




Teachers' perspectives of the reading comprehension challenges and instructional strategies they use for Grade 8 EFAL learners



Authors:

Agnitius Molwantoa¹ 
 Florence M. Olifant¹ 
 Madoda Cekiso¹ 

Affiliations:

¹Department of Applied Languages, Faculty of Humanities, Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa

Corresponding author:

Florence Olifant,
 olifantfm@tut.ac.za

Dates:

Received: 01 Apr. 2025

Accepted: 01 Dec. 2025

Published: 27 Feb. 2026

How to cite this article:

Molwantoa, A., Olifant, F.M. & Cekiso, M., 2026, 'Teachers' perspectives of the reading comprehension challenges and instructional strategies they use for Grade 8 EFAL learners', *Reading & Writing* 17(1), a576. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v17i1.576>

Copyright:

© 2026. The Authors.
 Licensee: AOSIS. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Read online:



Scan this QR code with your smart phone or mobile device to read online.

Background: Reading comprehension instruction remains a cause of concern worldwide. Many studies have been conducted on the issue to provide possible strategies to assist readers with reading comprehension challenges.

Objective: The study sought to investigate teachers' perspectives on learners' comprehension challenges and instructional strategies used for Grade 8 English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners.

Method: This qualitative study employed a case study design and thematic data analysis to organise and analyse the data. The purposively selected sample for the semi-structured individual interviews comprised four Grade 8 EFAL teachers from four secondary schools chosen as a research site in the Capricorn North District, Koloti circuit.

Results: Teachers believed that learners experience challenges because of overcrowding, limited vocabulary, and pronunciation. Most importantly, learners' native language makes it a challenge because they speak Sepedi in class. The results further indicate that all four teachers concurred in their responses about the reading strategies and engagement strategies they used. More disturbingly, teachers relied on traditional teaching methods.

Conclusion: The study found that the strategies employed by at least two of the four teachers in the sample were inadequate for effectively supporting Grade 8 EFAL learners' reading comprehension.

Contribution: The findings indicated that teachers rely on traditional teaching methods such as questioning and summarising and therefore should be exposed to current methods of teaching reading. The study calls for teachers to be exposed to different teaching methods for reading, such as shared reading, guided reading, inferencing, and other comprehension strategies that engage learners effectively in meaning-making.

Keywords: reading comprehension; teachers' perception; EFAL; reading comprehension strategies; learners.

Introduction

Many teachers, particularly in rural South Africa, do not teach reading comprehension, as learners continue to experience challenges of learners who cannot read (Dagada 2022; Desta 2020; Klapwijk 2015; Pretorius & Klapwijk 2016; Rule & Land 2017). For instance, Klapwijk (2015) pointed out that many teachers believe reading comprehension is not a teachable skill and view it as separate from the reading process. This misconception is largely due to a limited understanding of effective strategies for teaching reading. Unfortunately, there is a noticeable lack of focus on directly teaching learners how to comprehend what they read (Klapwijk 2012). In a similar vein, Desta (2020) argued that many South African teachers lack essential skills required for effective reading instruction, which in turn causes their learners to struggle with reading. It appears that learners in numerous countries experience low reading proficiency and high learner attrition rates due to limited teacher knowledge of reading instruction.

Research by Molwantoa, Olifant and Cekiso (2025) found that reading comprehension was infrequently instructed in classrooms within the Capricorn North District, and that teachers lacked the requisite proficiency to teach reading comprehension using effective methodologies, such as guided reading, reciprocal teaching, and pre-reading discussion. The discovery aligns with the findings of Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016), which revealed that

many teachers lacked sufficient knowledge and skills concerning reading comprehension practices.

Brennan (2015) observed that teachers in upper elementary grades frequently assess learners' reading comprehension by posing questions after reading, rather than explicitly teaching the skills needed to comprehend texts. Echoing this concern, Klapwijk (2012) highlighted that South African schools rarely offer explicit instruction in reading strategies, and many educators lack the skills needed to teach reading comprehension effectively. This challenge is partly due to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Department of Basic Education 2011), which fails to clearly specify the reading strategies that should be taught to enhance Grade 8 learners' understanding. As a result, teachers often have limited knowledge of these strategies and face difficulties in applying them in the classroom.

According to the study conducted by Olifant, Cekiso and Rautenbach (2019), teachers believed that learners face difficulties with reading because they do not engage with the text. Klapwijk (2015) also noted that many teachers do not recognise reading comprehension as a fundamental aspect of the reading process, citing inadequate training as another barrier to effective teaching in this area.

Some studies have focused on the reading comprehension challenges of the learners' perspectives (Klapwijk 2015; Zimmermann & Smit 2014). Few studies have concentrated on the teachers' perspective of the reading comprehension challenges and their instructional strategies. Among the few studies, the studies conducted by De Witt and Lessing (2016), and Rule and Land (2017), as cited in Dagada (2022), found that many South African teachers possess inadequate knowledge of teaching reading. This is further compounded by challenges such as lack of reading material and overcrowding. Reflecting these concerns, Adamu, Tsiga and Zuilkowski (2022) discovered that teachers faced difficulties in teaching learners to read for meaning and lacked a solid understanding of how to foster reading development. Similarly, Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016) presented compelling evidence that many educators are unable to effectively build learners' foundational reading skills, which are crucial for deep comprehension. These challenges inspired the researcher to undertake this study, aiming to explore teachers' views on the reading comprehension difficulties encountered by Grade 8 English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners, as well as the instructional approaches they use to support learners' reading comprehension development.

