



Reading for Meaning Among Grade 9 Sepedi Home Language Learners: A Case Study of a Selected School in the Mankweng Circuit, Capricorn South District, Limpopo Province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT

Reading is crucial for the development of a young mind. The inability to read affects the failure rate of learners in schools, as most subjects require that a learner have reading skills to understand the content. What contributes to these learners failing is the manner in which reading is taught in the classroom. The aim of the study was to investigate the challenges faced by grade 9 Sepedi Home Language learners when attempting to read text for meaning. The study is underpinned by Vygotsky's Theory of Social Constructivism, which contributes to social learning and teaching. The study adopted the qualitative research approach, with an interpretivist paradigm. Six learners were purposefully sampled to conduct the study through semi-structured interviews. The thematic analysis method was used in the form of non-participatory observation, whereby the learners should identify the errors in a text. The findings revealed that learners lack reading skills, are unable to identify words and cannot read for meaning. This is due to the lack of reading strategies being implemented during the lesson. There are, therefore, no pre-reading, reading and post-reading activities that the teacher uses in the classroom. The recommendations suggest the use of pre-reading, reading and post-reading strategies to help learners understand what is being read and therefore be able to engage with the text. The research will contribute greatly to both the study of teaching reading and writing with comprehension, as well as to the study of factors contributing to the failure rate among Grade 9 Sepedi Home Language learners.

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INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental skill for the development and academic success of learners.¹ The biggest challenge is reading for meaning in the classroom. Nation attests that the learners should read with understanding.² Failure to read with understanding means the whole process of learning will be affected. Most Pedi-speaking learners in the 20th century show more interest in learning English than the Sepedi Home Language, and they therefore lack interest in Sepedi as a subject, which is why they perform poorly. Getie states, "It is widely accepted that English has become the language of choice for many international

¹ Blanka Klimova and Katarina Zamborova, "Use of Mobile Applications in Developing Reading Comprehension in Second Language Acquisition—A Review Study," *Education Sciences* 10, no. 12 (2020): 391.

² Kate Nation, "Children's Reading Difficulties, Language, and Reflections on the Simple View of Reading," *Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties* 24, no. 1 (2019): 47–73.

scholarly journals.”³ This indicates that English is the preferred language of choice among scholars. This is also evidenced in black communities during a gathering where a young person is required to read in their mother tongue, and their pronunciation is not good compared to when they read in English. In schools, learners only practice reading and speaking their mother tongue during that specific period, while learning the rest of their subjects in English. Madikiza et.al., cite that reading is practical learning, which means that for grade 9 learners to read fluently, they need to practice often to strengthen their skills.⁴ The lack of ample opportunities to practice their mother tongue leads learners to be unable to read with understanding or read for meaning. As much as this leads to poor performance in Sepedi Home Language, the way in which the curriculum has been designed leaves little to no room for opportunities to improve the status quo. The challenge faced at the moment is coming up with strategies to overcome the problem and make learners not only love the language but also feel motivated to excel in the subject as they read with understanding.

Grade 9 learners are among the many high school learners who are unable to read for meaning. Most of them, especially those in Grade 9, are able to read but are not able to comprehend what they have just read. This is a big challenge to the success of those learners, as it leads to them failing at a high rate. There has been research done that focused on reading for meaning in general and some research done on Grade 9 reading for understanding in international schools; however, there is insufficient research on reading for meaning in the Grade 9 classroom within the South African context. Hence, this research attempts to fill that gap by investigating South African learners, in particular learners in Limpopo-based schools. The aim of the study is to investigate the reasons behind grade 9 learners’ inability to read for meaning at a selected school in Mankweng Circuit, Capricorn South, Limpopo Province.

