisure print material that was prominently referred to was newspapers and magazines

Do you read any English newspapers, magazines, novels for leisure purposes?

Responses from focus group 1:

R: Sometimes Daily Sun.

R: Yes. I really like You magazine.

R: Sometimes, cause when I, when I'm bored I'll read.

R: Um, the Daily Sun, and, uh, what's the other one's name, the Sunday Times.

R: Only my Business Studies and then Maths, because we are doing Maths in English, but I'm in an Afrikaans class. And I don't read novels that much, and newspapers and magazines. Sometimes magazines, when I'm on the long road.

The responses offered by focus group 2 correlated with group 1 in that by answering some of the respondents in this group indicated that they read magazines and the others indicated that they did read newspapers for leisure purposes.

Responses from focus group 2

[Some respondents indicate yes]

R: News... ah, magazines.

How many English books do you read on a monthly basis?

A mixed response originated from learners in focus group 1, with some indicating that they read one book per month to some reading 25 books per month, which reflected that indeed some learners did practice good reading habits, whereas others did not participate in reading practices

Responses from focus group 1

R: Jo, one.

R: My mother go every week to the library, she fetches maybe six books. In a week [I: six books] and then we read for a week so, I don't know how many, but its many books.

R: Not much.

R: I read, 25 books.

Interviewer: 25 books in a month?

R: Ja. (Yes)

R: None.

The learners from focus group two indicated that they read one to two books per month on average

Responses from focus group 2

R: Let's say one or two.

R: One.

R: It's based on how many pages are there, like I can say maybe one or two.

How much time do you spend reading English during the week?

Learners from focus group one revealed that actually they did read a lot more English during the week than what they realised in situations such as when they read to complete schoolwork, or reading the English subtitles on Afrikaans television programmes or when they read posters. One learner mockingly indicated that he reads for five minutes during the week then he gets distracted by friends.

Responses from focus group 1

R: Uh, I'd say, um, most of the time we use English because, on the TV, like in, maybe 7de Laan, then I read the... [I: the subtitles.] Ja, the subtitles and stuff like that. Ja, everywhere where you see you will find English, on, like, posters and stuff like that. So I'd say, most of my time I, I spend my time reading English, but I don't realise I read English that much

R: About five minutes [I, laughing: five minutes.]. Ja. Then my friends come and then...: then the friends come and then...] [laughter]

R: Ja mine is like almost every day, cause I need to read when I, maybe it's, like, work they give us that I need to read before I answer. So ja.

The participants from focus group 2 divulged that they read between 15 minutes per week to three hours per week.

Responses from focus group 2:

R: Maybe an hour.

R: Maybe, um, 15 minutes [laughs].

R: Three hours. Like whenever ... myself, but, um do like Bibles, count? [I: Ja.] Yes, three hours.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Reading attitude and motivation

Theme 3 explored the ESL reading attitude and motivation of learners. Within this theme the researcher examined whether the learners' related accounts, coincided with that of the teachers' viewpoint of their (the learners') reading attitude and motivation.

4.3.3.1 Individual Interviews with ELS teachers

As an ESL teacher, what do you think the reading attitudes of the grades 8 to 10 ESL learners are?

The teachers disclosed that it was difficult to instill a positive reading attitude in learners. Teacher I4 reported that as teachers they were trying to cultivate a positive attitude of reading amongst learners but they were challenged by the careless attitude

which learners displayed towards reading. All the teachers communicated that learners possessed a negative attitude towards reading, accompanied by what Teacher I1 referred to as learners' "reluctance" to read.

The following interviews extract support the above:

R: Children are generally reluctant to read. But I think the problem is they don't get a chance to read what they like. (Teacher I1)

R: S'joe, the minute they hear reading, uh, they feel bored already. And they moan and they complain. So [laughs], uh, with the attitude I think, they feel negative about it. (Teacher I2)

R: Their attitude is, uh, mostly, why do I have to read? Uh, it's negative. (Teacher I3)

R: Lower grades, attitude, positive. [.....] Like to read, like to read in class, but when we are doing the reading period. [I: OK.] The problem lies with the Grade 10s who are not willing to show (Teacher I5)

R: [pause] We're trying, we're trying, but we have a huge obstacle of cell phone and the lax attitude of the learners. (Teacher I5)

Do you think that the grades 8 to 10 ESL learners are motivated to read English?

In relation to the learners' motivation to read, all the teachers included and referred to extrinsic factors of motivation in their responses. Teacher I2 insinuated that the learners' reading ability may also be influenced by the fact that the skill of reading was not reinforced in learners during the primary grades, by saying that high school learners could not go back to teaching learners to read. Teacher I2 also articulated that it was not every learner that "Is not Interested" to read, and Teacher I5 said that the learners in themselves were not motivated to read.

The following interviews extract support the above:

R: [pause] It's a difficult one to answer, because at our school the children are not very, very exposed to the outside world. It depends how things go, uh, at home, if the parents are buying newspapers and magazines, and fashion magazines, the children will read, but I think there's, um, there's a problem at home, I don't think that there's enough reading material there to motivate them to read. [I: hmm] Because reading starts basically at home. (Teacher I1)

R: [whistle] That's a tough one. [laughs] [pause], look it's not everyone, not everyone is, uh, not motivated. Not everyone is not interested. [pause], I think this is a [pause] this is a problem that comes from home. And, uh, since we're a high school here, we can't be going back to Grade 1 or Grade 2 standards where you have to teach someone to read (Teacher I2)

R: In a way, yes, yes. I wouldn't say all of them, I would say some, some of them are. There is some form of motivation that comes from outside. (Teacher I3)

R: We're trying to motivate them, and, uh, they in themselves are not really good, well-motivated. (Teacher I5)

4.3.3.2 Focus group interviews with learners

Do you enjoy reading English?

None of the focus group participants from group one or group two actually confirmed that they enjoyed reading.

Responses from focus group 1

R: Because, because people at home disturbs a lot and stuff like that. I said, people at home disturb and, when you get disturbed by somebody while you're reading, you don't find it interesting, because, like, when, eish [general laughter] ...

R: Um, like I said, nobody disturbs me, but sometimes when my mom calls me to wash the dishes I get really fed up cause I don't like being disturbed when I'm reading.

Do you ever buy books just to read?

All the participants confirmed that they never bought books just to read. It seems as if learners perceived the purchasing of books as a responsibility for parents (adults) and they communicated that they viewed the financial acquisition of a book as an unimportant activity and a waste of money.

Responses from focus group 1

R: My parents... [I: Your parents buy.]

R: Never. I won't ever [I: You won't?], I won't because it's like I'm wasting my money.

Interviewer: You're wasting your money when you buy a book?

R: Yes.

Interviewer: What would you say, in your opinion, is more important?

R: Maybe something nice to eat, a snack or stuff like that.

R: I love reading but I won't waste my money on a book. Because... [I: You won't waste your money on a book?] No, my mom will buy me a book. Cause when I buy a book, I read and I just leave it there on the table.

In focus group 2, only one learner admitted to the purchasing of a book, whereas the rest indicated that they did not purchase books. The learner confirmed that s/he would buy a book because s/he had seen his/her mother buying books and stated that s/he participated in the act of reading because of parental reading examples.

Responses from focus group 2

[Most respondents say no, one indicates yes]

R: Ja.

I: And why, what motivates you to do that? Why do you do that?

R: My mother has, like, such a big cupboard full of books. And why I started reading those books, because there was a specific book, uh, 50 Shades of Grey, that's how I started reading books.

How do you feel when you have to read out loud in the English class?

Some of learners from focus group one admitted to enjoying reading out loud. They acknowledged that they experienced difficulty in terms of pronouncing difficult words, but still connected reading out loud with feeling excited and as a nice activity. One of the learners confessed that s/he preferred reading in Afrikaans (her/his first language)

as opposed to reading in English, because s/he sometimes did not understand the words

Responses from focus group 1

R: I love reading out loud, because I feel it's nice to read out loud. Sometimes I struggle with words, but I love reading and every day when I read it improves my, my, um..., um, ja. I love reading out loud.

R: With, um sometimes in English there are, um, like, big words, long words, and I struggle, but there's always someone helping me. My mother loves reading, so she's always there to help me.

R: I would rather prefer to read in the Afrikaans class. Out loud.

I: OK. So your confidence is better with your first language? [R: Yes.] OK. If you do read out loud in an English class, how do you feel?

R: Uh, sometimes I struggle a bit with my pronunciation. [I: OK.] There's some words... [Another R: That you don't understand.] that I don't actually understand and I don't like reading something that I don't understand. Ja.

R: I love reading out loud, ...my class, ja, they know when the teacher asks who wants to read [then they will] scream my name, so, ja, I love reading, I, most of us struggle with words. So, ja. I'm also struggling.

R: I'm very talkative, so I can't read in silence [I: [laughs]] and I can't read in my mind, so I have to read out loud. Ja. I feel excitement, it's justI can't hold myself [I: [laughs]].

Focus group 2 gave a mixed reaction to reading out loud in class. One learner expressed fear of reading out loud. Another learner articulated his/her fear that other learners might laugh when he/she read. Another learner alledged reading out loud in class garnered attention which s/he did not like. One other learner said that reading out loud in the class was what s/he liked, in fact, the learners mentioned that s/he would like to read in front of the whole school.

Responses from focus group 2

R: Anxious.

R: Scared.

R: Because I like to read out loud. Because I know I can read.

R: Um, [pause] I'm scared my, that the children might be, um, laugh. Yeah, laugh for the wrong words.

R: Because the children like to laugh, just [unclear] wrong words.

R: I couldn't say ..., just speak and be myself. So I prefer to read in front of like the whole school.

R: I don't like a lot of attention, eyes on me. It makes me sometimes a little bit dizzy. I feel like the class is going like this, [showing circle pictures with finger] like in a circle.

R: And when we read I want to be the first one reading.

4.3.4 Theme 4: reading and technology

Theme 4 attempted to discover the implications that technology (the instant, unlimited and continuous evolution thereof) had on the reading relationship of learners. This theme sought to establish a) the teachers' interpretation of learners using technology for reading and b) the learners' view of employing technology as a platform for reading by means of their own descriptions of it.

4.3.4.1 Individual interviews with ESL teachers

In your experience, what impact does digital technology have on the reading habits and attitudes and motivation of learners towards reading English?

All the teachers agreed that reading influences presented by technology were dual-sided in having positive and negative effects. They asserted that technology had the potential to improve the habit of reading by creating a platform for learners to engage more in the practice of reading, and consequently they spent more time on reading, reading different types of material. However, teachers were of the opinion that the elements of technology affected the writing quality learners utilised with the use of short message service codes in academic writing. Teachers also alerted to the plagiarism element which was increased by the use of technology. TEACHER 14 claimed that learners are out-phasing books by making more use of the Internet.

The following interviews extract support the above:

R: I'm not sure whether they read at home. We read our set books at school, but for me it seems to me as if they read a lot of things from their social media. (Teacher I1)

R: There's a huge impact, in fact, you can use social media and digital, uh, language, um, what they, what they offer you can actually use it in class. But, the negative thing is that children start to write in this sms type of, um, sms type of... language that is not good for writing habits. And also, there's also a downside to, um, to the social media because it lends itself a lot to plagiarism when the children are busy. But I think social media is, is also, it's a tool. Nobody can stop technology. (TEACHER I1)

R: [pause] Well, [pause, sigh] from what I can gather there's only, they only make use of social networks. (Teacher I2)

R: Well, at least it makes them want to read. But now the other thing is, when you have essays, and you have letters to write, spelling mistakes, uh, uh, acronyms they used, and um, [I, simultaneously: SMS language.] SMS language basically, yes, it's evident in the, in their writing. So, digital media, to answer your question, yes it is, it makes them read. But now, they have the SMS language or the WhatsApp language and so spelling is still a problem in that way. (Teacher I2)

R:... yes, what I mean by that is some children do not have access to this technology of, these smart phones whereby you can just get your story onto it and read from there.(Teacher I3)

Rmost of the time, they are busy with their own things. Of which now the books, they are actually phasing out the books on their own, without being told. Because they do not read those, everything they need, it's there, on their cell phones. So it is not exactly the attitude that they've got; instead, it is the technology that push them to the corner (Teacher I4)

R: Uh, [pause] it can go both ways if the learner's attitude is proper. The fact that social networking can assist learners to read more by, uh, reading proper content. But the problem lies on the other end where the social networks and language is changing to a contracted one which is totally a new language. ... And it's not reading per se. If learners want to research in the social network system, well then the cell phone will help. The technology will be assisting us very much there. But at this stage, our learners do only use the worst part, the wrong side of the social networking. (Teacher 5)

4.3.4.2 Focus group interviews with learners

Do you prefer reading a book, or would searching the Internet entertain you more? Why?

Apart from one learner in focus group one, all the other learners attested to preferring the Internet platform to print reading material. Learners motivated their preference of reading material by saying that it afforded them with more choices, as well as explaining the reading content better. One learner confirmed that s/he preferred reading books, because Internet facilities were expensive. Learners confirmed that using the Internet affected the quality of essay writing subconsciously because of the use of the short message service codes. This coincided with the claim made by teacher I3, who alleged that some learners did not have access to digital media.

Responses from focus group 1

R: I love working on a cell phone. I don't like working actually on the books, but the cell phone.

R: I love internet, cause internet it explains me better than books.

R: Because children our age are very lazy and they don't like working in their books so they'd rather prefer...