The results of this study provide important insights that can guide focused support for Grade 8 EFAL teachers, especially in teaching reading comprehension. This article seeks to identify existing gaps in understanding by examining recent South African research on teachers' instructional methods and their grasp of reading comprehension. To accomplish this, the study was structured around the following research questions:

- What is this sample of Grade 8 teachers' understanding of the EFAL learners' reading challenges?
- What is this sample of Grade 8 teachers' perception of the strategies they employ to assist learners who experience challenges with reading comprehension?
- What is this sample of Grade 8 EFAL teachers' perception of engagement activities they employ in the classroom?

Literature review

This section provides a literature review focused on reading comprehension challenges within the South African context. It examines teachers' understanding of reading comprehension instruction, explores their perceptions of the difficulties faced by EFAL learners, and discusses effective strategies that EFAL teachers can implement to enhance reading comprehension in the classroom.

English First Additional Language teachers' understanding of reading comprehension instruction

Teachers' views on reading and their own reading habits can significantly influence learners' literacy levels. According to Borg (2003:88), as cited by Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016:4), 'teacher cognitions' are the mental constructs that influence teachers' actions in the language classroom.

Teachers play a pivotal role in fostering strong literacy skills and habits among learners; however, to do so effectively, they must themselves be proficient and skilled readers. This is because their own reading proficiency directly influences how effectively they can guide, assist and scaffold learners' reading process. For example, a teacher who reads fluently and accurately can do more than pronounce words correctly; they can identify where learners struggle and implement teaching strategies tailored to individual needs, helping learners develop comprehension skills and become reflective readers.

While earlier work (Pretorius & Klapwijk 2016:4) highlighted foundational challenges, a more recent study by Mokgadi and Hove (2024) revealed that teachers in the Intermediate Phase possess pedagogical content knowledge which is strengthened by the subject matter knowledge in the teaching of reading in EFAL. While teachers demonstrate pedagogical content knowledge, there is a necessity for enhancing the aspect of imparting knowledge of reading for meaning to learners.

Findings from the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) report (2013), which investigated literacy teaching in the Foundation Phase, highlight three key areas of knowledge that pose challenges for many South African teachers: subject content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and curriculum knowledge. Subject content knowledge involves a deep understanding of the discipline, including language, literacy (both reading and writing), and literature, which is especially important for language teachers.

Pedagogical content knowledge refers to a teacher's ability to effectively teach language, reading, and writing. Curriculum knowledge, on the other hand, involves an understanding of the specific requirements outlined for each grade level, including the CAPS guidelines and other relevant national education policy documents (NEEDU 2013; Taylor & Taylor 2013).

As cited by Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016), Irvine-Niakaris and Kiely (2015) found that experienced EFAL teachers' pedagogical knowledge is closely linked to their understanding of language content, texts, and assessment methods. To teach reading effectively, educators must not only comprehend the reading process but also possess the skills to teach it. Moreover, they should be competent readers themselves, with familiarity across various text genres.

Burt and Ridgard (2014) outline three key stages in the reading process: before reading, during reading, and after reading. Effective comprehension instruction begins at the before reading stage. Given that not all learners naturally enjoy reading or possess reading fluency – both of which can impede comprehension – this process is broken down into manageable phases, each with specific learning objectives. Teachers play a central role throughout all three stages, guiding learners and facilitating their engagement with texts. In the before-reading phase, for example, teachers support learners by examining the book's cover and illustrations to help them make informed predictions about the content (Burt & Ridgard 2014:4).

English First Additional Language teachers' perceptions of the reading comprehension challenges encountered by English First Additional Language learners

Teachers' perceptions of reading, along with their personal reading habits, can significantly impact learners' literacy development. Borg (2003, as cited in Pretorius & Klapwijk 2016:4) refers to these perceptions as 'teacher cognitions' – a concept that encompasses what teachers think, know, and believe, and how these mental constructs influence their actions in the language classroom (Borg 2003:81).

In South African EFAL classrooms, teachers encounter various challenges like overcrowding, lack of reading materials and resources and language differences when teaching reading comprehension. One significant challenge is the diversity of languages spoken by the learners: in many South African classrooms, learners come from a diverse home language background with limited exposure to English, and teachers are faced with the difficulty of addressing different language needs in their classrooms. Again, some learners may lack vocabulary knowledge simply because English is not spoken in their villages. While the diversity of languages spoken enriches the learning environment, it can also hinder learners' comprehension of English, the language of instruction. Teachers often resort to code-switching – alternating between languages – to assist

learners understand the content. This balancing act requires understanding each learner's unique language challenges while celebrating multilingualism in the classroom (Makalela 2014).

By embracing linguistic diversity, addressing socioeconomic disparities, bridging the digital divide, and refining their teaching methods, these teachers can create supportive environments where every learner can thrive and engage with literature effectively.