The objectives of the study are:

- To understand various contextual factors that affect the inability to read Sepedi.
- To identify the underlying complexities that disturb Grade 9 learners’ ability to read for meaning when reading texts in the Sepedi Home Language Classroom.
- To develop pedagogical strategies that address the challenges that Grade 9 learners face and to overcome those challenges and enhance their reading proficiency.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Resources

Reading materials currently being used in schools, such as printed texts and digital material, play an important role in assisting learners to read. Pardede sees the use of digital texts as a text which requires new ways of learning and teaching because digital texts have essentially changed the manner in which reading takes place, as well as the attitude of learners towards reading.⁵ The new method of reading has an impact on learners’ reading skills. The teacher can display the text on the overhead projector, which will draw learners’ attention as they experience a more modern way of reading texts. Efendi adds that visual media is media which only relies on the sense of sight.⁶ Some examples of visual media are picture files, flashcards, charts, etc. This will appeal to visual learners who get easily bored by listening to a teacher for long periods of time. Digital materials can also assist in addressing the problem of textbook shortages in certain schools, which greatly impacts reading ability.

Several schools utilize textbooks as the main resource for teaching and learning, as stated by Yetti et.al., who posit that in more schools, textbooks become the primary source of learning material.⁷ When schools run short of textbooks, it can affect the learners’ ability to read fluently. According to Rokhmansyah, et.al., reading material is an essential factor in supporting learning activities, especially

³ Addisu Sewbihon Getie, “Factors Affecting the Attitudes of Students towards Learning English as a Foreign Language,” *Cogent Education* 7, no. 1 (2020): 1738184.

⁴ Nophawu Madikiza et al., “Analysing English First Additional Language Teachers’ Understanding and Implementation of Reading Strategies,” *Reading & Writing-Journal of the Reading Association of South Africa* 9, no. 1 (2018): 1–10.

⁵ Parlindungan Pardede, “Print vs Digital Reading Comprehension in EFL.,” *Journal of English Teaching* 5, no. 2 (2019): 77–90.

⁶ Mukhamad Ardiansyah Efendi, “The Use of Pictures as Media to Improve Students’ Reading Comprehension,” *Journal of English Teaching, Literature, and Applied Linguistics* 2, no. 2 (2018): 84–86.

⁷ Yetti Widiarti, Hanifah Hanifah, and Saleh Haji, “The Effect of Blended Learning Model with Realistic Mathematics Education (RME) Approach on Concept Understanding and Mathematics Problem Solving Ability of Students of Junior High School 11 Bengkulu City,” 2023, 381–93, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-012-1_49.

language and literature learning—the better the reading material, the better the students’ understanding of the material.⁸ Not only do they emphasize the need for reading materials, but good reading materials in order to produce learners who excel at reading for meaning.

Low Self-esteem leads to the Inability to read

A learner may have a low sense of self-efficacy regarding their own reading ability.⁹ A learner who does not believe in their own ability to read will more than likely be hesitant to attempt to read. Such a learner will not feel confident enough to read in front of their peers, due to the fact that self-esteem fluctuates along with the level of approval from others.¹⁰ They would much rather read for teachers privately, especially when it is reading for marks. Teachers then have a responsibility to ensure that learners are protected from the scorn and ridicule of other learners when reading. That is the reason there should be reading strategies that boost vocabulary and instil confidence to prevent insecurities in learners who are unable to read in front of their peers. This is further attested by Mudini et.al., who say low self-esteem can be particularly detrimental, especially as millennial students represent the future generation.¹¹ Lack of self-confidence can restrict personal growth and potential. High self-confidence results in higher performance.

Reading Strategy

Par indicates that successful readers (learners) who apply reading strategies obtain good scores in reading comprehension tests, compared to their counterparts who do not apply those strategies.¹² This idea means that if a teacher applies reading strategies in the classroom, the readers will perform well during the reading assessment period. Okasha states that reading strategies and techniques are effective in improving reading skills.¹³ The strategies, namely, pre-reading, reading and post-reading, will produce better results for learners. Pre-reading, also referred to as before reading, involves activities that are designed to help learners understand what they are about to read. These activities can include discussion about the topic as well as the front cover, in the case of a book, scanning for specific information and skimming for main ideas from the text in an attempt to predict the events of the story. During reading activities are designed to increase understanding by engaging with the text, these activities can include taking notes, highlighting key terms, defining unknown vocabulary. It is also in the reading phase where learners verify their predictions. After reading, activities are designed to help learners see if they understood what they read. These activities include summarising or reviewing the text, taking a quiz, and re-telling the story. Nation indicates that reading strategies affect learners' reading comprehension and have a great impact on the ability to read.¹⁴

Ardhian, et.al., argue that the ability to read is very complex and not only the ability to read, but also the ability to understand and interpret the contents of the text.¹⁵ The authors emphasise the complexities involved in reading fluently by indicating that it is important that a reader interpret and understand the text being read. In other words, reading skills are the abilities that a reader has to construct the meaning of a text.¹⁶ Reading with understanding is a skill necessary for fluent reading. Reading is associated with fluency, speed, efficiency and the ability to master the content.