R: I like a book because it helps me with many things like spelling, and, ja, I love reading.

R: I'm not that much into internet, but when I need the internet I will use it.

R: I would say, it that affects us most, WhatsApp, social networks, cause we're used to, like, making the words shorter than writing out [Agreement from other participants] in full.

I: So you use SMS language? [Agreement]

I: Do you use that when you write your essays as well? In school?

R: Sometimes, it just comes out. Your mind is somewhere else. Then it just goes out. Then afterwards you see it [there's general agreement from the other participants during this].

The responses from the participants in focus group two varied, with two of the learners stating that they preferred to read books over the Internet. One of the two learners motivated his/her option by referring to books as a more concrete source of reading, whereas the other learner mentioned that the Internet was extremely expensive, and therefore books would be a less expensive option. The other remaining learners indicated that they would rather search the Internet because it offered a wide variety of reading sources, access was easy and because it required less effort to listen than to read.

Responses from focus group 2

R: Because, why, there's always a lot of things that you see on the internet.

R: I think a book, because like [...]don't go on the internet and write books, they prefer to write on paper. You see it on black and white.

R: Uh, I love to listen [I: Uh huh.] and learn, ja.

R: Internet, because the internet has more access to everything.

R: A book has more suspense, and the internet is very expensive.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Internal and external factors that affect reading interest

Theme 5 referred to internal factors (elements from within the inside of the learner) and external factors (elements outside of the learner, but within the environment), that influenced the reading ability, and consequently, the reading habits of an individual. The assessment of the ESL teachers; and the depiction of the learners, on how these elements affected the reading practices of learners were considered.

4.3.5.1 Individual interviews with ESL learners

According to you, what are the factors that influence the reading habits and attitudes of ESL learners?

Collectively, the teachers mentioned that there were a number of factors that influenced the reading habits and attitudes of the learners. Influencing factors

identified by Teacher I1 were (a) poverty; (b) reading material, (c) the environment at home, (d) lack of exposure, (e) lack of libraries facilities and (f) demotivated emotional state of learners. Teacher I2 referred to (a) the disadvantaged area in which the school was situated, (b) socio-economic factors such as unemployment and (c) social background such as single parenting. Teacher I3 added (a) access to reading material and (b) social influences such as role models in the community, friends and parents to the list. Teacher I4 included the influence of the first language ability on the second language reading. Teacher I5 claimed that the attitude of the learners and the effect of study groups were some of the influences that affected the reading habits and attitudes of the learners

The following extract from the interviews support the above:

R: [pause] It starts at home. If there's... if there's poverty at home the chances that the parents will have money to buy books and things are very, very slim, because they have to make a decision between what they are going... what is priority for them to spend the money on. But I think schools should do more in terms of libraries, um, reading material and... newspapers, I think the news, uh, the news houses can also help in this regard to help to sponsor schools to get, uh, reading material into the schools that the parents can't provide to their kids. (Teacher I1)

R: If their learning, .. reading capability is weak, it will disempower them, actually. It will force them to actually put them into the demotivated stage where they do not want to study because of not being able to read (Teacher I1)

Rmost of the learners that ... at this school are from, uh, disadvantaged areas so, uh, that makes it difficult for them [I: Hmm.] to, to cope with the language especially (Teacher I2): Sjoe, there's a lot. [pause] [I: [laughs] Let's list them.] Yeah, socio-economic factors, first of all, um, social background, uh, single parenting, um, [pause] unemployment... there's a lot to mention. And, uh, this is what we experience here, and learners are not exposed. So, ja, that's what I can, that's what I can think of, why, why they're not interested. (Teacher I2)

R: Factors would be basically socio-economic ...Then, apparently our school doesn't have a library. So, it's, the access to [I: To books.], to material [I: Yes.] to reading material is, a little bit restricted to them. And, then you have the influence of, your social influence out there, where people see reading as a waste of time and reading properly as a waste of time. And it is mainly displayed by their peers, friends outside, and sometimes it's been influenced in the habits of their elders, their parents at home. Uh, their role models, in many a case, we

can see that the role models they follow is not academically inclined, they have other ideas of life. And that influences them negatively towards reading, and actually working into, in school in general. (Teacher 13)

R: [pause] It's, it's finding the comfort zone. With the comfort zone, learners who are doing second language, they always want to use their first language or the home language (Teacher 14)

R: The reading habits are influenced by, negatively by peer pressure, by the social networks, and, uh, maybe just the attitude of the learners.... study groups, study groups and, uh, learners forgot about study groups. They don't use that any more. And, learners' parents can have a good influence, effect on them..... (Teacher 15)

4.3.5.2 Focus group interviews with learners

In which after school activities do you normally participate?

The participants from the first focus group all mentioned a number of activities which formed part of their list of daily after school activities, but reading was not indicated as a habit by one of them. One learner included reading amongst many other things to do, whereas the rest of the learners admitted that they did not read as an after school activity. Activities such as cooking, sport and roaming social media sites had a higher after school activity ranking than reading.

Responses from focus group 1

R: My, um, activity after school is watching TV [I: Uh huh.], on my cell phone, with my cell phone, and cooking. That's all, [that's my baby, the stuff that I...] [laughs]

R: During the week, when I, when after school, then I go to [school name] and I play for them rugby, cause our school doesn't have rugby. [I: OK.] Then when I get home, me and my friends, we play soccer.

R: After school, I come home, I like to sleep, wake up, read and gym.

R: OK, I struggle because when I read, I don't focus when there are, when my friends are, ja, talking, I also want to listen but I'm reading. The thing that, ..., keeps me from, the thing that I'm struggling, because I don't focus when I'm around a lot of people, like my friends, the people who distract me. Then I don't focus and that's the reason why.

The learners from focus group two concurred with the learners from focus group one, apart from one learner, that they preferred to participate in sport activities before reading. One learner indicated that s/he preferred to read books, but did not really have an opportunity to go to the library

Responses from focus group 2

R: The gym. Actually going to the gym before I read anything. Reading won't give me a buff body.

R: Ja, I think it's, that reading, it gets you, it just puts you in that motion., then you are still and you don't even know what's going on around you, ja.

R: But I think that reading is a medicine to your heart and to your mind.

R: Like, sometimes I want to read books and I can't have that opportunity to go to the, go to a library for reading.

4.3.6 Theme 6: reading habits and perceived academic performance

Theme 6 gave an account of the effect that reading had on the academic performance of learners. Within this theme, the teachers' point of view and the learners' reports on the effect of reading on their (the learners') academic performance was integrated or detached to confirm the interview findings

4.3.6.1 Individual interviews with ESL teachers

If the reading habits of learners were to improve, what impact do you think will it have on their academic performance?

All teachers agreed that should the reading habits of the learners improve, it would have a profoundly positive effect on the academic performance. Teacher I1 alleged that if the reading habits of learners improved, it would improve their ESL vocabulary;

it would enhance their comprehension ability (critical literacy) and further develop their writing ability which connects with the theory of multi-literacies.

Teacher I2 indirectly implied that you need to be multi-literate (demonstrate the skill to read, write, speak and listen) to achieve academic success. Critical literacy was also included by this teacher by referring to 'intensive reading' which required the learners to employ his/her cognitive ability to demonstrate understanding of written text in order to perform academically. Teacher I3 and Teacher I4 agreed that should the reading habits of learners improve, it would affect their marks, and ultimately increase the learners' pass rate.

The following interviews extract support the above;

R:if you have a reading problem you have a problem with all your subjects. (Teacher I1)

R.....if their reading habits improve, it will make it easier for them to understand, um, higher order questions. Because there's a problem. It will increase their vocabulary; it will increase their understanding. It will also increase their, their level of writing that you need to be able to write good essays and good exams. (Teacher I1)

Rif you can't read, the maths will be a problem. If you can't read, the, the life orientation will be a problem, the arts and culture will be a problem, if you can't read. The same if you can't write. There's intensive [pause] learning that must be done. Development must be done. And uh, if it's not improving on these lower grades, I don't see, I don't see them [pause] see them passing. (Teacher I2)

R.... if that improves, the reading improves, it will have a serious positive impact on a You will have lesser failures, you'll have lesser, children roaming around without any form of interest, but there will definitely be a definite change. Even your pass rate at schools will improve. (Teacher I3)

R: Children are generally reluctant to read. But I think the problem is they don't get a chance to read what they like. (Teacher I1)

R: Positive. It will improve our learners' performance, because our learners [pause] do not read regularly, [I: Mom hmm.] meaning they do not have the habit of reading for long periods. So if reading is done properly and the learners', uh, attitude towards that change, it will definitely improve their marks. Definitely improve the marks. In all subjects. (Teacher I5)

4.3.6.2 Focus group interviews with ESL learners

Do you think you have enough support to improve your reading?

Learners from focus group one indicated their academic results were better in general than the results for their first language and confirmed that they had enough support to improve ESL ability. However, one learner clearly stated that he/she did not feel as if he/she needed to improve his/her ESL reading habits, because their academic marks were good. Another learner agreed with this response by indicating that she was not failing English so why was it necessary to read? A third learner commented that although he/she was challenged in English, his/her marks were “nice.” One learner clearly stated that he/she would appreciate more support to improve his/her reading, in order to improve academically. The learner identified a lack of reading assistance within the school environment and at home.

Responses from focus group 1

R: My English is..., my marks, uh, like my English marks will be 70, 80, but my home language will be like 40, 50. I don't understand it. That's why I love English. Because my English are, it's my marks are better than my Afrikaans.

R: I'm always, I never fail English. That's why for me, sometimes I don't feel like reading cause I'm better in English, so why must I read [I: Oh.], so ja, that's why I don't read much, cause for me I just feel like no...

R: Um, my English marks are higher than my Afrikaans marks but I still struggle with English because, but, like the test or the tasks that they give us are also hard. So I always pass it with a nice mark. But my Afrikaans, [unclear, another participant adds something] it's always lower than my English but I [trips over a word, laughs] understand things more in Afrikaans than in English.

R: Because, if you want to pass the grade that you are in, you have to pass English, and your first additional language and Maths.

R: Yes, I'd love to do that. [I: OK.] Cause at home I don't have, um, someone who can sit with me and help me with the pronunciation and stuff like that. And at school, teachers always don't have time and stuff [I: Mmm.]. Cause I don't go with my parents.

A significant response that was extracted from a learner in focus group two was that the learner acknowledged that more support would assist to improve reading ability, but by frequently engaging in reading practices, the learners could improve their own reading ability and develop a good reading habit.

Responses from focus group 2

R: It might improve my reading, but you can always improve on your own, by reading much, much more.

4.4 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE FINDINGS JOINTLY INTERPRETED

There are many ways of collecting and absorbing, as well as analysing and making sense of data through more than one way, therefore accentuating the data crystallisation effect. Doing research on a singular real life phenomenon may produce numerous perspective of information, based on the analysed data.

The application of the crystallisation of data enabled the researcher to present the topic under discussion from different angles by employing multiple data collection instruments. Consequently, the researcher was able to present the findings collected by different instruments in various forms, with the purpose of seeking patterns, making comparisons, emphasising similarities, and accentuating differences and measuring correlations. Accordingly, within the data crystallisation process, the researcher acknowledged the importance of the participants' voices, respected and considered valid accounts of the reading practices and experiences by participants, in conjunction with the findings generated by the questionnaire survey. In addition, the data crystallisation process enhanced the dependability of the study by providing honest participants perspectives on: Reading habits and attitudes of ESL Grades 8 to10 learners Eersterust.

4.4.1 Theme 1: ESL reading purposes and reading proficiency

Theme 1 refers to the teachers' perceptions of why learners read as well as the reading ability of the learners, which were then substantiated or contrasted by the learners' narrative of their reading experiences.

Questionnaire extracts

Table 4.13: The difficulty of English reading

		1	2	3
	Item	%	%	%
1	I find English reading difficult.	12.3	60.3	26.0
4	When I read, there are many words that I cannot understand.	19.2	72.6	8.2

Frequencies: 1: Always 2: Sometimes 3: Never

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

4.4.1.1 Individual interview extract with ESL teachers

R: They are reading quite well, but there are a few children who struggle with the reading, you can see it especially when they write essays, and they write uh... they have to answer especially comprehensions. You see there are some lapses in concentration and also see there are some problems with their vocabulary. Which indicate to me that they don't read very... very much. (Teacher I1)

4.4.1.2 Focus group interview extract with ELS teachers

R: I'm always, I never fail English. That's why for me, sometimes I don't feel like reading cause I'm better in English, so why must I read? ... so ja, that's why I don't read much, cause for me I just feel like no...

The statistics indicated that 60.3% of the learners found ESL reading difficult. 72.6% expressed that sometimes, when they read, there were many words that they did not understand. Teacher I1 articulated that there were learners who read well, but we needed to consider those learners that struggle to read, which was evident in their

writing and comprehension ability. During the focus group interviews, a learner indicated that s/he never failed English, and for that reason do not feel the need to read English.

4.4.2 Theme 2: Reading habits and reading material

Theme 2 is related to the opinion of teachers in terms of how they viewed the behavioural relationship that learners displayed towards reading and what type of reading material, according to their observations, the learners seemed to enjoy. The learners' depiction of when they read and what they read were also brought into account, to establish whether their (the learners') version of their reading practices were aligned to the opinion of the teachers.