Strategies that English First Additional Language teachers can use to teach reading comprehension in the classroom

Effective reading comprehension instruction is essential in EFAL classrooms, as it enables learners to understand and interpret texts more successfully. Reading strategies play a key role in this process by helping learners engage with and better grasp the material (Banditvilai 2020). These strategies contribute to the development of comprehension skills. This discussion will focus on core components such as summarising, peer-assisted learning, collaborative strategic reading (CSR), extensive reading, scaffolded learning experiences, and inferring the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary.

Peer-assisted strategy

According to Almutairi (2018:50), peer-assisted learning involves one learner helping another. Specifically, some learners are fluent readers and can support those who struggle with reading.

This peer-assisted strategy pairs proficient readers with less skilled ones, allowing them to engage in collaborative reading exercises aimed at improving reading abilities. For example, if a learner has trouble understanding words, a teacher may pair them with a more proficient reader. The more proficient reader could show off their expression and pronunciation as they read a short chapter out loud in a duo. To assess comprehension or get assistance with text summarisation, stronger readers could ask questions after reading. Struggling readers often relate better to their peers than to teachers. This supports Almutairi's (2018) view that peer-assisted strategies are effective. Such approaches can enhance comprehension for learners facing reading challenges.

Collaborative strategic reading

Boardman et al. (2015) emphasise that successful implementation of the CSR approach requires strong teacher guidance. Teachers play a vital role in promoting learner collaboration and supporting the development of reading proficiency. As part of this strategy, learners are assigned specific roles before, during, and after reading. For instance, one learner might take on the role of the predictor, using the title and images to anticipate the content of the text prior to reading. One individual may serve as the clarifier while the other reads, assisting in clarifying difficult words or sentences. A summariser may review the key points

post-reading, while a questioner may pose enquiries about the topic to ensure comprehension and stimulate discussion. Before reading begins, teachers are responsible for guiding learners to activate their prior knowledge. For example, the teacher might start by asking 'What kind of weather do we usually have in summer here?' if the reading passage is about weather patterns. This enables learners to relate the new subject to their personal experiences. Furthermore, Boardman et al. emphasise that teachers should assist learners in presenting topics and vocabulary concepts, helping them connect these elements to their existing knowledge and establish a clear purpose for reading.

Extensive reading

This approach encourages learner engagement in reading by allowing them to choose their books from the school library. When learners are involved in extensive reading, their interest in the selected titles helps prevent boredom. The more they read, the more they enhance their reading proficiency. Stoller (2015:152) emphasises that allowing learners to select their own reading materials fosters a sense of empowerment and increases their engagement with reading. She further argues that the most effective way to develop reading skills is through consistent practice—by reading itself. This view is supported by Sandon (2017:113), who similarly asserts that reading is best acquired through the act of reading. Additionally, learners naturally absorb new vocabulary and grammar from the texts they encounter (Shelly 2015). Duke and Cartwright (2021) identified important reading aspects such as word recognition, language comprehension, predict reading, morphological awareness, planning, inference-making, decoding strategies and integrating new information with existing knowledge. This methodology serves as motivation for learners to engage in more reading activities, ultimately improving their fluency.

Scaffolded reading experiences

English First Additional Language teachers utilise scaffolded reading experiences, a method that gradually shifts the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the learners.

According to Salem (2017), scaffolding aids learners in acquiring new skills and enhances their ability to understand and analyse texts. Initially, teachers provide substantial support and guide learners through the comprehension process. Teachers gradually reduce their assistance as learners gain confidence and proficiency, encouraging independent comprehension. This scaffolding approach ensures that learners receive appropriate guidance while fostering self-reliance and critical thinking skills. The instruction style of scaffolding, as highlighted by Hassan (2015:172), creates a supportive learning environment that promotes independent comprehension, resourcefulness, creativity, and reading proficiency.

Guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words

Teachers must promote the use of this method. Learners analyse components like roots, prefixes, and suffixes to determine unknown vocabulary meanings. Learners guess

unfamiliar words using information from the word and the text (Marpaung & Sihombing 2019). By implementing these tactics, EFAL teachers create a comprehensive and inclusive learning environment in which learners are equipped with the abilities needed to grasp and analyse a wide range of texts effectively.

The researcher selected the following reading strategies because they have the potential to assist learners with comprehension challenges. These strategies are relevant because they can support teachers in addressing comprehension difficulties.

Contextual inference

The contextual inference strategy is significant in reading. Learners frequently utilise a blend of prior knowledge and contextual cues to comprehend unfamiliar vocabulary, but also to make inferences, predict outcomes and integrate ideas across the texts. According to Morrison et al. (2020), inference is a vital element of reading comprehension; they asserted that the capacity to infer aids learners in constructing a mental framework of the material they have encountered. Morrison et al. (2020) proposed that teachers should facilitate learners in the inference-making process and highlight its importance during discussions. For example, good readers infer antecedents or consequences of events, infer a character's motives for an action, and use pieces of information to connect apparently separate elements referred to.

Questioning

Questioning and active involvement with the material can significantly improve the understanding of EFAL learners. Amalia and Devanti (2016) discovered that this stimulates their interest and enhances comprehension. Learners' comprehension enhances when they engage actively in the reading process by posing enquiries. Facilitating question formulation regarding the topic is one method in which teachers can aid EFAL learners in cultivating critical thinking skills. For example, the teacher can take a few pauses while reading and ask learners questions about the text that target both the higher- and lower-order thinking.