⁸ Alfian Rokhmansyah et al., “Evaluation of Reading Materials for Students in Schools.,” *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences* 16, no. 3 (2021): 1097–1105.

⁹ Jessica R Toste et al., “A Meta-Analytic Review of the Relations between Motivation and Reading Achievement for K–12 Students,” *Review of Educational Research* 90, no. 3 (2020): 420–56.

¹⁰ Michelle A Harris and Ulrich Orth, “The Link between Self-Esteem and Social Relationships: A Meta-Analysis of Longitudinal Studies.,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 119, no. 6 (2020): 1459.

¹¹ Siti Mudini, Rahmadi Nirwanto, and Hesty Widiastuty, “Correlation the Link Between Students’ Self-Esteem and Reading Comprehension,” *Journal Of Foreign Language Learning and Teaching* 4, no. 2 (2024): 1–14.

¹² Leonardus Par, “The Relationship between Reading Strategies and Reading Achievement of the EFL Students,” *International Journal of Instruction* 13, no. 2 (2020): 223–38.

¹³ Mohammed Ahmed Okasha, “Using Strategic Reading Techniques for Improving EFL Reading Skills,” *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Volume* 11 (2020).

¹⁴ Nation, “Children’s Reading Difficulties, Language, and Reflections on the Simple View of Reading.”

¹⁵ Trio Ardhian et al., “Reading and Critical Thinking Techniques on Understanding Reading Skills for Early Grade Students in Elementary School.,” *International Journal of Instruction* 13, no. 2 (2020): 107–18.

¹⁶ Md Ruhul Amin, “Developing Reading Skills through Effective Reading Approaches,” *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities* 4, no. 1 (2019): 35–40.

Lack of Interest

Learners' inability to read is often affected by their lack of interest, either in the text or in the subject in which reading is done. According to Rowa, someone who has a strong interest in reading will manifest it in a willingness to get reading material and then read it on their own or with encouragement from outside.¹⁷ This indicates that the more interested a learner is in reading, the more willing they are to go even beyond the classroom to practice reading, thus excelling in it. On the contrary, someone who is not interested in reading will not put any effort. Rowa states that learners are less interested in reading in class because they prefer to play and sometimes feel bored in class. This boredom needs to be addressed for learners to perform well.¹⁸

Pratiwi and Ayu indicate that the teacher's creativity and strategy should be implemented in the class while teaching reading to make students perform well.¹⁹ Teachers, therefore, have to think of more creative ways of conducting a reading lesson instead of the usual lecture method, as long as it is in line with the prescriptions of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. This includes finding ways to attract and keep learners' attention. Pratiwi and Ayu further state that the use of digital media should be maximized for teaching and learning.²⁰ They are supported by Rowa when she says that reading basically requires high motivation so that concentration is maintained.²¹ The use of technology is vital for modern day learning as it improves concentration and motivates learners to want to learn.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is influenced by Vygotsky's Theory of Social Constructivism, which contributes to social learning and teaching.²² The Grade 9 Sepedi Home Language classroom will help learners who struggle with reading for meaning, with the integration of these concepts: Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), scaffolding and social interaction by Vygotsky. This is attested by Shen and Suwanthep, when they speak about social constructivism and say that a social constructivist requires teachers to broaden their schema and engage them in an active reading process.²³ As such, the Grade 9 Sepedi Home Language teachers will use the social constructivism theory to engage learners in group discussion and group reading during class activities.

Through Social interactions and collaborative learning, Grade 9 learners can construct knowledge and understand what they read as they decode meaning from the extract. It is therefore beneficial for a teacher to make provision for learners to interact with each other and work in collaboration, as this enhances their understanding of the text. This exercise gives a learner the opportunity to develop his/her skill and internalise effective reading practices. Learning by grouping the learners will help them have confidence when brainstorming within their group, before they come up with constructive reading skills. Grade 9 learners, with the help of the social constructive theory, will gradually develop independent thinking skills to read a text with meaning by applying the before-reading, during-reading, and after-reading strategies.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted the qualitative research approach to investigate the inability of grade 9 Sepedi Home Language learners to apply the skills necessary to read for meaning. The method to collect the qualitative data was through documentation and observations, which focused on open-ended questions and focus group discussions with the participants of this study.