Questionnaire extract

Table 4.14: Reading habits of learners

		Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Very often
	Item	%	%	%	%	%
5	I read English during my leisure time.	19.2	15.1	38.4	16.4	4.1
6	I would be bored without a book.	49.3	16.4	21.9	4.1	4.1
7	Do you read outside class?	45.2	6.8	32.9	5.5	2.7

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

4.4.2.1 Individual interview extracts with ESL teachers

R... really not good. Reading, I'm struggling to force my learners to read. To read, uh, on their own at home and then start to read, uh, start to force the habit of reading and trying to have them. I even asked them to read when they go to the toilet. ... And sit and just read something for that half an hour, 15 minutes they spend there. And that's where you acquire that [inaudible] and they don't

even do that. They don't even do that. They don't even read newspapers, they don't, they're so into the new system of technology [I: Hmm.] and networking and so on, social networks and they are so busy with that they rather go with their phones to the opportunity to read and not to read books and magazines and stuff. (Teacher I5)

4.4.2.2 Focus group interview extracts with ESL learners

R: About five minutes [I, laughing: five minutes.]. Ja. Then my friends come and then... [I, simultaneously: then the friends come and then...] [laughter]

R: Ja mine is like almost every day, [I: OK.] cause I need to read when I, maybe it's, like, work they give us, that I need to read before I answer. So ja.

4.1% of the learners revealed that they *very often* participated in reading English during their leisure time and 33% marked that they *never* read outside class. The view of Teacher I5 was that the reading habits of the learners were not good, commenting that the learners did not even read newspapers, because they were very busy with technology. A learner from the focus group discussions indicated that he/she spent about five minutes reading and then friends would come along.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Reading attitudes and motivation

Theme 3 explored the ESL reading attitude and motivation of learners, according to the teachers' perspective of it, as well as the learners own description thereof.

Questionnaire extract

Table 4.15: Learners' attitudes toward reading

		1	2	3	4	5
	Item	%	%	%	%	%
6	Listening to music is more fun than reading	15.1	9.6	17.8	17.8	37.0
7	I would rather do something else than do English reading	21.9	12.3	28.8	16.4	19.2

Frequencies: 1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Not Sure 4: Agree 5: Strongly Agree

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

4.4.3.1 Individual interview extracts with ESL teachers

R: Shoo, the minute they hear reading, uh, they feel bored already. And they moan and they complain. So [laughs], uh, with the attitude I think, they feel negative about it. (Teacher I2)

4.4.3.2 Focus group interview extracts with ESL learners

R: Because, because people at home disturbs a lot and stuff like that. I said, people at home disturb and, when you get disturbed by somebody while you're reading, you don't find it interesting, because, like, when, eish [general laughter]...

54 % of the learners conveyed that they felt that listening to music was more fun than reading and 35.6% of the learners communicated that they would rather do something else than to read. Teacher I5 confirmed that the learners were displaying a negative

attitude towards reading, which tied in with the comment of a learner, who mentioned that there was a lot of disturbance at home and when you were disturbed whilst reading, the interest faded.

4.4.4 Theme 4: Reading and technology

Theme 4 emerged from the implications that technology had on the reading practices of learners.

Questionnaire extract

Table 4.16: The impact of technology on reading

I like reading this English material:	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Internet	5.5	11.0	30.1	19.2	30.1

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

4.4.4.1 Individual Interview extracts with ESL teachers.

Rmost of the time, they are busy with their own things. Of which now the books, they are actually phasing out the books on their own, without being told. Because they do not need those, everything they need, it's there, on their cell phones. So it is not exactly the attitude that they've got; instead, it is the technology that push them to the corner (Teacher I4)

4.4.4.2 Focus group interview extracts with ESL learners

R: I love working on a cell phone. I don't like working actually on the books, but the cell phone.

79.4% of the learners responded that they *sometimes* to *very often* liked reading English on the Internet. Teacher I4 affirmed that learners were phasing-out books because all the information they needed was available on their cell phones. A focus group learner said that he/she did not like to work with books, but with cell phones.

4.4.5 Theme 5: Internal and external factors that affect reading interest

Theme 5 referred to internal factors (elements inside the learner) and external factors (elements outside the learner, but within the environment), that influenced the reading ability, and consequently, the reading habits of an individual.

Questionnaire extract

Table 4.17: Factors that affect reading interest

		Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Very often
	Item	%	%	%	%	%
3	I read English at home.	24.7	11.0	43.8	16.4	2.7
4	I only read books in my first language in my leisure time.	16.4	12.3	37.0	13.7	16.4

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

4.4.5.1 Individual Interview extract with ELS teachers

R: Factors would be basically socio-economic ...Then, apparently our school doesn't have a library. So, it's, the access to [I: To books.], to material [I: Yes.] to reading material is, a little bit restricted to them. And, then you have the influence of, your social influence out there, where people see reading as a waste of time and reading properly as a waste of time. And it is mainly displayed by their peers, friends outside, and sometimes it's been influenced in the habits of their elders, their parents at home. Uh, their role models, in many a case, we can see that the role models they follow is not academically inclined [I: Mmm hmm.], they have other ideas of life. And that influences them negatively towards reading, and actually working into, in school in general. (Teacher I3)

4.4.5.2 Focus group interviews extract with ESL learners

R: OK, I struggle because when I read, I don't focus when there are, when my friends are, ja, talking, I also want to listen but I'm reading. The thing that, um, keeps me from, the thing that I'm struggling, because I don't focus when I'm around a lot of people, like my friends, the people who distract me. Then I don't focus and that's the reason why.

19.1% indicated that they often to very often read at home and a combination of 30.1% marked that they often to very often only read books in their first language for leisure purposes. Teacher I3 alleged that the reading interests of learners was affected by factors such as: parents at home, the role models of learners, their friends, the availability of a library and socio-economic factors. A focus group learner mentioned that their friends affected their reading interest.

4.4.6 Theme 6: Reading habits and perceived academic performance

Theme 6 gave an account of the effect that improved reading habits might have had on the academic performance of learners, as was related by the teachers and the learners

Questionnaire extract

Table 4.18 The effect of improved reading habits on academic performance.

		1	2	3
		%	%	%
5	I think that learning English is important in life.	72.6	11.0	15.1

Frequencies: 1: Always 2: Sometimes 3: Never

Keys: N = 73 learners % = percentages score

4.4.6.1 Individual Interview extract with ESL teachers

R.... if their reading habits improve, it will make it easier for them to understand, um, higher order questions. Because there's a problem. It will increase their vocabulary; it will increase their understanding. It will also increase their, their level of writing that you need to be able to write good essays and good exams. (Teacher I1)

4.4.6.2 Focus group interview extract with ESL learners

R: It might improve my reading, but you can always improve on your own, by reading much, much more.

72% of the learners illustrated that they acknowledged English as important in their lives. Teacher I1 stated that the improvement of reading habits would contribute to the enhancement of the learners' vocabulary and understanding. A focus group learner said that reading more should improve reading ability.

4.5 SYNTHESIS OF THE FINDINGS

The aim of this study was to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners toward English L2 in two high schools in the Eersterust area of the Tshwane south district within the boundaries of the research questions,

This chapter presented the findings to these questions by means of a questionnaire survey, individual interviews with ESL teachers and focus group interviews with learners as interpreted by the researcher.

The researcher collected relevant responses from the questionnaire survey. The findings seemed to indicate that the reading attitudes of learners affected their reading habits and their reading relationships with various types of reading material. The interview information provided by both the teachers and the learners provided insightful and significant knowledge in relation to the phenomenon of reading habits and attitudes, based on the perceptions and experiences of the participants. Some of the direct quotations expressing the ESL teachers' perceptions appeared to be in contrast with some of the interview responses as relayed by the ESL learners.

The triangulation process proved to be constructive in that it enabled the researcher to provide a detailed, yet objective and impartial analysis of the data in search of answering the research questions.

In the following chapter, chapter 5, the findings of the study are discussed, patterns, similarities and contradictions indicated by the findings are highlighted and explained and any limitations to the study that were experienced during the investigation are considered.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the results of the study and its implications within the framework of the literature review that is based on the socio-cultural theory of reading and Mathewson's attitude Influence model of reading.

The aim of this study was to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners toward English L2 in two high schools in the Eersterust area of the Tshwane south district, with a view to suggesting how to improve their reading habits and attitudes.

Creswell and Plano Clark (2007: 21) are of the opinion that as the study of a phenomenon progresses, world views and perceptions may change and may be shaped by new experiences, new thoughts, new theories, new statistics and continuous research. Subsequently and relative to this study, data were collected from a sample representation group of Grades 8 to 10 learners and teachers as a means of investigating the phenomenon of reading habits and attitudes within a natural context.

In order to achieve the aim of this study and answer the research questions, the following points of discussion emerged from the interpretation of the findings according to the themes in Chapter four:

- Learners had a positive attitude toward ESL learning and reading
- Learners read predominantly for academic achievement
- Teachers perceived that learners did not practise good reading habits
- Learners did not read enough to qualify for good reading habits
- Alternative activities took preference over reading
- Learners had a negative attitude toward reading ESL print material, not electronic reading material
- Learners favoured technology-based reading options

- Parents' encouragement and peer pressure were the main factors of influence toward reading.
- There was a deficiency of monetary resources to motivate reading
- School library facilities were lacking

5.2 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.2.1 Theme 1: ESL reading purposes and reading ability

The ESL reading purposes and reading ability are discussed in the following section.

5.2.1.1 Learners had a positive attitude toward ESL learning

The findings of this study disclosed that the learners demonstrated a positive attitude towards ESL learning, and therefore also a positive attitude towards ESL reading. Learners were all in accord that English is a world language. They also associated the learning of English with socio-economic advancement such as academic progress, a successful future, travelling, acquiring a better job and interacting with other cultures.

This finding is echoed by research on English language attitudes by Bosch and De Klerk (1996: 235) who reveal that users have a positive attitude towards English, primarily because of "a pragmatic necessity", meaning that people portray a positive attitude towards learning a language when they know that they need that language to achieve a certain goal. Therefore, it appears that the attitude towards a language involves the feeling(s) that the language user experiences, whether positive or negative, when learning a language, or when choosing to use a language within various situations.

The findings obtained from the focus group interviews with learners revealed that learners regarded the learning of ESL as important in life. Gardner (1985: 40-42) proposes that second language attitudes are reflected in the relationships regarding how people approach a second language and how much people achieve in the language. Many South Africans perceive English as a vehicle of communication to advance their social and economic aspirations in life

During the focus group interviews, learners observed that their ESL academic results were better than those of their first language, which was Afrikaans. The following focus group extract seemed to communicate the following sentiment shared by most of the learners interviewed: R: ... *"I never fail EnglishSo why must I read?"* served to substantiate that learners thought themselves to be capable English language users. However, the English proficiency confidence of learners was contradicted by the poor annual South African matric results as well as the teachers' perceptions of the English reading abilities of the learners

This contradiction in findings can also be attributed to the fact that learners perceived English to be important because they associated it with socio-cultural-economic advancement, yet they did not manifest the importance of the language by engaging more in the practices of ESL, which included the act of ESL reading. This finding is supported by Volbrecht (1992:30) who alleges that "most students have an unrealistically high estimation of their proficiency in English for academic purposes."

The interview data findings were endorsed by the questionnaire findings in that the majority of learners maintained that they had *always* thought that learning English was important in life and most of the learners indicated that being able to read English was *always* important for them. However, it was evident from the findings that only a few learners read English at home.

Van Der Walt, Evans and Kilfoil (2009: 6) suggest that, learning (which includes reading) a language in school only, with limited or no exposure to the language outside of the classroom is considered as a second additional language, which can be achieved successfully, if learners are intrinsically (internally) motivated, which is a result of a positive attitude toward the target language, its speakers, and within the communication environment.

This study established that regardless of the findings that revealed that learners did not engage in the practice of ESL reading as a habit frequently, they strongly perceived English as important for the success of their life journey and hence, they were motivated to learn it. The findings thus enhanced the pronouncement by the

American Academy of Paediatrics (2007: 2) that reading is a critical interactive activity in a socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic environment. As a result, learners had a positive attitude towards English as a second language, yet they harboured a negative attitude towards ESL reading.

5.2.1.2 Learners read predominantly for academic achievement

The results of the study revealed that most learners did read. During focus group discussions with learners, a number of learners confirmed that they actually read at school in order to pass. However, the teachers divulged that many learners struggled with spelling, a limited vocabulary and the inability to comprehend texts successfully, which was evident when they wrote essays or completed a comprehension test.

The above-mentioned observations contradict Worthy *et al.* (1998: 13) who promote the motion that when children practise reading in their own time, their vocabulary expand, and their attitudes and motivation regarding reading also improves, as their basic reading skills develop. In relation to what is asserted by Worthy *et al.*, it was evident from the findings that although the learners indicated that they read at school, they excluded the practice of ESL reading as a habit.

Many learners indicated on the questionnaire survey that they did read English books. However, the data reflected that the majority of learners *only* read ESL in school with the purpose of doing well academically. This was in contrast with a small number of learners who revealed that they *never* to *hardly ever* read during school time. Information obtained from interviews with the teachers supported the statistical data that revealed that learners only read in-class in response to the instruction to read.

Corroborating the above-mentioned observations, the findings of the study revealed that most learners primarily engaged in the act of reading with the sole purpose of progressing at school. This implied that learners did not practise reading for pleasure or for knowledge enrichment, which could consequently, have a negative impact on both their learning experiences and their academic achievement.