Summarising

According to Stevens, Park and Vaughn (2019), summarising is fundamental to the learning process for both learners and teachers. Their study demonstrates that summarisation enhances learners' memory by enabling them to concentrate on the principal concepts and essential phrases inside a text. This activity facilitates the recognition of relationships between ideas and comprehension of text structure, hence improving the capacity to recognise the main components of a paragraph.

Ahmad and Sriyanto (2021) highlighted the significance of summarising in deepening learners' comprehension of what they read. They define summarising as an activity that necessitates understanding, analysing, and synthesising ideas. A study by Nurhayati and Fitriana (2018) shows that summarising helps improve reading comprehension and

boosts the reading skills of foreign language learners. For example, teachers can ask learners to summarise sections read in their own words, and this ensures that learners can identify main points and ideas from the text.

Visualisation

Kendeou and O'Brien (2018) found that visualising material during reading markedly improves comprehension of both narrative and expository literature. This research emphasises the significance of promoting imagery as a technique to enhance comprehension and the overall reading experience. Kendeou and O'Brien (2018) asserted that visualisation involves the cognitive process of creating images and concepts while reading, enabling learners to transform their literal comprehension of the text into a visual depiction. This strategy encourages learners to synthesise their existing knowledge, textual evidence, and creativity to build a mental image that corresponds with the narrative. Visualisation promotes comprehension by generating vivid mental imagery, allowing readers to better absorb, arrange, and retain the information offered in the text. For example, teachers can ask learners to create mental images from the text.

Prediction

The prediction strategy serves as a valuable tool for learners, aiding them in establishing a clear purpose for reading and igniting their curiosity, as highlighted by Brod (2021). Awada and Plana (2018) stated that one method of teaching is to have learners predict what the following chapter will include. Learners are able to successfully predict what will happen next by combining what they know with what they read in the text. This strategy proves especially effective during formative assessments, as it not only motivates learners to engage with the material but also allows them to check the accuracy of their initial predictions, thereby sustaining their interest (Mistar, Zuhairi & Yanti 2016). For example, to keep learners actively engaged, teachers can encourage them to make predictions about the passage by examining topic sentences before reading the full text and that way they can see if they understand or not.

Research methods and design

The researchers adopted a qualitative approach within the interpretative paradigm to examine teachers' perspectives on reading comprehension challenges and the instructional strategies used for Grade 8 EFAL learners.

This study employed a case study design, widely recognised as a qualitative research method suitable for examining social interactions. According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2022), case studies offer a structured framework for investigating complex phenomena within real-world settings. As noted by Coombs (2022), case studies typically involve small sample sizes, prioritising in-depth understanding over statistical generalisation. Furthermore, Faber and Fronseca (2014) argue that when the research population is homogeneous, small samples are appropriate, as the data collected is likely

to reflect similar viewpoints among participants. This design was considered appropriate for the study as it enabled the researchers to examine and interpret teachers' experiences and instructional practices. The specific case under investigation focused on Grade 8 EFAL teachers in four secondary schools in the Capricorn North District.

Participants and sampling

A sample of four Grade 8 EFAL teachers was chosen from four secondary schools in the Capricorn North District. Purposive sampling was employed in this study because the authors focused particularly on the teachers responsible for teaching EFAL in Grade 8. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which researchers utilise their expertise to select participants who are likely to yield the most valuable insights relevant to the research questions at hand (Kumar 2019). Purposive sampling was utilised in this study to select participants who provided rich data regarding teachers' experiences, challenges, and instructional strategies for improving reading comprehension among Grade 8 EFAL learners. The participants were four teachers responsible for teaching Grade 8 EFAL at their respective schools. With the permission of the teachers, recordings were used during semi-structured individual interviews with the teachers, providing opportunities for teachers to reflect on and communicate their professional experiences regarding their understanding and teachers' experience and instructional strategies used for Grade 8 EFAL learners. The interviews were conducted with four EFAL teachers from four secondary schools in the rural Limpopo area of the Capricorn North District. Each school had one Grade 8 EFAL class, and their teacher responsible for teaching Grade 8 EFAL participated in this study.

Teachers were interviewed by the researcher individually. This group comprised three women and one man, all of whom were Black and shared the same home language as their learners, with several residing near the schools. Participants ranged in age from 29 to 56 years, with teaching experience spanning between 7 and 31 years. The male teacher, who serves as the Head of the Language Department, holds an Honours degree in English teaching, while the three female teachers each possess a bachelor's degree in the same field (English Language Teaching).

Data collection methods

Semi-structured individual interviews with EFAL teachers were conducted as the primary source of data for this study. Kumar (2019) stated that any intentional two-way communication between individuals, whether in person or over the phone, serves as an interview. It was deemed relevant for the research questions, which centred on gaining insights into teachers' instructional practices, challenges and perspectives.

Data analysis

Data analysis was based on a thematic approach. The researchers utilised an interview schedule along with an

audio recording device to gather information, which was later transcribed. The initial step involved examining the data for a general understanding and reflecting on its overall significance. Next, the researchers organised the information by grouping codes into themes and labelling them accordingly. Thus, coding was applied to create connections between the themes. The findings were presented in a narrative format. The interpretation of the results from teachers' interviews highlighted whether the insights aligned or contradicted one another, facilitating a deeper thematic analysis.