¹⁷ Monika Rowa, "The Student's Lack of Interest in EFL Reading Classroom," *Journal of Literature Language and Academic Studies* 1, no. 01 (2022).

¹⁸ Rowa, "The Student's Lack of Interest in EFL Reading Classroom."

¹⁹ Z Farhanah Pratiwi and Mutiara Ayu, "The Use of Describing Picture Strategy to Improve Secondary Students' Speaking Skill," 2020.

²⁰ Pratiwi and Ayu, "The Use of Describing Picture Strategy to Improve Secondary Students' Speaking Skill."

²¹ Rowa, "The Student's Lack of Interest in EFL Reading Classroom."

²² Lev Semenovich Vygotsky and Michael Cole, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1978).

²³ Shujing Shen and Jitpanat Suwanthep, "A Social Constructivist Instructional Approach to Reading: A Blog-Based Class," in *Proceedings of the International Graduate Research Conference 2013*, 2013.

The researcher investigated the real-life events as experienced by a group of Grade 9 learners. The researcher employed the case study method by investigating Grade 9 learners to gain in-depth and contextual knowledge about reading for understanding.

The Grade 9 learners gain the ability to read through their interaction with each other and understand that reality is complex and evolves through time. Interpretivism is based on the epistemology that the specific contexts in which people live and work are central for understanding the participants' meaning and experiences.²⁴ This means that for the researcher to understand the meaning and experiences of certain participants, it is crucial to understand the circumstances surrounding where they live and work. The researcher made use of the planned reading materials and evaluated the grade 9 learners during reading activities, keeping in mind the participants' backgrounds. The researcher had a responsibility to understand that each learner is an individual and thus different from the next one. The researcher analysed findings based on the individual experiences and perceptions of learners. The researcher gathered data first and then interpreted the results to derive a theory. The researcher was part of the research through observation only and later interpreted the results individually.

Study Sample and Population

A sample of 6 learners from a total of 43 Sepedi Home Language learners in Grade 9 was purposefully selected to participate as the population of the study. The population of this study was the 6 learners who had purposely been selected to take part in the study and conclusions were drawn from them. The Grade 9 learners in the classroom are 43 in number and were narrowed down to 6 participants for the study.



Figure 1: A map showing a selected school in Mankweng

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

Data was collected through observation, documentation and semi-structured interviews. This observation technique assisted the researcher in observing reading lessons in the classroom and seeing the techniques, if any, implemented for reading for meaning. The researcher wrote down notes which helped in analysing data, thereafter, interpreted the data she collected and made plans for continued observations.

Documents such as rubrics, score sheets, and reading material, which help during reading lessons, were used. Marks were allocated on the score sheet, and a rubric served as a marking tool. A pre-test was

²⁴ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design. Choosing Five Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2013).

done to test the learners before they did the post-test, which determined their results. This process is followed during the pre-reading, reading and post-reading stages, which are outlined in CAPS.

The data analysis was performed through thematic analysis techniques. The collected data were classified according to themes or patterns. Data from documents and observations were collected, and interpreted, analysed and thereafter a report of the findings and themes from the data was compiled. In applying this method, time was needed to concentrate on the interpretation of the reading data from the learners in grade 9, to come up with better strategies to improve results.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to several protocols before the collection of data. Ethical considerations are vital to ensure that the participants are protected. The researcher sought and gained permission to conduct the study at the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC), the Limpopo Department of Education and the school principal. The researcher ensured that information collected from the participants was kept private. The researcher further ensured that participants were treated with respect, irrespective of ethnicity and culture, and their dignity was maintained during the study. The participants were informed of the study, and the parents of minor participants were informed of the participation of their children by giving them consent to participate in the study by appending their signatures on the form.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The researcher observed a reading lesson and found the following in relation to the learners:

Learner 1: Borrowed the book from his peer in order to read, as he did not have one.