Accordingly, the findings presented a paradox. The learners expressed that they read mostly to advance in their schooling career, yet the very fact they only read for this

reason, could have had a negative effect on their progress in school and their knowledge of life, because they did not cultivate the practice of reading as a habit

Furthermore, teachers were of the opinion that learners should read more because should their reading habits improve, it would have a positive effect on their overall academic performance. They rated the learners' reading ability as average to below average and thus, their perceptions concurred with those of Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko and Hurwitz (2000: 5) who allege that many high school learners are unable to apply critical thinking skills by interpreting texts in their prescribed schoolbooks, which created a barrier for them to achieve the required academic benchmark successfully.

Scholars of reading, Dauzat and Dauzat (1981: 6) summarise reading as "a process that involves mental activity," thus referring indirectly to it as a cognitive process and in order to comprehend a text, the learner needs to demonstrate the cognitive ability, which has a direct influence on learners' academic performance. Reading habits and attitudes are not about academic ability *per se* and the achievements of the learner, instead, reading habits and attitudes influence the reading abilities (cognitive abilities) of learners, and as a result, they have an impact on the academic performance of learners. Furthermore, reading habits refer to the reading behaviour in which learners engage. Therefore, positive reading habits and attitudes can influence academic performance and achievements positively. In contrast, we can thus conclude that if a learner engages in good reading habits, this can lead to good reading capabilities and consequently, it can result in academic success

5.2.2 Theme 2: The reading habits and reading materials and Theme 6: reading habits and the perceived academic performance

The above aspects are discussed in the next section.

5.2.2.1 Teachers perceived that most learners did not practise good reading habits

This study revealed that teachers held the viewpoint that learners were not in the habit of reading frequently. The reflection on the interviews with teachers gave a clear indication that teachers were of the opinion that the learners did not read at home or in their spare time. The teachers observed that spelling mistakes were made, plagiarism was committed and the infiltration of the short message service (SMS) language when learners wrote essays, stood as proof that learners did not read enough. The learners struggled with the pronunciation of English words, which teachers claimed they detected during text reading in class. In addition, the learners illustrated a limited vocabulary, and lapses in concentration and they did not demonstrate adequate higher order intellectual capacity when responding to comprehension activities. Furthermore, the learners did not have the opportunity to learn to practise how to apply reading strategies correctly, because they did not read enough to use them.

The above finding differs from Dechant's (1982: 288) viewpoint who asserts that the process of reading requires word identification and the ability to pronounce the words. In addition, reading requires comprehension; the decoding or associating meaning with the symbols that comprise the words. Stahl and Hayes (1997: 136-137) also concur that reading is all about creating meaning. According to the teachers, the learners failed to demonstrate these reading processes successfully.

Teachers further referred to the fact that learners lacked enthusiasm when they were requested to read. However, in contrast with the perceptions of the teachers, the information disclosed by some learners during the focus group interviews, indicated that learners were excited to read. This finding was remarkable to note notwithstanding the fact that teachers perceived that learners lacked the necessary enthusiasm to read, the data collected from the focus groups revealed exactly the opposite.

Another finding that emanated from this study was that teachers' perceptions of learners were influenced by their own school experiences. During the interviews, the

teachers would compare their own reading habits and abilities, when they were at school years earlier with the reading behaviour of the current learners. An example of such a comparison was the following: Teacher I2 communicated this experience: *“When I was at school... no reading was non-existent... It was drilled into you.”* As time progresses, technology evolves, viewpoints about issues in life change, activities transform and so too, does education. Today, learners experience different educational challenges while being presented with various educational opportunities and platforms and it still continuous to change.

A school is the institution where most learners learn to read and write, and teachers are the facilitators of reading and writing within the socio-cultural environment of a school. In agreement to this, Applegate and Applegate (2004: 556) suggest that teachers create a classroom environment that encourages the growth of reading in learners. In addition, Rhodes and Shanklin (1993: 55) state that the teacher is a crucial model of literacy learning demonstration, which includes the learning of reading skills. Teachers therefore, demonstrate reading to learners, with which print materials they should engage, why reading should be practised and which attitudes to display towards reading. The teachers’ perceptions can thus influence the reading habits of the learners. As a result, the findings of this study highlighted the importance of the reading habits and attitudes of learners not being looked at in a comparative historical context by the teacher, but rather to ensure that the literacy expectations of learners are pro-active, realistic and in context with an ever developing socio –cultural environment. Consequently, learners must be allowed space to develop their own reading practices in a manner that will stimulate their desire to engage in good reading habits as a lifestyle activity.

5.2.2.2 Learners did not read enough to acquire good reading habits

Findings from this study suggested that the learners did not participate enough in reading activities as a form of relaxation. The majority of the learners mentioned that they did not read outside school because according to them, there were other things to do, which were more important than reading. When asked how many books they

read per month, some learners replied that they read “none” or one book on a monthly basis.

The learners agreed that they did not engage nearly enough in sound reading habits and they were aware of it. However, they hid their consciousness of this fact by laughing as they admitted to it, which exemplified the fact that learners were oblivious of their own cognitive potential, as well as how they could use the continuous practice of reading to develop that potential.

Throughout the interview sessions with the teachers, it was clear that they did not think that learners participated in reading habits outside school or for the sole purpose of enjoyment. Some of the learners expressed that they did read, however the time they spent on reading and when they chose to read did not correspond with that of learners who read for leisure.

Information given by the teachers and the majority of the learners was supported by the statistical information obtained through the questionnaire survey. A small percentage of learners reported that they actually read very often during leisure time, opposed to the greater number of learners who communicated that they never read for the purpose of relaxation, which accentuated that the highest proportion of learners did not engage in the act of reading in their spare time. From the data obtained it was apparent that learners were not proactive enough concerning the practices of reading as a leisure activity.

This information highlighted the fact that although the learners had the opportunity to read more in their own time, they chose not to practise reading as a habit... This finding was in line with Hughes-Hassel and Lutz’s (2006: 36) statement that leisure reading is an activity which learners choose to do.

According to Shen (2006: 560), a reading habit refers to how often, how much and what the readers read. Krashen (1993: 84) explains that students who practise good reading habits, such as reading in their spare time, become better readers and display more content knowledge than those who do not read as often.

Even though the learners acknowledged that they did not read in their spare time, and the questionnaire statistics validated this acknowledgement, learners were able to mention the name of a popular magazine, which was: “*You*” magazine and two well-known newspapers: the “*Daily Sun*” and the “*Sunday Times*.” This proved to the researcher that learners were aware of the variety of reading options on the market. The question is just, how do we get learners to read more?

Woolfolk (2013: 364) postulates that a person may possess a skill or behaviour, but may not perform that behaviour until there is some motivation or incentive to do so. According to Woolfolk (2013: 364) and relative to this study, the findings indicated that learners did engage in the act of reading, it was just that they did not read as much and as frequently as they should have to inculcate good reading habits. Conclusively, reading should not be an act, but it should be a habit. In the words of Aristotle: “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act, but a habit.”

5.2.3 Theme 3: Reading attitudes and motivation

Reading attitudes and motivation are discussed in the next section.

5.2.3.1 Alternative activities took preference over reading

The findings indicated that learners chose other activities that interested them more than reading did. Learners indicated that they preferred music rather than reading, because it was the type of leisure activity where they could choose which type of music to listen to, they could listen to it with their friends and in addition, music required no effort and no concentration. Hence, it was not a not a surprise when the majority of the learners strongly agreed that listening to music was more fun than reading. Consequently, the conclusion was that many learners did not enjoy reading and viewed it as a boring activity.

From the focus group interviews with learners it was evident that learners would participate in sport rather than engage in reading. Most of the learners mentioned that they would visit the gymnasium, play soccer, go jogging, or walk their dogs rather than

read. Spending time on the Internet, watching television and cooking were some-of the other activities that were chosen above reading

What was interesting was that none of the schools facilitated the sporting activities which the learners mentioned. Neither did any of the schools offer music as a subject; nor did they offer music as a co-curriculum activity. Nevertheless, the learners participated in this rather than in reading activities, at their own cost and in their own time. Importantly, most of the learners indicated that they were not prepared to buy a book or spend their leisure time reading. Therefore, this study concluded that as long as no effort was made to cultivate the learners' interest in reading, they would continue to prefer alternative activities as a replacement for of reading.

Research conducted by Hughes-Hassel and Lutz (2006: 39) reveals that readers who do not enjoy reading appeared to favour other activities and this sentiment was confirmed by the findings in this study. Woolfolk (2013: 213) postulates that when a particular action or type of behaviour is being avoided, it relates to negative reinforcement, which is the consequence that strengthens behaviour by means of the disappearance of a stimulus. Accordingly, and relative to this study, when a learner avoided the act of reading in preference for another activity, the disappearance of the engagement of reading was strengthened and therefore, it resulted in the negative reinforcement of reading, which then allowed the learner to participate in alternative activities.

Furthermore, this study confirmed the pronouncements by Van Wyk (2002: 30) that a child is not born with the ability to read, but is taught how to read by the continuous practice of the skill of reading. Failure to introduce children to sound reading practices at an early age in their lives, will make it difficult for them to acquire this habit in later years. The findings indicated that due to a lack of an interest in and love for reading, the learners found other activities more interesting than participating in reading.

5.2.3.2 Learners had a negative attitude towards ESL reading print material, not electronic reading material

The findings derived from the learners' responses during the focus group interviews reflected that they did not find English reading interesting and that they felt that they had better things to do. Further input confirmed that learners had a negative attitude towards reading and they expressed the view that buying books was "a waste of money." In addition, some of the learners, stated that they preferred alternative activities over reading, because "*reading gets bored [sic] sometimes.*" It is obvious that the learners' negative attitude towards reading emerged from their ignorance about the role of the written word and how it could increase their reading ability and improve their academic performance.

Half of the total number of the learners revealed by means of the questionnaire survey that they would *never* be bored without a book, in concurrence, quite a significant number of learners indicated that they never liked visiting a library. All the teachers agreed that learners could read, however they struggled with reading because they did not read enough, neither did they display a positive attitude towards reading because they were not motivated to read. As Teacher I2 related: "*...the minute they hear reading, they feel bored already.*" These findings served as substantiation that grades 8 to 10 learners in Eersterust had a negative attitude towards ESL.

It was evident from the data collected that learners appeared to find ESL reading an effort and they displayed behaviour reflecting a lack of interest when it came to the reading of print resources. This behaviour indicated that learners had a negative attitude towards reading. The attitude-influence reading model of G. C. Mathewson' in Ruddel and Unrau, (2004: 1431-1448) explains that a reader's whole attitude towards reading, such as prevailing feelings, and evaluative beliefs about reading as well as action readiness for reading, will influence the intention to read, and, in turn, influence reading behaviour.

Furthermore, a negative attitude toward a target language may result, as postulated by Brown (1987: 127), in the decrease in or absence of motivation, and, possibly,

unsuccessful learning (which includes reading) in the target language. McKenna (2001: 139) alleges that in order to change the learners' attitudes towards ESL reading, the causative factors that affect attitudes should be considered. Internal factors such as the learners' self-belief and self-confidence and the learners' will to read were all factors that were found to affect the readers' attitude to reading. Hence, if learners can be made aware of the benefits and advantages of reading, they will start to appreciate (develop a positive attitude) the skill of reading and consequently, it will generate an inner driving force (motivation) to increase the habit of reading and this development will give life to the words of Winston Churchill: "Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference!"

5.2.4 Theme 4: Reading habits and technology

5.2.4.1 LEARNERS FAVOURED TECHNOLOGY-BASED READING OPTIONS

The study also probed the type of print material that learners preferred to read. The learners had to point out which reading materials they liked amongst schoolbooks, magazines, newspapers, novels and the internet.

The findings of the study disclosed that the majority of the learners indicated that they very often preferred to surf the Internet or log onto social media on their cell phones, rather than to read books. Although most of learners divulged that they preferred the Internet as their choice of reading material, the material that they indicated as reading *often* to *very often* after the Internet, was schoolbooks. This information reconfirmed that learners primarily read to advance their school careers.

The focus group discussions with learners also reflected that most of them preferred to read using the Internet because it was easily available and accessible. In addition, computer-based reading resources presented a wide variety of reading materials to choose from and, text was explained with pictures and videos. This highlighted the fact that reading by means of technology required little effort and therefore, learners would select this reading facility because it provided easy access. This is summarised by Meek (1984: 29) who substantiates the aforementioned statement in saying that

reading requires time and effort, whereas, watching television and “surfing” the Internet is easier, yet even more time consuming, as the user can spend hours accessing these sources.

The teachers were in accord with regard to the effect of technology on reading, namely that it could produce positive results and simultaneously, it could also generate and enhance negative reading habits. The positive results which teachers referred to were that firstly, that learners could produce creative essays when writing, because the Internet offered such a wide variety of materials and as a result increased the knowledge content of the learner, and secondly, the reading interest of learners was stimulated, resulting in them reading more. In contrast, although they read more, they tended to read more about social activity aspects, which were not necessarily educational and that was why their spelling abilities declined, their vocabulary capacity stayed limited, plagiarism was evident in their work and they were challenged during comprehension activities. The focus group participants concurred with the teachers by intimating that they were now so used to the SMS style of writing, they also used it when writing academically, without even realising that they had used it.