Ethical considerations

The Faculty Committee for Research Ethics in Humanities (FCRE-HUM) at Tshwane University of Technology, with the reference number FCRE/APL/STD/2023/09, approved ethical clearance to carry out research for this research. Participants' identities were protected through the use of coded identifiers. Specifically, letters of alphabet were used to hide the identity of the participants.

Findings

In this section, the findings emanating from the data collected through the semi-structured interviews are presented.

Theme 1: Teachers' perception of learners' reading comprehension challenges

This theme concerns teacher opinions and seeks to discover the challenges that Grade 8 EFAL experienced with reading comprehension challenges that Grade 8 learners face in the English classroom.

The first research question sought to investigate teachers' perspectives on the difficulties Grade 8 EFAL learners face in reading comprehension. The results revealed the intricate nature of reading comprehension challenges, encompassing both linguistic and cognitive aspects. One out of four teachers pointed out the challenges learners faced with complex vocabulary, sentence and paragraph comprehension, and the identification of main ideas and text structures. These difficulties indicated struggles at the micro-and macro-levels of language and text comprehension.

One out of four teachers drew attention to specific question types that presented challenges for learners, such as opinion-based and open-ended questions and questions requiring the identification of synonyms, antonyms, and figures of speech. These question types called for higher order thinking skills and a nuanced understanding of language, which many learners found challenging.

The results of the study emphasise the influence of learners' native language on their reading comprehension. It was noted that certain learners encountered challenges in understanding English, which affected their ability to comprehend written material. One teacher out of four specifically identified language barriers, particularly the

adoption of Sepedi home language in the English classroom, as a constraint for their learners when it came to understanding English passages. Additionally, teachers revealed that the issue of overcrowding in the classroom made it challenging for other learners to understand as the class is not manageable, emphasising the necessity for a more manageable class size in order to effectively teach EFAL reading. The teacher also shared that the noise and distractions resulting from the crowded classroom environment hindered learners' focus on reading. These insights illuminate areas requiring improvement to cultivate a more conducive learning environment and enhance reading comprehension.

One out of four teachers expressed concern about their learners' vocabulary and pronunciation skills, noting that limited vocabulary could hinder their reading comprehension. They emphasised that understanding and pronouncing words correctly is crucial for academic success, as it impacts both reading comprehension and language skills. Learners with limited vocabulary may find it difficult to understand the texts they read. The following extracts support the findings of this study:

'I think reading comprehension problems learners face in my classroom include unfamiliarity with complex words and vocabulary, difficulty understanding sentences and paragraphs, and difficulty identifying main ideas and text structures.' (Teacher A)

'First, there are opinion-based questions, open-ended questions that are very tricky for our learners. Second, there are questions where learners are expected to give either synonyms or antonyms. Some find those questions very difficult. Third, there are questions where figures of speech are needed or maybe an explanation of certain figures of speech, and such questions have proven to be a hard nut to crack for my learners.' (Teacher B)

'One of the challenges in teaching English First Additional Language learners to read in my classroom is a language barrier because my learners use Sepedi as their L1. To add, overcrowding is also a challenge, as I am unable to move around the classroom.' (Teacher C)

'One, learners lack vocabulary. The other thing is that they are unable to pronounce certain words properly, which ends up making the word lose meaning because they should have read it the other way than the way it should be. That is a challenge. The other thing is a lack of understanding, basically because our learners do not like or use dictionaries. I try everything, but they don't use dictionaries and as a result [...] in most cases, they are found wanting because they are unable to grasp and get an understanding of the meaning of a particular word. As a result, reading will become more difficult, because they may come across a number of several words that they do not understand, and they are going to find it difficult to read and maybe the meaning of what they read.' (Teacher D)

The findings above reveal that learners struggle with understanding complex vocabulary, sentence structure, identification of main ideas from supporting ideas, and text structure. Additionally, the findings highlight gaps in teachers' ability to teach all these aspects of reading comprehension.

These challenges hinder learners' comprehension skills. The challenges include learners' inability to respond to open-ended questions or questions that require higher order thinking skills. These factors highlight the need for strategies to support learners so that their cognitive and linguistic skills are enhanced.

The authors believe that language barriers, particularly learners' limited opportunities to engage with English language outside the classroom and inadequate support within the classroom significantly affect learners' reading comprehension. Limited vocabulary, pronunciation issues, and classroom overcrowding exacerbate these difficulties, hindering effective teaching of reading in the classrooms. One teacher indicated that overcrowding was also a challenge to effectively teach reading. According to the researcher, the classes had over 80 learners in each class. Learners were sitting three to a desk, and that limited teacher movement. Tackling these issues is crucial for enhancing learners' reading comprehension and fostering a more nurturing educational environment.

Theme 2: Teachers' perception of teaching strategies employed

The second research question aimed to determine the teaching methods EFAL teachers in this sample use to assist learners who struggle with reading comprehension. To this end, teachers indicated that they utilised a range of techniques to instruct learners in developing proficiency in reading comprehension. Teacher interviews revealed that a variety of strategies are employed in teaching EFAL reading, including guided reading, questioning, summarising, and prompting learners to make inferences. By applying these strategies, teachers can help learners uncover implicit information in texts, draw conclusions, and generalise ideas. It is imperative for teachers to explicitly model and elucidate these strategies, as some learners appeared to lack these skills during observations. Furthermore, employing diverse methods allows teachers to cater to a variety of learning styles, ensuring that all learners can engage effectively with the material.