Learner 2: Had her own textbook, read the text too fast and thus did not observe punctuation, thereby affecting meaning.

Learner 3: Could not pronounce words or intonate accurately, also affecting meaning.

Learner 4: Did not project her voice and thus lost the attention and the interest of the learners sitting at the back.

Learner 5: Had to be woken up when it was his turn to read.

Learner 6: Read very well, using appropriate pace, intonation, correct spelling and punctuation.

The researcher found the following in relation to the teacher:

- The teacher did not introduce the lesson correctly and did not employ any reading strategies of pre-reading, reading, and post-reading activities efficiently during the lesson..
- The teacher uses old methods of teaching, which is instructional, neglecting the CAPS document and thus not engaging the learner adequately.
- The teacher failed to create a safe space for learners with low confidence to practice public reading without being ridiculed by their peers.
- The researcher also found that technology has not been maximally utilised by teachers to effectively deliver a meaningful reading lesson that encourages reading for meaning.
- The teacher does not employ peer reading as often as necessary to boost the confidence of learners.
- The lack of visuals or audio contributes to the lack of stimulation in the learners.

DISCUSSION

Having made the necessary observations and taken notes during the lesson, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the learners mentioned above to get a better understanding of the factors leading to their behaviour. A semi-structured interview is perceived to enable researchers to track their studies while being flexible and adaptable to ask questions to their interviewees.²⁵ As previously mentioned, Learner 1 did not have a textbook. The learner revealed that he was not given a textbook at the beginning of the year due to a shortage of books. The school is based in a semi-rural area where most parents struggle to make ends meet. The school therefore cannot request parents to purchase books and parents themselves

²⁵ Ruslin Ruslin et al., "Semi-Structured Interview: A Methodological Reflection on the Development of a Qualitative Research Instrument in Educational Studies," *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)* 12, no. 1 (2022): 22–29.

are unable to prioritise books over basic needs of the household. This results in the learner not being able to practice reading at home. He only has exposure to the reading material at school.

Learner 2 read too fast and, interestingly enough, pronounced words fluently; however, they did not punctuate. The fast-paced reading, which lacks punctuation, leads to a lack of meaning. The learner read fast; however, she did not understand what she was reading. The challenge found was that the learner did not understand what she was reading. The lack of understanding stems from the absence of pre-reading activities. The employment of pre-reading activities would have ensured that the learner has a general idea of what the text is about. Activities such as scanning, skimming and predicting (as outlined in CAPS document) would have highlighted the general idea for the learner.²⁶ These activities would have ultimately assisted the learner in understanding the text when reading.

The research conducted indicates that there is a general lack of interest shown by learners in the Sepedi Home Language subject. According to Septia, et. al., if students are not interested, it would be very difficult to understand the reading.²⁷ It is therefore important for students to be interested in what they are reading in order to achieve the desired outcome. Learner 3 could not pronounce words correctly or even intonate appropriately. When asked, the learner revealed that she cannot pronounce words because she does not speak Sepedi on a daily basis, and she prefers to speak English. Further probe by the researcher revealed that the learner is generally not interested in Sepedi as a language and therefore does not communicate in it. This lack of interest ultimately affects her interest in reading the language and ultimately her performance in the subject. A learner who lacks personal motivation will not desire to learn to read, leading to a learner who reads without meaning.

Similarly, a learner whose self-esteem is badly affected by the teacher and peers will not attempt to read further. Learner 4's low volume during the reading lesson indicated her lack of self-esteem or confidence. The learner indicated that she is aware of the whispers and comments made by other learners when it is her turn to read. She indicated that she had brought it to the attention of the teacher; however, the behaviour continued. This resulted in her lowering her voice when reading, thus affecting her self-esteem. The teacher, therefore, bears the responsibility of ensuring that every learner has a safe environment to practice reading. An environment free of ridicule and scorn by others.

Learner 5 fell asleep during the lesson and had to be woken up. A discussion with the learner revealed that it was not due to his being a low-performing student; rather, it was due to his saying he found the lesson boring. The circumstances of the teaching-learning activity should be interesting.²⁸ He indicated that he found that listening to the teaching and conducting the lesson through a lecture method did not stimulate his interest. The learner needs to be mentally stimulated in order for his attention to be fully captured in the classroom. Stimulation can come in the form of teaching through the use of technology instead of the traditional lecture method that the teacher used.