The learners were all different individuals with different interests. Some preferred to learn by reading and looking, some could listen and still recall information, some learned best kinaesthetically, some focussed intensively and others paid attention to many things at once. Johnson-Smaragdi and Johnson (2006: 521) argue that books are not the only reader materials, and therefore, digital multimedia presents the reader with an alternative to plenty of print text, such as e-books, online magazines and newspapers and computer-based media. Therefore, it appeared that books were not the only sources of reading, which enabled learners to participate in reading activities, but the development of technology was presenting learners with an alternative platform to read. The Internet, cell phones, computer games and the television were all alternative sources of information that present the learner with print information that required the learner to make little to no effort.

The above finding implied that one should change with the times, and it was the time for technology. It is important to adapt with the use of technology; laptops, iPad,

tablets, phablets, smart phones, television, Internet and cell phones to improve and expand one's knowledge but, one should not forget that books can also do the same. All these mentioned technology gadgets offer a platform for reading, at anytime, anywhere, with the least effort. As a result, the findings of this report concurred with what the learners disclosed through the questionnaire statements and the interview data, namely, that they did read. Good reading habits have nothing to do with technology, just as books have nothing to do with paper. It is the written text that is supposed to increase knowledge that matters. Ultimately, it is the acquisition of knowledge through the practice of reading that counts, regardless of whether the text is being read from paper such as a book, or from an electronic platform such as a cell phone.

5.2.5 Theme 5: Internal and external factors

The internal and external factors that affect reading interest produced the points of discussion that will be discussed next.

5.2.5.1 Parents' encouragement and peer pressure were the main factors of influence towards reading.

The findings inferred that learners did not read regularly at home, neither did they read with their families or caretakers at home. The absence of parental, family and caretaker reading involvement further aggravated the reading deficiency situation in South Africa, so that we are now faced with a crisis in this country. Social interaction and behaviour, such as the habit of practising an activity, is encouraged or discouraged at home. Children like to imitate both the behaviour and actions of their parents, and as a result, the habit of reading is instilled in the child, by the parents of the child. Woolfolk (2013: 176) hypothesises that parents who read with their children, provide the books read as well as their educational toys and accompany their children to libraries. Consequently, these parents' children are inclined to become enthusiastic readers.

During the focus group interviews, information surfaced that it was the parents of the learners that went to the library to borrow books and yes, the children saw the parents read, but none of the interviewed learner participants indicated that they read with their parents.

The questionnaire survey showed that although a significant number of learners strongly agreed that their parents liked to engage in reading activities, almost half of the learners communicated that they never read with their families. This result was aligned to what Meek (1991) attests to, namely that reading is an important family literacy practice, which can generate a positive attitude and motivate the learner to practice reading as a habit. Reading as a habit brings the following English quote to remembrance: “tell me I forget; show me I remember, involve me and I understand”. If parents and teachers only instruct learners to read, they will forget, yet if parents and teachers physically demonstrate to learners how to read they will remember. In fact, when parents and teachers frequently read with learners, learners will understand the importance of reading. Besides, to develop a positive reading habit takes practice. Parents need to practise reading with the learners, in order for them to cultivate good reading habits.

All the teachers interviewed, referred to the parents’ contribution as an influential factor of the reading abilities and habits of the learners. Teachers were in accord that they needed the parents to help them to teach the learners to practise good reading habits. Another factor that surfaced from the interview data was that there were learners who had parents who were not educated. Teacher I4 pointed out “*Remember, we still have those parents who are not educated.*”

The PIRLS 2011 findings reflected a strong positive relationship between students’ reading proficiency and their early learning experiences. Students whose parents reported that they themselves were readers and indulged in early literacy activities with their children, such as reading books and telling stories, had a higher reading achievement. On the other hand, because of their illiteracy, parents may be more

aware of the importance of literacy and in order to prevent their children from suffering the same fate as them, they can become a potent source of motivation for their children.

In the same breath, the teachers implicated the parents, or rather the lack of their (involvement in the reading practices of the learners. Teacher I maintained: “... *because reading basically starts at home.*”

Based on the perceptions of the teachers, it became evident that there was a need for parents to be actively involved in the reading habits of their children, while teaching a child to read remained the responsibility of the teacher, specifically the primary grades teacher, where learners is introduced to the act reading. This sentiment is confirmed by the DoE, “Teaching learning in the early grades” (2008: 7) which states: “When a learner enters school, it is the teachers’ role and responsibility to provide, plan and teach an effective reading programme that will enable the learner to become a skilful reader.”

When learners enter the foundation phases of their school careers, learners are taught how to write and to read basic texts, which become more complicated as they progress at school. In South Africa, regardless of the amount, most parents pay school fees for their children to be schooled. Accordingly, we may assume that during the school careers of learners, the education system also contributed to the failure to produce learners who were skilful readers. Teacher I2 confirmed this by acknowledging indirectly that teaching elements within the schooling journey failed the learner: “... *since we're a high school here, we can't be going back to Grade 1 or Grade 2 standards where you have to teach someone to read.*” This perception coincided with Pretorius (2002: 190) who claims that after Grade four, little time is allocated to reading, because then reading is considered as a leisure activity.

The findings also confirm Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory in Woolfolk (2013: 55), in which he postulates that everything is learned on a two-fold processing level. Learning

first occurs on a social level through interaction with the other people in the social environment, such as parents, family members, caregivers, peers, and other people within the cultural environment. In addition, learning occurs on an individual level, which entails the cognitive process of learning. Of interest to this study, Vygotsky examined the influence of social factors on learning, which includes the act of reading. As a child grows, he/she interacts with the people in his/her environment, and normally, especially with young children, most of the interaction occurs with parents and caregivers. Thus, as the child grows and sees what the parents do, the child will imitate and portray those actions or behaviour. Hence, if the parents demonstrate positive reading practices, they (the parents) will serve as an example and a source of encouragement for their children to also engage with the reading resources.

The intrinsic and extrinsic factors that affect reading can be examined within the socio-cultural theory of literacy (Street, 2001: 430), because literacy is a social practice that exists between people, within groups and communities and the daily practices of society. Thus, the reading habits and attitudes of learners could be influenced by our social practices, which could advance, or reduce, the reading ability and proficiency of learners.

On the other hand, if children do not observe their parents read, there will be no demonstrated example for them to follow with regard to reading. This is emphasised by Clark and Rumbold (2006: 24) who declare that parental involvement in the child's learning experiences and practices are a more important force than other family orientated variables, in many cases, such as social class and the level of parental education.

As a result, this research found that in order for children to develop good reading habits, it was crucial that parents should become involved, encourage and be a model of reading for their children with the aim of assisting them to cultivate good reading habits.

This study has indicated that peer pressure played a vital role in the act of reading. Peer group influence and peer pressure as indicated by the data obtained from the interviews with teachers; as well as the learners during the focus group interviews, were some of the negative factors influencing the reading habits and resulted in learners being reluctant to read. Teacher I2 contributed the following information as evidence of the influence of peer pressure on the reading habits of learners: *“They're scared of their peers. So I think that's where the resistance comes from. They don't want, cause they're laughing at each other most of the time.”*

During the focus group interviews, the learners disclosed that their reading activities were greatly influenced by the presence of their friends. In the life of the young adolescent, socialisation plays an important role, therefore, most of them engaged in their after-school activities with their friends, and as a result, their friends had a significant impact on their reading habits.

These findings reflected that the influence of peer pressure was prevalent amongst the population sample, which contributed to the learners avoiding the practice of good reading habits. Consequently, the findings were effectively aligned with claims by Gouws, Kruger and Burger (2008: 90) when they allege that adolescents share a lot with one another as they go to school together and discuss matters of interest to them and subsequently, they influence each other. If peer group members, as alleged by Guthrie and Knowles (2001: 172) do not value the thoughts and behaviour of each member, little possibility exists that the group will encourage the practice of reading as a habit.

5.2.5.2 Lack of monetary resources to motivate reading

The interview findings with teachers repeatedly referred to how the poverty, socio-economic factors and the lack of financial resources at home contributed to the poor reading habits portrayed by the learners. In order for print materials to be made available at home, they needed to be purchased. However, information obtained through this study, indicated that there were other more important necessities in life,

such as food or hygiene materials that were required within in the learners' home environment, which limited the resources available for reading materials.

The interview with Teacher I2 produced the following information: “*Yeah, socio-economic factors, first of all..., social background..., single parenting, unemployment...*”. In addition, Teacher I1 and Teacher I4 concurred that parents did not regard the availability of reading materials as a life survival tool; consequently, they would rather buy a loaf of bread or a bar of soap, before they invested in print materials.

It was interesting to note that the learners related the same sentiment with regard to the financial expenditure and reading materials during the focus group interviews. When asked the question: “Do you ever just buy a book to read?” All the learners agreed that they never bought books, motivating their answer by saying that it was a waste of money and that there were more important things, such as food on which they needed to spend their money. This response was rather controversial because the learners reported that they read more on the Internet than they read print materials. However, surfing the Internet or social media sites requires data, which must also be purchased. Therefore, if learners could purchase data for Internet purposes, why could they not purchase print materials?

As alleged by Fleisch (2008:2), South African studies of academic achievement indicate a strong relationship between poverty and performance, and thus, the reason that poverty is linked to underperformance and reading is an element that contributes either to the academic performance or underperformance of the learners. Woolfolk (2013: 176) claims that normally, children from economic disadvantaged households read less, due to the fact that they have less exposure to books, computers, libraries, educational trips and museums.

On the other hand, it is imperative to take care not to over-generalise, for it is not impossible for families with low monetary resources to create a rich learning environment for their children (in which reading is an element), and in so doing,

encourage their children to also become enthusiastic readers by displaying a positive attitude towards reading and ultimately, engage in good reading habits.

5.2.5.3 A need for school library facilities

The findings revealed that schools lacked library facilities, and even when they were available, access was restricted and the reading resources were limited. The lack of school library facilities at the sample site schools contributed to learners not engaging in reading practices, led to a negative attitude towards reading.

The above related findings were supported by information acquired from the focus group session with learners at school A; learners remarked that even if they wanted to read, they could not do so, because the library at school was closed. Data obtained through the interviews revealed that School B did not have a library at all, and as Teacher 3 reflected: “... *our school doesn't have a library. So, it's, the access to ... reading material is, a little bit restricted] to them.*” Information came to the light that the space that was originally allocated and utilised as a library, was being used as a classroom.

Because of the unavailability or limited access to library facilities, the school hampered the reading explorations of learners; restricted their access to different print materials, as well as denying them the opportunity to enjoy some quiet reading time and space to read, which is important in the development of good reading practices and on that note it was interesting to hear Teacher I1 suggests: “...*I think schools should do more in terms of libraries, um, reading material...*”

Relative to the lack of school library facilities, the findings furthermore exposed that the questionnaire survey indicated that almost half of the learners indicated that they did not like to spend time in a library. Corresponding with the aforementioned data, more than a quarter of the learners conveyed that they never liked visiting a library. This finding emphasised that apart from the fact the learners did not engage in good reading habits, learners did not demonstrate a positive attitude towards ESL reading

and therefore they did not enjoy visiting environments which promoted the culture of reading.

Rasana (2006) alleges that due to historical differences and inequalities, many schools in South Africa still lack library facilities, whilst others have redundant collections of library materials. The access to school libraries and the availability of contemporary and interesting reading material, may serve as a motivation for learners to read. However, the non-practising of good reading habits and the negative attitudes of learners toward ESL reading could be attributed directly to the unavailability of libraries at both sample site schools.

This study found that although interview-collected data revealed that teachers were aware of the unavailability of school library services; it did not appear that they were keen to change the situation. This is in contrast with Van Der Walt *et al.* (2009: 175) who say: "The maintenance and extension of the school library is dependent on the language teachers' enthusiasm and efforts to keep the library open and functioning properly". Salter and Salter (1991: 61) assert that the purpose of the school library is to support and further facilitate classroom activity by means of teaching library skills, to provide additional and supportive reading materials, reinforce teachers' programmes, and offer casual reading material for learners. The failure of schools to include school libraries as learning and reading facilities as part of its curriculum puts the assertion by Salter and Salter into non-effect. Thus, the lack of school library support services proved to have further exacerbated the situation for learners not to engage in good reading habits.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted and limited to the two high schools in Eersterust. Teachers' perceptions about the reading habits and attitudes of learners were considered and the learners related their experiences concerning the topic under investigation. However, the parents of learners were not included in the study and, perhaps, their views about the habits and attitudes of; and/or the influences on; the reading practices of their children might have disclosed a different perspective on the topic.

The study focussed only on Grades 8 to 10 learners that used Afrikaans as a first language and English as an L2, and it might be that the findings were not a true reflection of the reading behaviour of all learners in South Africa. However, the aim of the study was not to generalise the findings but to achieve an in-depth explanation of the reading habits and attitudes of the learners at two high schools in Eersterust.

The study did not include a reading test to assess the reading ability of the learners; that could have provided further verification by confirming or contradicting the data obtained from the interviews. Nonetheless, the interviews helped the researcher obtain detailed information about the learners' personal feelings, perceptions and opinions about their reading habits and attitudes towards ESL reading.

5.4 SYNTHESIS OF THE DISCUSSION

In order to improve the status of reading in culturally diverse South Africa, it is important that we change our thinking and attitudes about reading and introduce a culture of reading not only within ourselves or within our children, but in our society. Learners need the interaction with as well as the motivation and support of parents, teachers, caregivers, librarians, peers and community role models to adapt a habit of reading and thus, develop a positive reading attitude to interact with various types of print text.