The findings of this study reveal the range of reading strategies teachers use to enhance learners' comprehension abilities, while also emphasising the need for further support to ensure these strategies are applied effectively. One out of four teachers' astute observations identified specific strategies, such as summarising, questioning, and visualising, demonstrating the active participation of learners in interacting with the text. Two teachers out of four insights further emphasised core strategies like silent reading and reading aloud. Silent reading encourages independent processing of text, allowing learners to monitor comprehension at their own pace. The following extracts support the results of this study:

'I employ a combination of methods to teach EFAL reading, such as direct instruction and I encourage my learners to read aloud in class to improve pronunciation and fluency.' (Teacher A)

'In Grade 8, I try to allow, in fact, I try to teach them main ideas and supporting ideas to make a difference, to separate main ideas from supporting ideas, and I also try to teach them to infer meaning, and, well, the most common one is questioning and answering.' (Teacher B)

'I employ various reading strategies, such as summarising, questioning, and sometimes visualising information. However, my learners seem to get lost when applying these strategies. We do read aloud also in my class.' (Teacher C)

'The reading strategy that I encourage my learners to employ is silent reading and as well as reading aloud. I am not sure if I am answering your questions correctly. But they go through a text silently on their own, even though at times I make them read aloud, but preferably reading on their own.' (Teacher D)

The study's results showed that teachers employ a number of reading approaches to help learners understand and appreciate literature. These strategies are meant to help with not just fundamental understanding, but also with skills like making inferences and coming to conclusions. But the fact that numerous learners still have trouble suggests that these tactics are not often taught well or implemented well. By employing varied methods like asking questions, making predictions, summarising, or using visual aids, teachers can fulfil the different learning needs of their learners and make comprehension sessions more effective.

Theme 3: Teachers' perception of engagement activities employed in classrooms

Teachers revealed that learners are inspired to read and enhance their reading skills. According to EFAL teachers, activities that enable learners to engage with texts play a crucial role in making reading more enjoyable, easier, and fun, while also fostering active participation. One out of four teachers noted that they involve learners in comprehension homework exercises, such as answering comprehension questions based on the short passages and summarising passages given to them, which can pose challenges for those who live with grandparents unable to assist with homework. Consequently, these learners find it difficult to respond accurately to comprehension questions during classroom assessments.

Learners who are actively engaged are more likely to enjoy reading and learning overall and stay committed to classroom activities. This, in turn, prevents learners from losing interest in the material being taught. The study's findings are substantiated by the following excerpts:

'To engage my EFAL learners and improve their reading skills, I used a variety of activities, such as comprehension homework exercises and group discussions (sometimes, though), and I encourage independent reading.' (Teacher A)

'There is this so-called "drop everything and read." I make learners come forward and read and ask them questions so that they can respond and so that I can test whether they really understand what they read. I let them read, and immediately thereafter, I ask questions pertaining to what they have read so that I can test whether they read to understand or read for the sake of reading.' (Teacher B)

'I also encourage them to summarise what they have read in their own words.' (Teacher C)

'My approach is simple. I read aloud to my learners and asked them to read aloud to me.' (Teacher D)

The study's findings underscore the importance of actively involving learners in classroom activities to promote meaningful and effective learning outcomes. While homework assignments may serve as a measure of learner engagement, they can pose significant challenges for those learners whose caregivers are unable to support their learning, such as learners residing with grandparents who have limited literacy skills. Furthermore, engagement strategies, including initiatives like 'Drop Everything and Read' (DEAR) have been shown to foster sustained interest in academic material, enhance motivation, and encourage active participation in the learning process. Furthermore, the excerpts emphasise the critical importance of maintaining the original spirit of DEAR, creating joyful, engaging reading experiences that foster intrinsic motivation rather than external pressure to perform. However, in this study, Teacher B's use of the DEAR approach appears to put learners on the spot and expose their weaknesses, creating a stressful rather than enjoyable learning experience, indicating that the teacher did not understand the strategy's teaching purpose. This finding may suggest a deficiency in teachers' training and professional development regarding the application of learner-centred reading comprehension strategies, underscoring the necessity for continuous support to guarantee that instructional practices are congruent with the desired educational objectives.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine and interpret teachers' perspectives and the instructional strategies they use to support Grade 8 EFAL learners in the Capricorn North District. One key finding from the data is that language can act as a barrier. The reading comprehension challenges faced by Sepedi-speaking learners may possibly be due to limited exposure to English outside the classroom and insufficient support within it, rather than being directly caused by their home language. In addition, and aligned to this finding, Akram et al.'s (2020) study in Pakistan revealed that learners mostly use their home language in their classroom to communicate and cannot understand questions or lessons presented in English. The reason why the researchers used the study from Pakistan is that both South Africa and Pakistan are multilingual countries where English is offered as the home language or the additional language, and many learners rely on their home language inside and outside their classrooms. Home language barriers, particularly in the English language, are not confined to South Africa only but are a global challenge; therefore, the study conducted by Akram et al. was not used to replace the local findings conducted by South African researchers but to show similar home language challenges that occur in other countries.