Learner 6 read fluently, showed understanding and did not have a problem with pronunciation or intonation. When interviewed, the learner indicated that she had a great support structure at home where she reads a lot. The home environment plays a crucial role in a learner's ability to read for meaning. It means that the social aspects are primary for learning to take place in the individual.²⁹ Learners need a quiet and peaceful environment to concentrate in order to make meaning of the words being read. Learners who have home-based support from parents and relatives read very well. The learner reads often, and this amount of practice ensures fluency. The learner further stated that despite the lack of peer reading in the classroom, she joined a reading club where she does peer reading outside of the classroom. A combination of the learner, the teacher, and the parents is proof that it indeed does take a village to raise a child.

²⁶ Department of Basic Education, *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement* (Pretoria: Government Printers, 2012).

²⁷ Neneng Widya Septia et al., "An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Reading Comprehension," *EEdJ: English Education Journal* 2, no. 1 (2022): 11–22.

²⁸ Mohammad Muhassin, Jihan Annisa, and Dewi Ayu Hidayati, "The Impact of Fix up Strategy on Indonesian EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension.," *International Journal of Instruction* 14, no. 2 (2021): 253–70.

²⁹ Reza Ghafar Samar and Mahmood Dehqan, "Sociocultural Theory and Reading Comprehension: The Scaffolding of Readers in an EFL Context," *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning* 2, no. 3 (2013): 67–80.

Cycle for meaningful reading

Reading for meaning is achievable through a combination of the following aspects: the availability of reading material, individual determination and interest, employment of reading strategies and use of technology, teacher and parental support, and high self-esteem. The ability to read is based on certain skills that must be formed by the teacher in the process of working in the classroom and at home.³⁰ The teacher, learner and parents are equally responsible for the process to be successful. These aspects are presented in the diagram below from the Stacked Bubble Chart:

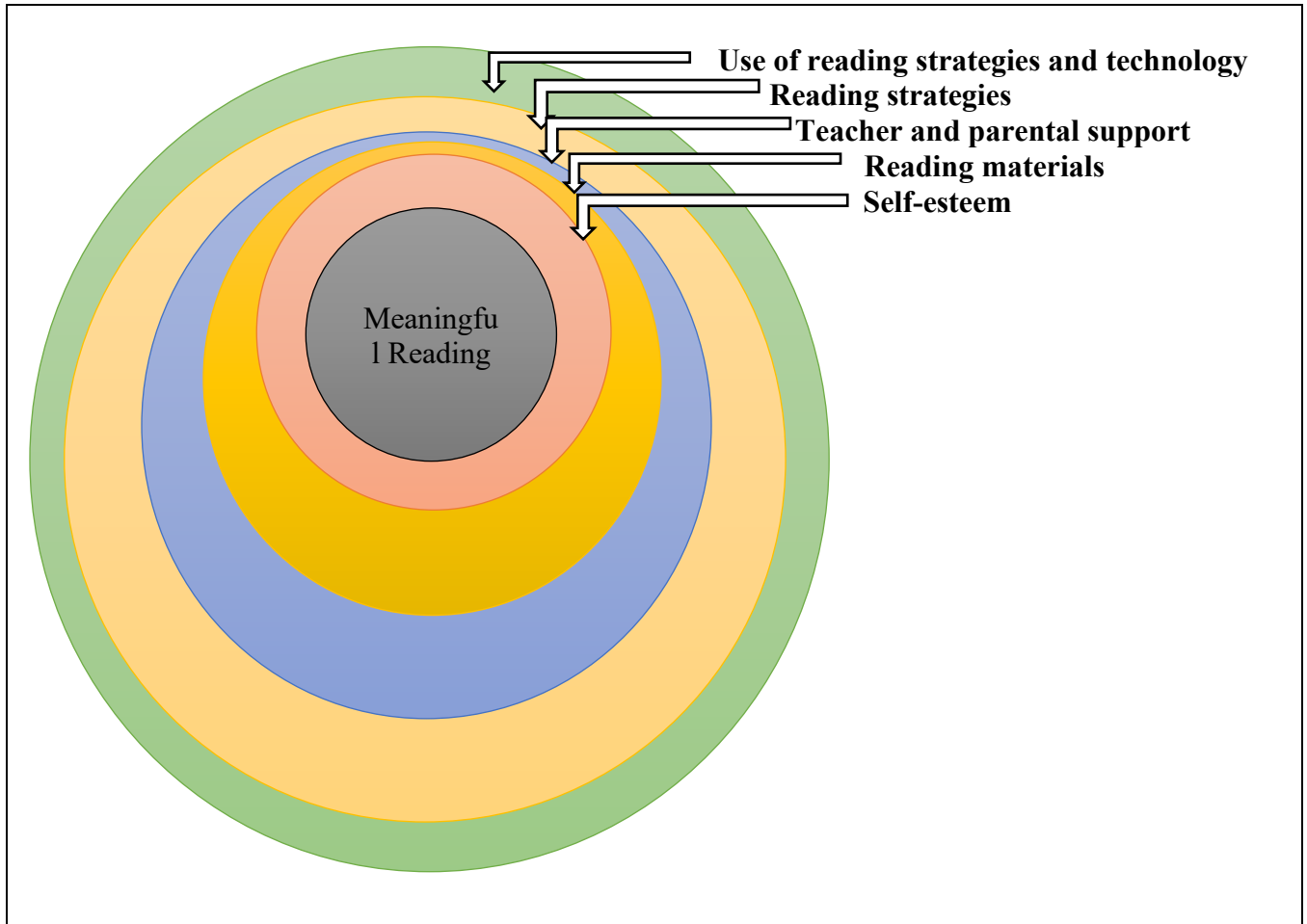


Figure 2: Diagram derived from Stacked Bubble Chart

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is acknowledged that teachers and learners make full use of a reading lesson to get reading done and complete a text; however, more needs to be done in order to adequately address the learners' need to read for meaning. The researcher recommends that the method of teaching used by teachers should be in line with the CAPS document of 2012, whereby reading strategies and skills will be implemented, namely, pre-reading, reading and post-reading. Similarly, the teacher should utilise technology maximally within the classroom in order to accommodate different learning styles, thereby achieving maximum results. Lastly, the teacher should create a safe learning environment for learners to practice their reading without fear of ridicule and scorn.

The researcher recommends that learners become proactive with regard to their education. Making an effort to practice reading outside the classroom to improve their pronunciation, intonation and pace. The lack of a prescribed textbook does not negate the existence of a variety of other reading materials available to learners from all backgrounds. The learners are also encouraged to love their mother tongue,

³⁰ Nazarov Rustam Irkinovich and Ismatullewa Iroda Izatullaevna, "Methods for Teaching Reading," *Journal of Pedagogical Inventions and Practices* 15 (2022): 47–50.

Sepedi, as this would improve their desire to read more Sepedi books, ultimately achieving the goal to read for meaning.

The researcher also recommends that parents play a more active role in the lives of their children by prioritising their education. Children who know that their parents have a vested interest in their education will go the extra mile to make them proud. Parents who encourage their children to read more at home help them improve their reading skills. Parents also have a responsibility towards their children to foster a deep love for their mother tongue and know how to pronounce words correctly, leading to meaning-making.

CONCLUSION

The study has analysed different reasons behind learners' inability to read for meaning. The findings reveal that the lack of sufficient textbooks in schools contributes greatly to learners' inability to read for meaning, as learners do not get the opportunity to practice reading outside of the classroom. The other reason found is that certain learners lack interest in either reading as a whole or reading Sepedi due to a lack of interest in the language. Additionally, learners' ability to concentrate is affected by the use of old traditional methods of teaching instead of including technology in lessons to accommodate visual learners. Lastly, the researcher found that parental support fosters greater interest in reading and thus encourages learners to read better. All of the above reasons are crucial in learners' ability to read for meaning. The more learners practice reading, the better they get at it and the more they understand. Increased vocabulary resulting from frequent reading helps learners understand more texts, whether in the classroom or outside. This then means learners will be able to read texts with meaning and not just read to be done with the text or to complete the task. Many tasks become easier for learners who are able to read for meaning, including comprehension tests and reading instructions in tests and examinations.

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