The findings of this study established that learners did read, although most learners indicated that they mostly read for the purpose of academic progression. Regardless

of the fact that they preferred technology-based reading platforms, compared to traditional print material, it was encouraging to note that learners did still read in order to gain knowledge. Nippold, Duthie and Larsen. (2005: 93) postulate that by engaging in reading for only 25 minutes a day, learners become acquainted with almost fifteen to thirty thousand words per year. The fact that learners indicated that they read, was a good starting point for them to be introduced to programmes to improve their reading habits and attitudes toward ESL reading

In conclusion, the findings of this study can add to the body of knowledge on the phenomenon of reading by means of the personal narratives of the research participants, instead of providing the researcher's perspective. The discussion under the findings, covered the reading beliefs, behaviour and habits of learners and the perceptions of the ESL teachers that did not indicate positive perceptions of and attitudes towards reading. The findings appear to authenticate the indifferent and negative perceptions of and attitudes towards reading, which are prevalent in the South African educational milieu.

CHAPTER 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted with the aim of investigating and describing the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners towards English L2 in two high schools in the Eersterust area of the Tshwane south district, with a view to suggesting how to improve their reading habits and attitudes.

Concerns about the reluctant and unenthusiastic reading behaviour that existed amongst Grades 8 to 10 learners in Eersterust resulted in the conception of this study. The research questions which this case study sought to answer were:

1. What are the reading habits and attitudes of Grade 8 to 10 learners towards English L2? In addition to the lead question, the supporting questions were:

1.1 What are the reading habits of Grades 8 to 10 learners in English L2?

1.2 What are the attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners towards reading English L2?

1.3 What are the perceptions of the English L2 teachers of Grades 8 to 10 learners' reading habits?

1.4 What are the perceptions of the English L2 teachers of the attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners toward reading?

The findings of the study were discussed within the schema of the review of the related literature and the theoretical framework based on the socio-cultural theory of literacy and the attitude influencing mode of reading.

The findings emanating from this study indicated that Grades 8 to 10 learners demonstrated a positive attitude towards English as a language, however they did not practise good reading habits and they presented a negative attitude towards ESL reading.

The following conclusions were deduced from this research study:

- The learners perceived English as the language which would give them access to better socio-cultural-economic advancement in a world in which English had become the primary international language of communication. Therefore, learners displayed a positive attitude towards ESL.
- Learners did not engage in good reading habits. The study revealed that learners did read, however, they did not read frequently enough to qualify their print text engagements as reading habits.
- Learners mostly read school textbooks in school, with the purpose of advancing their school careers.
- Learners preferred to participate in alternative social activities of interest, rather than engaging in the act of reading.
- Learners did not participate in the practice of reading for leisure or pleasure purposes.
- Learners preferred to use technology-based reading platforms, rather than to engage in traditional print text material.
- Parents and caregivers did not model reading habits; neither did they engage their children in reading practices.
- Peer group pressure had a negative influence on the reading practices and attitude of learners towards ESL reading.
- The scarcity or lack of financial resources contributed to readers not demonstrating good reading habits.
- The school sites included in the study offered no library facilities.
- Teachers' perceptions were that learners did not display good reading habits and as a result they were academically challenged.
- Teachers' perceptions were that learners portrayed a negative attitude towards reading.

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6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Many role players and stakeholders within the socio-culture environment, from learners, parents, caregivers, friends, community members and civil society, teachers, to librarians, the government officials of department of education, bookstores and to publishers, can contribute and should be involved to assist and encourage learners to practise good reading habits and to cultivate a positive attitude towards ESL reading.

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations need to be considered:

- Change learners' thoughts on what they think about reading. All stakeholders should contribute to help the learners change their thoughts about reading, thereby changing their reading behaviour. If a learner thinks about reading as an act of enjoyment, something from which they can take pleasure, they will most probably cultivate an internal desire to read more. As a result, learners will enjoy the act of reading, which will motivate them to read more, and the more they read, the more they will grow into the habit of reading. Ultimately, the habit of reading most probably may improve the learners' reading ability. It all starts in the mind. What the learner thinks about reading.
- Learners' reading choices and interests: Learners must be allowed to work with teachers in selecting, and thereby could make a contribution related to, the type of print text which should be included in the curriculum. This process will introduce books in the curriculum of teaching and learning which will interest the young reader, and as a result the learners will read more. The fact that learners unambiguously indicated throughout the investigation that they preferred to use technology based reading platforms to read; substantiates this recommendation. Electronic gadgets such as laptops, ipads, tablets, phablets, smart phones, television, Internet, and cell phones; to mention but a few; are what the learners indicated as exciting.

- Furthermore, learners revealed that they would rather participate in activities such as listening to music, going to the gym and other alternative activities which they found interesting, before they would engage in the act to read. To include the learners' reading choices, as well as print materials that stimulate the interest of the learners, may possibly enhance their reading curiosity and thus assist in the campaign to motivate learners to read more. In addition, the inclusion of learners' reading choices will introduce more contemporary and relevant reading resources into the curriculum of language teaching and learning in South Africa. Simultaneously, when the learners start to enjoy what they read, their attitudes towards reading will become positive.
- New digital media learning material should be made available and accessible to all learners in South Africa. In 2014, the Department of Education initiated a R396.2-million e-learning solution project in Gauteng providing all learners an e-mail address and free internet access by means of uncapped Wi-Fi and 3G connectivity and 88 000 Huawei tablets. It is important that this project be completed in order to provide new digital media learning material (E-learning opportunities) to each learner in every school in South Africa. The continuation and successful completion of this programme will offer the learners access to technology based platforms and might possibly increase the reading interest of learners. Learners should also be informed about new electronic educational applications that emerge, which can assist them reading and learning.
- The parental involvement should be increased: Most of the time, children duplicate their parents' behaviour, thus, it is imperative that parents read with their children and thereby effectively engage their children in the act of reading, which most probably will result in good reading habits. Schools can also introduce a "reading is important" seminar for parents on an annual basis, preferably early on in the school calendar, to highlight the importance and benefits of reading habits to the parents, with the aim of this information to be transferred and modeled to learners in the home environment.

- Teacher-parent reading partnerships should be established: The establishments of strong teacher-parent partnerships might possibly amplify parental involvement and awareness of the reading practices of learners and as a result, increase the chances of the learners to engage in good reading habits.
- Read with a friend programmes should be promoted: Friendships are crucial in the life of the learner and reading with a friend/s can be a way to motivate learners to read more frequently. However, the study results indicate that learners did not read together. Supportive friends who are socially competent and academically competitive can be a factor of influence to more frequently engage in the act of reading by practicing reading as a social activity. When learners enjoy reading together it will produce a positive attitude toward reading.
- Reading workshops and reading related dialogue should be implemented: The augmentation of reading awareness within communities by hosting reading workshops on a continuous basis and to advertise books with topics which are relevant to the youth of today. Reading workshops might establish and open up dialogue channels in which all role players can actively contribute to and encourage positive reading practices. Reading workshops will also present learners with the platform to reflect, internalise and share their reading experiences, which can be used to address and correct reading behavior.
- Schools should engage the services of Language Practitioners and Reading Specialists: To facilitate the reading workshops, the services of language practitioners and reading specialists should be utilised. Apart from facilitating reading workshops to enhance the awareness of reading within society, these professionals can also provide training to teachers, after-school care givers and reading promotion role players. The inclusion of language practitioners or reading specialist as part of curriculum programme may prove to be a very influential factor of support and motivation to promote the love for reading among learners.

- School library facilities should be established and promoted at all schools: In order to assist learners to be exposed to and have access to a variety of type of print text, as well as develop good reading habits, it is essential that all schools, regardless of the area in which it is located, should offer learners with a library facility. The South African Schools Act of 1996 (DOE, 1997) states that each school receives a financial allowance, from which they must provide for the operation and maintenance of their teaching and learning programmes. Accordingly, school should also invest in presenting learners with a contemporary library support facility. The provision of a library facility will enable learners to increase their knowledge about the world around them, in addition to the curriculum information which they are required to acquire in their school career.

6.3 SYNTHESIS

In the light of the findings and conclusions of this study, it is evident that urgent measures should be considered immediately to motivate and support high school learners to improve their current reading habits. The study results emphasised the lack of interest in reading by learners, and subsequently it links up with the reading crisis which is prevalent in South Africa. Meaningful exposure and interaction with various types of print material and text integrated into our daily activities will motivate the habit of; and assist in the development of a positive attitude towards reading

The study indicated that role players at home, at school and within the community can all contribute to promoting good reading habits. To echo the words of Minister Pravin Gordhan in the 2016 midterm budget speech: “Ditau tsa hloka seboka di shi twa ke nare e hlotsa.” (Lions that fail to work as a team will struggle to bring down even a limping buffalo.) (Gordhan,2016). In order to rectify the reading crisis situation and assist learners in South Africa to cultivate good reading habits and a positive attitude towards reading successfully, a collective pro-active, socio-cultural-economic commitment, involving all stakeholders within the social environment will have to be made.

Adapting Nelson Mandela's enduring words..." With freedom come responsibilities...We dare not linger, for our long walk is not ended". Much research still needs to be conducted to understand the phenomenon of reading better and more also needs to be done to remedy and foster positive reading habits among learners. We need more research studies on the concept of reading to appreciate the benefits of the stimulation of the continuous evolution of the text, regardless be it in the traditional way presented by books, or offered by new digital media.

The following possible avenues of research may be pursued in future:

- This study focussed only on Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners in Eersterust. This study could be replicated in other areas or provinces in South Africa, to obtain a conclusive idea about the reading habits and attitudes of learners toward English.
- Both schools used as sample sites in this study are government-supported schools. An analogous study could be performed in private schools as a comparative investigation of the reading behaviour of learners.
- This study indicated the mammoth effect that social media have on the reading behaviour of the learners. More research could be conducted in order to investigate how social media can be used more effectively to advance the reading habits and attitudes of learners.
- This study concentrated specifically on the reading habits and attitudes of ESL learners. Further research can be conducted on how the ESL writing ability of the learners is influenced by the reading habits and attitude of ESL learners.
- This study focussed primarily on the teachers' perceptions and the learners' versions of their reading habits and attitudes towards ESL reading. Future research could involve the parents' opinion on the reading habits and attitudes of the learners toward ESL reading.

In conclusion, this study provided results that can add to the body of knowledge and can assist with the understanding of the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 ESL learners based on information disclosed by learners and ESL teachers.

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ADDENDUM A



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LANGUAGES

Letter to Department of Education

Department of Education

Head of Department (HOD)

10th Floor Arcadia Building

111 Commissioner Street

Johannesburg

Date: 12 July 2016

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH.

My name is Tilla Olifant and I am an M-Tech student in Applied Languages at Tshwane University of Technology.

In fulfilment of my degree requirements, I am currently doing research on:

READING HABITS AND ATTITUDES OF GRADES 8 - 10 LEARNERS IN EERSTERUST TOWAR ENGLISH L2.

The aim of conducting research of this nature, is to:

- Investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of learners using English as second language, in two high schools in the Eersterust area of Tshwane south district, with possibilities to make suggestions on how to improve the reading habits and attitudes of the learners.

I hereby request permission to conduct research at **Name of school A** (Address and contact number of school) **and Name of School B** (Address and contact number of school), both schools are located in Eersterust Township, Tshwane South District (D4).

Respondents in this study will be requested to complete a questionnaire, and /or participate in focus group interviews to record and understand their behaviour in relation to reading literacy. English second language (ESL) educators will also be requested to participate in an interview in relation to the reading habits and attitudes of ESL learners.

During the research, I will at all times be considerate of the research ethical codes and at no point of time will I expose any research respondent to any harm, nor pose a threat to them or the schools involved in this study.

As primary investigator, I can be contacted at tillaolifant@gmail.com or by cellular phone at 072 784 0504. Should you have any further questions, my study leader, Dr. E. Rautenbach, can be contacted during office hours at (012) 382 4114.

Your consideration in this regard will be appreciated.

12 July 2016

TUT research student

Date

ADDENDUMB

For administrative use only:
Reference no: D2017 / 185
enquiries: Diane Buntting 011 843 6503



GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	25 July 2016
Validity of Research Approval:	25 July 2016 to 30 September 2016
Name of Researcher:	Olifant F.M.
Address of Researcher:	P.O. Box 41254; Eersterust; Pretoria; 0022
Telephone / Fax Number/s:	072 784 0504
Email address:	tillaolifant@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Reading habits and attitudes of Grade 8 - 10 English L2 learners
Number and type of schools:	TWO Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Tshwane South

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to the Principal, SGB and the relevant District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted. However participation is VOLUNTARY.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher has agreed to and may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN GDE

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned, the Principal/s and the chairperson/s of the School Governing Body (SGB) must be presented with a copy of this letter.*
2. *The Researcher will make every effort to obtain the goodwill and co-operation of the GDE District officials, principals, SGBs, teachers, parents and learners involved. Participation is voluntary and additional remuneration will not be paid;*
3. *Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal and/or Director must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*

Helle
2016/07/26

1

Making education a societal priority

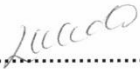
Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management (ER&KM)

9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 255 0505

4. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded by the end of the THIRD quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
5. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
6. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written consent from the SGB/s; principal/s, educator/s, parents and learners, as applicable, before commencing with research.
7. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilizing his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institution/s, staff and/or the office/s visited for supplying such resources.
8. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research title, report or summary.
9. On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management, with electronic copies of the Research Report, Thesis, Dissertation as well as a Research Summary (on the GDE Summary template). Failure to submit your Research Report, Thesis, Dissertation and Research Summary on completion of your studies / project – a month after graduation or project completion - may result in permission being withheld from you and your Supervisor in future.
10. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned;
11. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director/s and school/s concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.