The findings of this study revealed that learners encountered challenges in EFAL reading comprehension, which limited

their ability to perform well in classroom reading activities. Issues such as poor pronunciation and a restricted vocabulary had a notable impact on their comprehension skills. In contrast, the study by Songbatumis (2017) in Indonesia offers a slightly different viewpoint compared to the current research in the Capricorn North District: teacher D highlighted that learners struggle to understand and pronounce unfamiliar words, which leads to misinterpretation and loss of meaning and, likewise, teacher A shared the same sentiment—that learners experience challenges with complex words and vocabulary. Mastering vocabulary poses a challenge for learners of English, primarily due to the presence of words that are not commonly used in their everyday lives. This unfamiliar vocabulary negatively impacts their ability to learn new words and pronunciation. The study provides an international perspective that reinforces similar difficulties observed among Grade 8 EFAL learners in the Capricorn North District. Likhoele's (2020) study highlighted that limited vocabulary knowledge is another factor contributing to the challenges faced in teaching and learning reading comprehension.

The study's findings indicated that overcrowded classrooms restricted teachers' ability to move freely and engage learners in developing reading skills. This aligns with the views of researchers such as Küçükler and Kodal (2019), who argue that overcrowding negatively affects the teaching of reading comprehension, as many classrooms accommodate a large number of learners.

The results indicated that teachers use various strategies to teach reading comprehension in their classrooms; however, they predominantly rely on traditional reading methods such as reading aloud, summarising and asking direct questions, which limits the exposure of some learners to more interactive techniques like questioning and group discussion to assist them in answering comprehension-related questions.

These results align with the research conducted by Klapwijk (2015), which found that learners continue to face significant challenges with reading comprehension, which teachers often overlook in their instruction. Klapwijk also noted that many teachers do not recognise reading comprehension as a fundamental aspect of the reading process, citing inadequate training as another barrier to effective teaching in this area; lack of knowledge often prevents teachers from using supporting language learning tactics including scaffolding, metacognitive reading modelling, and explicit instruction in inferencing and summarising to improve learners' comprehension.

Additionally, the research highlighted a lack of knowledge regarding reading strategies among teachers, as evidenced by their responses indicating that some are not effectively teaching comprehension as it should be taught. Similarly, research by De Witt and Lessing (2016), as well as Rule and Land (2017), acknowledged that many South African teachers have limited understanding of effective reading instruction. The Department of Education (2008) noted that educators

often rely on a single teaching method, which may not cater to the varied learning styles of all students. Additionally, Rule and Land observed that teachers tend to use a narrow selection of reading strategies. In addition to these limitations, many teachers lack the skills to motivate learners to read, both within and beyond the classroom setting. Teachers also pointed out that the challenges associated with the rural location of the schools significantly affected their resources, which often hindered support for learners facing difficulties in reading comprehension.

Finally, the findings showed that teachers provide support, motivation, and engagement for their learners. Learners who are engaged typically perform better academically. Activities that promote engagement encourage learners to enjoy reading; however, one teacher incorporated reading comprehension homework as a form of engagement, which may create difficulties for those living with grandparents who are unable to read and write. Also, this reading comprehension instruction approach is flawed because it replicates the standard comprehension questions, which frequently only highlight learners' weaknesses rather than fostering their confidence and abilities. Such questioning strategies offer few opportunities for meaningful learning and may even deter learners from reading texts because they are linked to inadequacy and failure rather than growth and discovery.

Additionally, giving reading comprehension homework to engage learners creates more learning challenges. For learners living with caregivers, like grandparents, who might not be literate and thus are unable to offer the required support, this method poses serious challenges. Homework-based comprehension exercises can worsen educational disparities and push vulnerable learners further behind, rather than increasing engagement. These findings highlight a critical disconnect between teachers' intentions to engage learners and the methods they employ. True engagement requires moving beyond traditional comprehension questioning toward approaches that celebrate what learners can do, build on their strengths, and create inclusive learning environments where all learners can participate meaningfully, regardless of their home circumstances.

Recommendations

Drawing from the study's findings, the following recommendations are presented and discussed below:

- The Department of Education should organise professional development workshops for teachers, focusing specifically on effective reading instruction and comprehension strategies, and led by professionals with expertise in developing the skills necessary for reading for meaning.
- The Department of Education should build more classrooms and employ more teachers in the village schools to minimise overcrowding the classrooms as it is difficult to teach a class with over 80 learners, especially with reading comprehension.

- Language Heads of Departments should regularly conduct classroom observations and assessments to identify common challenges and inform a curriculum that is responsive to learners' needs.
- Teachers – especially those who are newly appointed or who did not specialise in English reading instruction – should focus on developing effective reading and comprehension strategies, as they often lack the necessary expertise in teaching reading comprehension.
- Most importantly, teachers should make use of different teaching methods such as guided reading, shared reading and group discussion to accommodate different reading styles of learners.
- English First Additional Language teachers should offer explicit guidance as well as feedback on reading strategies and comprehension skills by demonstrating tactics such as predicting, summarising, questioning, and making inferences, in order to assist learners in developing a critical approach to texts.
- Teachers should always encourage active participation and engagement in reading activities.
- Teachers should use English in their English classrooms to help bridge language gaps, but they must also be equipped with effective language teaching strategies to support learners' understanding. Additionally, schools and the government should address overcrowding by building more classrooms, creating an environment where these strategies can be implemented effectively.