The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards


.....

Dr David Makhado

Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management


DATE:

ADDENDUM C



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LANGUAGES

Letter to Department of Education

Tshwane South District (D4)

District Director
President Towers Building
265 Pretorius Street
Tshwane
0001

Date: 27 July 2016

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH.

My name is Tilla Olifant and I am an M-tech student in Applied Languages at Tshwane University of Technology.

In fulfilment of my degree requirements, I am currently doing research on:

READING HABITS AND ATTITUDES OF ENGLISH L2 GRADES 8 - 10 LEARNERS IN EERSTERUST TOWARD ENGLISH L2.

The aim of conducting research of this nature, is to:

- The aim of this study is to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of learners using English as second language, in two high schools in the Eersterust area of Tshwane south district, with possibilities to make suggestions on how to improve the reading habits and attitudes of the learners.

I hereby request permission to conduct research at: **Name of school A** (Address and contact number of school A) **and Name of School B** (Address and contact number of school B), both located in Eersterust Township, the Tshwane South District.

Respondents in this study will be requested to complete a questionnaire, and /or participate in focus group interviews to record and understand their behaviour in relation to reading literacy. English second language (ESL) educators will also be requested to participate in an interview in relation to the reading habits and attitudes of ESL learners.

During the research, I will at all times be considerate of the research ethical codes and at no point of time will I expose any research respondent to any harm, nor pose a threat to them or the schools involved in this study.

As primary investigator, I can be contacted at tillaolifant@gmail.com or by cellular phone at 072 784 0504. Should you have any further questions, my study leader, Dr. E. Rautenbach, can be contacted during office hours at (012) 382 4114.

Your consideration in this regard will be appreciated.

27 July 2016

TUT research student

Date

ADDENDUM D



GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries: S.G Ngwenya
Tel: (012) 401 6331/ 012 401 6385
Fax: (012) 401 6386
Email: Sello.Ngwenya@gauteng.gov.za
Ref: Private Sector Partnerships (14/1/1/1)

RESEARCH

TO: OLIFANT F.M (RESEARCHER)

FROM: MRS H E KEKANA
DIRECTOR: TSHWANE SOUTH DISTRICT

DATE: 28 JULY 2016

SUBJECT: RESEARCH APPROVAL – OLIFANT F.M

OLIFANT F.M
P.O Box 41254
Eersterust' Pretoria
0022
Mobile: 072 784 0504;
E-mail: tillaolifant@gmail.com

RESEARCH APPROVAL – OLIFANT F.M

We have received a letter approving your research from Head Office and we grant you permission to access the research sites subject to the approval of the School Governing Bodies of the targeted schools. The title of your research is "Reading habits and attitude attitudes of Grade 8-10 English L2 learners". You are expected to adhere strictly to the conditions given by Head Office Research and Knowledge Management Office.

Kindly communicate with the principal and/or SGB of the schools you have selected for your research regarding your schedule.

Please submit your report including findings and recommendations to the district office and to Head Office Research and Knowledge management Office at least two weeks after concluding your research. You may be requested to participate in the Department of Education's mini-research conference to discuss your findings and recommendations with departmental officials and other researchers.

Page 1 of 2

Making education a societal priority

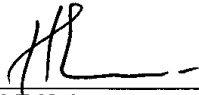
Office of the District Director: Tshwane South
(Mamelodi/Eersterust/Pretoria East/Pretoria South/Atteridgeville/Laudium)
President Towers building, 265 Pretorius Street, Pretoria, 0002
Private Bag X198, Pretoria, 0001 Tel: (012) 401 6317; Fax: (012) 401 6318
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

CONDITIONS

1. This programme is a support programme and may not supersede the Departmental programmes, projects and priorities. In case competition for accommodation arises, departmental programmes will take precedence.
2. The safety and wellness of all learners and school staff must be prioritised at all cost.
3. Teaching and learning time may not be interfered with.
4. The Department or schools may not be held liable for any payments incurred in this programme.
5. The programme will be self-sustaining and no costs will be charged to the Education Department at any level, learners and/ or their parents or the schools.
6. The participants may not be exposed to any harm or any life-endangering situations and they may withdraw at any time from participation without giving any reason/s.

Our support will be rescinded in case you contravene the terms and conditions indicated herein or any departmental regulations and laws or if at any point risk to the reputation of the district, the GDE or the education Department becomes imminent.

Yours sincerely



Mrs H.E Kekana
Director: Tshwane South District
Date: 01/08/2016

ADDENDUM E



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LANGUAGES

LETTER TO THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The Principal
School B
School address

Date

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Tilla Olifant and I am an M-tech student in Applied Languages at Tshwane University of Technology.

In fulfilment of my degree requirements, I am currently doing research on:

READING HABITS AND ATTITUDES OF GRADES 8 - 10 LEARNERS IN EERSTERUST TOWARD ENGLISH L2.

The aim of conducting research of this nature, is to:

- The aim of this study is to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of learners using English as second language, in two high schools in the Eersterust area of Tshwane south district, with possibilities to make suggestions on how to improve the reading habits and attitudes of the learners.

I hereby request permission to conduct research at: School name.

Respondents in this study will be requested to complete a questionnaire, and /or participate in focus group interviews to record and understand their behaviour in relation to reading literacy. English second language (ESL) educators will also be requested to participate in an interview in relation to the reading habits and attitudes of ESL learners.

During the research, I will at all times be considerate of the research ethical codes and at no point of time will I expose any research respondent to any harm, nor pose a threat to them or the schools involved in this study.

As primary investigator, I can be contacted at tillaolifant@gmail.com or by cellular phone at 072 784 0504. Should you have any further questions, my study leader, Dr. E. Rautenbach, can be contacted during office hours at (012) 382 4114.

Your consideration in this regard will be appreciated.

TUT Research student

Date

ADDENDUM F



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LANGUAGES

INFORMATION LEAFLET AND RESEARCH SUBJECTS' CONSENT FORM

(LEARNERS' PARENTS)

PROJECT TITLE: READING HABITS AND ATTITUDES OF GRADES 8-10 LEARNERS IN EERSTERUST TOWARD ENGLISH L2.

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR: Ms. T. OLIFANT

STUDY LEADER: Dr E. RAUTENBACH
Department of Applied Languages
Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria

CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof. M.P. CEKISO
Department of Applied Languages
Tshwane University of Technology, Soshanguve South

Dear Parent,

Your child is invited to participate in a research study that forms part of my formal MTech. studies. The information in this leaflet explains to you what will be expected of your child, should he/she be selected to take participate.

WHAT IS THE STUDY ALL ABOUT?

The aim of this study is to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of learners using English as second language, in two high schools in the Eersterust area of Tshwane south district, with possibilities to make suggestions on how to improve the reading habits and attitudes of the learners.

As a researcher, I think that your child, as English second language learner might teach us more about the reading habits and attitudes of high school learners in Eersterust. If we learn more about reading habits and attitudes might be able to suggest ways that may help learners to improve their reading skills.

When we are finished with this study, we will write a report about what was learned about reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 learners of English second language in Eersterust.

WHAT ARE YOU REQUIRED TO DO SHOULD YOU AGREE THAT YOUR CHILD MAY PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY?

If your child is selected to take part in the study, you would be required to do the following:

- Sign this consent form.

WHAT WILL YOUR CHILD BE REQUIRED TO DO SHOULD YOU AGREE THAT S/HE MAY PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY?

If you agree that your child may participate in this study, s/he will be asked to: a) Complete a questionnaire about reading; and/or b) Participate in a focus group interview about his/her reading habits and attitudes, in order to investigate, describe and understand the reading behaviour of Grades 8-10 English L2 learners in Eersterust.

ARE THERE ANY CONDITIONS THAT MAY EXCLUDE YOUR CHILD FROM THE STUDY?

Your child will not be eligible to participate in this study, if s/he is not a stakeholder to investigate, describe and understand reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 English L2 learners in Eersterust.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS INVOLVED IN THIS STUDY?

Questionnaire: The procedure involves no foreseeable physical discomfort to your child, but your s/he may be requested to respond to personal questions in relation to her/his English second language behaviour and perceptions.

Focus group Interview: The procedure involves no foreseeable physical discomfort to your child, but s/he may be requested to respond to personal questions, in relation to her/his English second language habits and attitudes, for which an audio recorder will be used as an information collection instrument.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS THAT MAY COME FROM THE STUDY?

The benefits of participating in the study are: Your child will make a contribution to the improvement of English second language reading habits and attitudes among high school learners in Eersterust.

INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY?

Please, note that you (or your child) will not be paid to participate in the study.

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS AS A PARTICIPANT IN THIS STUDY?

You, as parent/ legal guardian, give permission for your child to take part in this study, but the participation of your child is voluntary, and s/he is free to withdraw their participation from the study at any time, should you not want to continue with it. The information received during the

project will only be used for research purposes and not be released for any educator-learner performance evaluation purposes.

HOW WILL CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY BE ENSURED IN THE STUDY?

All the data during the study will be handled confidentially. This means that access to the information that your child provides will be strictly limited to the researcher, the supervisors of the study and designated examiners. Also your child's data and personal information will be kept and stored in a confidential format which will only be accessible to the researcher.

IS THE RESEARCHER QUALIFIED TO CARRY OUT THE STUDY?

The researcher is a qualified trainer in the field of language practice, and is, therefore, equipped to investigate and describe the English L2 reading habits and attitudes among learners

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

Yes. The Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee of Tshwane University of Technology has approved the formal study proposal.

WHO CAN YOU CONTACT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE STUDY?

The primary investigator, Ms. Tilla OLIFANT, can be contacted at tillaolifant@gmail.com or on her cellular phone at 072 784 0504. The study leader, Dr. E. RAUTENBACH can be contacted during office hours at (012) 382-4114. Should you have any questions regarding the ethical aspects of the study, you can contact the chairperson of the Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee, Prof. A. MJI, during office hours at Tel (012) 382 9932

DECLARATION: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

As an English part-time lecturer at TUT, the researcher's position constitutes no possible conflict of interest in this study, since Eersterust high school learners form the sample population.

A FINAL WORD

Your co-operation and participation in the study will be greatly appreciated. Please, sign the underneath consent form if you agree to participate in the study. In such a case, you will receive a copy of the signed consent form from the researcher.

PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT

(Applicable when participants are younger than 18 years old)

I, hereby, confirm that I have been adequately informed by the researcher about the nature, conduct, benefits, and risks of the study. I have also received, read, and understood the written information above. I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details

regarding my child, will be anonymously processed into a research report. I understand that their participation is voluntary, and that they may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw their assent and participation in the study. They have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions, and I, of my own free will, declare that my child can participate in the above-mentioned study.

Research participant's name: _____ (Please print)

Research participant's parent/guardian's name: _____ (Please print)

Research participant's parent/guardian's signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's name: _____ (Please print)

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____

VERBAL CONSENT

(Applicable when parents/legal guardian of children under 18 years cannot read or write)

I hereby declare that I have read and explained the contents of the information sheet to the parent of the research participant. The nature and purpose of the study were explained, as well as the possible risks and benefits of the study. The parent of the research participant has clearly indicated that he/she will be free to withdraw their child from the study at any time for any reason and without jeopardizing the child's relationship with the school.

I hereby certify that the parent of the research participant has verbally agreed that their child may participate in this study.

Name of the parent/legal guardian of the research participant

_____ (Please print)

Parent's/Legal guardian's Signature _____

Researcher's name: _____ (Please print)

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____

CHILD ASSENT FORM

(Applicable when participants are younger than 18 years old)

I, (print full name), understand that my parent(s)/guardian(s) has given permission (said it is okay) for me to take part in the research project. I am taking part because I want to, and not because I'm forced to do so. I have been assured that I can stop at any time I want to, without getting into any trouble (nothing bad will happen to me and nobody will be mad at me if I want to stop). Also, I can always ask the researcher any question about the study.

ADDENDUM G



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LANGUAGES

INFORMATION LEAFLET AND RESEARCH SUBJECTS' CONSENT FORM

(English L2 Learners)

PROJECT TITLE: READING HABITS AND ATTITUDES OF GRADES 8-10 LEARNERS IN EERSTERUST TOWARD ENGLISH L2.

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR: Ms. T. OLIFANT

STUDY LEADER : DR E. RAUTENBACH
Department of Applied Languages
Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria

CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof. M.P. CEKISO
Department of Applied Languages
Tshwane University of Technology, Sohanguve
South

Dear Research Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study that forms part of my formal M-Tech studies. The information in this leaflet explains to you what will be expected of you, should you be selected to take participate.

A research study is a way to learn more about people and their experiences. We are asking you to take part in this study, because we are trying to learn more about the reading habits and attitudes of grades 8 to 10 learners who use English as a second language in Eersterust.

WHAT IS THE STUDY ALL ABOUT?

The aim of this study is to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of learners using English as second language, in two high schools in the Eersterust area of Tshwane south district, with possibilities to make suggestions on how to improve the reading habits and attitudes of the learners

As a researcher I believe that your opinion, as English second langugae learners might teach us more about the reading habits and attitudes of high school learners in the

Eersterust . If we learn more about reading habits and attitudes, we might be able to suggest ways that may help learners to improve their reading skills.

When we are finished with this study, we will write a report about what was learned about reading habits and attitudes of English second language grades 8 to 10 learners in Eersterust.

WHAT YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO DO IN THE STUDY

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to: a) Complete a questionnaire about reading; and/or b) Participate in a focus group interview about your reading habits and attitudes; and c) Sign this consent form, in order to investigate, describe and understand the reading behaviour of Grades 8-10 English L2 learners in Eersterust

ARE THERE ANY CONDITIONS THAT MAY EXCLUDE YOU FROM THE STUDY?

You will not be eligible to participate in this study, if you are not a stakeholder to investigate, describe and understand reading habits and attitudes of English L2 grades 8 to 10 learners in Eersterust.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS INVOLVED IN THIS STUDY?

Questionnaires: The procedure involves no foreseeable physical discomfort to you, but you may be requested to respond to personal questions in relation to your English second language reading behaviour and perceptions.

Focus group interview: The procedure involves no foreseeable physical discomfort to you, but you may be requested to respond to personal questions in relation to their English second language reading experiences. An audio recorder will be used as an information collection instrument.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS THAT MAY COME FROM THE STUDY?

The benefits of participating in the study are: You will make a contribution to the improvement and progress of English second language reading skills among grades 8 to 10 learners in Eersterust.

INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY?

Please note that you will not be paid to participate in the study.

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS AS A PARTICIPANT IN THIS STUDY?

Your participation in the study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your participation from the study at any time, should you not want to continue with it. The information received during the project will only be used for research purposes and not be released for any educator-learner performance evaluation purposes.

HOW WILL CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY BE ENSURED IN THE STUDY?

All the data during the study will be handled confidentially. This means that access to your data will be strictly limited to the researcher, the supervisors of the study and designated examiners. Also your data and personal information will be kept and stored in a confidential format which will only be accessible to the researcher.

IS THE RESEARCHER QUALIFIED TO CARRY OUT THE STUDY?

The researcher is a qualified trainer in the field of language practice, and is, therefore, equipped to investigate and describe the English L2 reading habits and attitudes among learners

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

Yes. The Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee of Tshwane University of Technology has approved the formal study proposal.

WHO CAN YOU CONTACT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE STUDY?

The primary investigator, Ms Tilla Olifant, can be contacted at tillaolifant@gmail.com or on her cellular phone at 072 784 0504. The study leader, Dr. E. Rautenbach can be contacted during office hours at (012) 382-4114. Should you have any questions regarding the ethical aspects of the study, you can contact the chairperson of the Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee, Prof. A MJI, during office hours at Tel (012) 382 9932.

DECLARATION: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

As an English part time lecturer at TUT, the researcher's position constitutes no possible conflict of interest in this study, since Eersterust high school learners form the sample population.

A FINAL WORD

Your co-operation and participation in the study will be greatly appreciated. Please sign the underneath consent form if you agree to participate in the study. In such a case, you will receive a copy of the signed consent form from the researcher.

LEARNER INFORMED CONSENT

I, hereby confirm that I have been adequately informed by the researcher about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of the study. I have also received, read and understood the above written information. I am aware that the results of the study will be anonymously processed into a research report. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study. I had sufficient opportunity to ask questions, and I, of my own free will, declare myself prepared to participate in the study.

Research participant's name: _____(please print)

Research participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's name: _____(please print)

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____

VERBAL CONSENT

(Applicable when participants cannot read or write)

I hereby declare that I have read and explained the contents of the information sheet to the research participant. The nature and purpose of the study were explained, as well as the possible risks and benefits of the study. The research participant has clearly indicated that he/she will be free to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason and without jeopardizing his/her relationship with the school.

I hereby certify that the research participant has verbally agreed to participate in this study.

Research participant's name: _____ (Please print)

Researcher's name: _____ (Please print)

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____

ADDENDUM H



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LANGUAGES

INFORMATION LEAFLET AND RESEARCH SUBJECTS' CONSENT FORM

(English L2 Educators)

PROJECT TITLE: READING HABITS AND ATTITUDES OF GRADES 8 - 10 LEARNERS IN EERSTERUST TOWARD ENGLISH

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR: Ms. T. OLIFANT

STUDY LEADER: Dr E. RAUTENBACH
Department of Applied Languages
Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria

CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof. M.P. CEKISO
Department of Applied Languages
Tshwane University of Technology, Soshanguve South

Dear Research Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study that forms part of my formal MTech. studies. The information in this leaflet explains to you what will be expected of you, should you be selected to take participate.

WHAT IS THE STUDY ALL ABOUT?

The aim of this study is to investigate and describe the reading habits and attitudes of learners using English as a second language in two high schools in the Eersterust area of Tshwane south district, with possibilities to make suggestions on how to improve the reading habits and attitudes of the learners.

WHAT YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO DO IN THE STUDY

Interviews will be conducted at pre-arranged time-slots, and at venues convenient to participants.

If you are selected to take part in the study, you would be required to do the following:

- Sign this consent form;
- Participate in an Interview about reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 school English L2 learners in Eersterust.

ARE THERE ANY CONDITIONS THAT MAY EXCLUDE YOU FROM THE STUDY?

You will not be eligible to participate in this study, if you are not a stakeholder to investigate, describe and understand the reading habits and attitudes of Grades 8 to 10 English L2 learners in Eersterust.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS INVOLVED IN THIS STUDY?

Interviews: The procedure involves no foreseeable physical discomfort to you, and the questions are not personal, neither are they emotional. Interview questions will only be in relation to the reading habits and attitudes of English second language (ESL) learners for which an audio recorder will be used as an information collection instrument.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS THAT MAY COME FROM THE STUDY?

The benefits of participating in the study are: You will make a contribution to the identification and improvement of ESL reading habits and attitudes among high school learners in Eersterust.

INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY?

Please, note that you will not be paid to participate in the study.

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS AS A PARTICIPANT IN THIS STUDY?

Your participation in the study is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw your participation from the study at any time, should you not want to continue with it. The information received during the project will only be used for research purposes and not be released for any educator-learner performance evaluation purposes.

HOW WILL CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY BE ENSURED IN THE STUDY?

All the data during the study will be handled confidentially. This means that access to your data will be strictly limited to the researcher, the supervisors of the study and designated examiners. Also your data and personal information will be kept and stored in a confidential format which will only be accessible to the researcher.

IS THE RESEARCHER QUALIFIED TO CARRY OUT THE STUDY?

The researcher is a qualified trainer in the field of language practice, and is, therefore, equipped to investigate and describe the English L2 reading habits and attitudes among learners.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

Yes. The Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee of Tshwane University of Technology has approved the formal study proposal.

WHOM CAN YOU CONTACT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE STUDY?

The primary investigator, Ms. Tilla OLIFANT, can be contacted at tillaolifant@gmail.com or on her cellular phone at 072 784 0504. The study leader, Dr. E. RAUTENBACH can be contacted during office hours at (012) 382-4114. Should you have any questions regarding the ethical aspects of the study, you can contact the chairperson of the Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee, Prof. A. MJI, during office hours at Tel (012) 382 9932

DECLARATION: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

As an English part-time lecturer at TUT, the researcher's position constitutes no possible conflict of interest in this study, since Eersterust high school learners form the sample population.

A FINAL WORD

Your co-operation and participation in the study will be greatly appreciated. Please, sign the underneath consent form if you agree to participate in the study. In such a case, you will receive a copy of the signed consent form from the researcher.

CONSENT

I hereby confirm that I have been adequately informed by the researcher about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of the study. I have also received, read and understood the above written information. I am aware that the results of the study will be anonymously processed into a research report. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study. I had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and of my own free will declare myself prepared to participate in the study.

Research participant's name: _____(please print)

Research participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's name: _____(please print)

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____

ADDENDUM I

SAMPLE POPULATION

QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY DISTRIBUTION FOR GRADES 8 TO 10 ESL LEARNERS

SCHOOL A						
Grade	8		9		10	
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F
Number	8	8	8	9	9	8

SCHOOL B						
Grade	8		9		10	
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F
Number	8	8	8	9	9	8

ADDENDUM J

SAMPLE POPULATION

ESL LEARNERS: FOCUS GROUP 1 AND 2 INTERVIEWS

Focus group 1 learner profiles:

	Grade	Gender	Age	First language
Learner M1	Grade 8	Male	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner F1	Grade 8	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner M2	Grade 9	Male	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner F2	Grade 9	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner M3	Grade 10	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner F3	Grade 10	Male	13-19	Afrikaans

Focus group 2 learner profiles:

	Grade	Gender	Age	First language
Learner PM1	Grade 8	Male	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner PF1	Grade 8	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner PM2	Grade 9	Male	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner PF2	Grade 9	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner PF3	Grade 10	Female	13-19	Afrikaans
Learner PM3	Grade 10	Male	13-19	Afrikaans

ADDENDUM K

SAMPLE POPULATION

ESL TEACHERS: INTERVIEWS

Profiles	Currently Teaching Grade	Gender	Age	Number of years teaching Experience	Number of years teaching ESL	Academic qualification(s)
TEACHER I1	Grade 10	Male	51years	27 Years	27 years	Honours degree in History; HDE-English; PGDE
TEACHER I2	Grade 9	Male	38 years	15 Years	3 years	Higher diploma in education
TEACHER I3	Grade 8	Male	54 years	30 Years	1 year	BA degree in education.
TEACHER I4	Grade 9	Female	45 years	23 Years	5 years	BED Honours languages
TEACHER I5	Grade 10	Male	52 years	22 Years	10years	BA degree, PGDE and MA degree

ADDENDUM L

QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY FOR LEARNERS (GRADES 8-10)

Please answer the questions below as truthful as possible. There are no right or wrong answers

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:(Please tick (X) in the correct box)

School: School A School B

Grade: _____ Age: _____

Gender: Male Female

Racial Affiliation: Black Coloured

Language Repertoire

State the languages you are capable of using for communication, with your first language at number 1, your second language at number 2 and use the same method to indicate any further languages. Use a tick (√) to indicate the skills you possess in each one of them:

Languages Used	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

PART B: Reading habits: Make a tick (√) in the relevant column.

		Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Very often
1	I do read English books.					
2	I only read English at school.					
3	I read English at home.					
4	I only read books in my first language in my leisure time.					
5	I read English during my leisure time.					
6	I would be bored without a book.					
7	I read outside of class.					
8	I read with friends.					
9	I read with my family.					
10	I read social media platforms on my cell phone					

PART C: Attitudes and motivation towards reading

3.1: Make a tick (√) in the relevant column

I like reading this English material	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Schoolbooks					
Magazines					
News papers					
Novels					
Internet					

3.2 Please use the scale below to indicate your response

Please indicate by making a (√) in the appropriate box

1: strongly disagree.2: disagree.3: Not sure4: agree5: strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I enjoy reading English books					
2	I like reading school text books					
3	I like spending time in a library					
4	My friends like reading					
5	My parents like reading					
6	Listening to music is more fun than reading					
7	I would rather do something else than do English reading					
8	I like watching English movies					
9	I like watching English television programmes					

3.3 Please use the scale below to indicate your response

Please indicate by making a (√) in the appropriate box: 1: always 2:sometimes 3:never

		1	2	3
1	I find English reading difficult.			
2	I feel anxious when I read English.			
3	I like visiting the library			
4	I enjoy reading out loud in class			
5	I think that learning English is important in life.			

3.4 Please use the scale below to indicate your response

1: always 2:sometimes 3:never

	Please indicate by making a (√) in the appropriate box	1	2	3
1	Being able to read English is important to me.			
2	I feel that other learners can read better than I do.			
3	I am afraid other learners will laugh at me when I read out loud in class.			
4	When I read, there are many words that I cannot understand.			

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

ADDENDUM M

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

FOCUS GROUP SEMI-STRUCTURES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS (GRADES 8-10)

1. What language do you use at home?
2. Do you speak any English at home?
3. Do you read any English books? Why?
4. Do you enjoy reading English?
5. Do you read any English newspapers, magazines, novels for leisure purposes?
6. Do you prefer reading a book, or would searching the Internet entertain you more? Why?
7. How many English books do you read on a monthly basis?
8. How much time do you spend on reading English during the week?
9. Do ever buy books just to read?
10. Do you think learning English is important? Why?
11. What after school activities do you normally participate in?
12. How do you feel when you have to read out loud in the English class?

ADDENDUM N

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE EDUCATORS (GRADES 8-10)

1. As an ESL teacher, what do you think the reading habits of the grades 8 to 10 ESL learners are?
2. As an ESL teacher, what do you think the reading attitudes of the grades 8 to 10 ESL learners are?
3. Do you think that the grades 8 to 10 ESL learners are motivated to read English?
4. How would you rate the current reading performance of the grades 8 to 10 ESL learners whom you teach?
5. Do you think the reading habits and attitudes of learners influence their learning experiences?
6. According to you, what are the factors that influence the reading habits and attitudes of ESL learners?
7. In your experience, what impact does digital technology have on the reading habits and attitudes and motivation of learners towards reading English?
8. In your opinion, what can be done to assist learners to improve their reading habits and attitudes and motivation towards reading English?