Conclusion

The study found that the strategies employed by at least two of the four teachers in the sample were inadequate for effectively supporting Grade 8 EFAL learners' reading comprehension. This highlights a critical need for professional development and training in evidence-based reading strategies to improve teaching practices and learner outcomes.

This research set out to explore and evaluate teachers' perspectives on the reading comprehension challenges faced by Grade 8 EFAL learners, as well as the instructional methods the teachers employ. The findings highlighted the importance of using a range of teaching strategies to strengthen learners' reading skills and identified several key factors contributing to their difficulties with comprehension.

Effectively implementing teaching strategies to support reading comprehension is vital in South Africa, particularly as many learners continue to struggle with reading and responding to questions using the techniques taught in class. Insights from teachers' perspectives suggest that the role of educators and the strategic use of instructional methods are more impactful than relying solely on traditional reading approaches.

While this study yielded several noteworthy findings, certain limitations must be acknowledged. In addition to the small sample size, the use of interviews as the primary data collection tool did not allow for verification of participants'

responses against their actual classroom practices. Therefore, future research could benefit from incorporating classroom observations to gain deeper insights into how teachers implement the reading strategies they discuss.

The findings from this study offer valuable insights that can help address the challenges teachers face in applying strategies to support learners with reading comprehension difficulties globally.

Acknowledgements

This article is partially based on Agnitus Molwantoa's dissertation entitled 'Analysing the reading comprehension challenges of Grade 8 English first additional language learners in the Capricorn North District' towards the degree of Master of Language Practice in the Department of Applied Languages, Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa, in April 2025, with supervisors Florence M. Olifant and Madoda Cekiso.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

CRedit authorship contribution

Agnitus Molwantoa: Data curation, Formal analysis, Methodology, Validation, Writing - original draft. Florence M. Olifant: Supervision, Writing - review & editing. Madoda Cekiso: Supervision, Writing - review & editing. All authors reviewed the article, contributed to the discussion of results, approved the final version for submission and publication, and take responsibility for the integrity of its findings.

Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability

The authors confirm that the data supporting this study and its findings are available within the article and its listed references.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and are the product of professional research. It does not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency, or that of the publisher. The authors are responsible for this article's findings, and content.

References

Adamu, A., Tsiga, A.U. & Zuilkowski, S.S., 2022. 'Teaching reading in northern Nigeria: The challenges of large class size', *Pedagogy, Culture & Society* 30(2), 225–242. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2020.1794948>

- Ahmad, Z. & Sriyanto, W., 2021. 'The effect of MMS (metacognitive, monitoring, summarizing) strategy in improving learners' reading comprehension', *Ethical Lingua: Journal of Language Teaching and Literature* 8(1), 254–259.
- Akram, H., Yang, Y., Ahmad, N. & Aslam, S., 2020. 'Factors contributing low English language literacy in rural primary schools of Karachi, Pakistan', *International Journal of English Linguistics* 10(6), 335–346. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v10n6p335>
- Almutairi, N.R., 2018. 'Effective reading strategies for increasing the reading comprehension level of third-grade learners with learning disabilities', D.Ed. dissertation, Western Michigan University, viewed 03 November 2024, from <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dissertations/3247/>.
- Amalia, A.R. & Devanti, Y.M., 2016. 'The use of questioning strategy to improve learners' reading comprehension', *Journal of English Language, Literature, and Teaching* 1(2), 81–88. <https://doi.org/10.32528/ellite.v1i2.465>
- Awada, G. & Plana, M.G.-C., 2018. 'Multiple strategies approach and EFL reading comprehension of learners with dyslexia: Teachers' perceptions', *International Journal of Instruction* 11(3), 463–476. <https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2018.11332a>
- Banditvilai, C., 2020. 'Then effectiveness of reading strategies on reading comprehension', *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanity* 10(20), 46–50. <https://doi.org/10.18178/ijssh.2020.V10.1012>
- Bloomberg, L.D. & Volpe, M., 2022. 'Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end', Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Boardman, A.G., Klingner, J.K., Buckley, P. & Annamma, S., 2015. 'The efficacy of collaborative strategic reading in middle school science and social studies classes', *Reading and Writing* 28(9), 1257. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-015-9570-3>
- Borg, S., 2003. 'Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do', *Language Teaching* 36(2), 81–109. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444803001903>
- Brennan, A., 2015. 'Teaching comprehension to pupils with learning difficulties', *Journal of The Irish Learning Support Association* 1, 96–107.
- Brod, G., 2021. 'Predicting as a learning strategy', *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review* 28, 1839–1847. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13423-021-01904-1>
- Burt, S. & Ridgard, D., 2014. *English for success*, CTP Printers, Cape Town.
- Cekiso, M.P., 2012. 'Reading comprehension and strategy awareness of Grade 11 English second language learners', *Reading & Writing* 3(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v3i1.23>
- Cekiso, M.P., 2017. 'Teachers' perceptions of reading instruction in selected primary schools in the Eastern Cape', *Reading & Writing* 8(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v8i1.158>
- Coombs, H., 2022. *Case study research defined*, viewed 16 September 2025, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/364126131_Case_Study_Research_Defined_White_Paper
- Dagada, M., 2022. 'Foundation Phase teachers' challenges in teaching reading in South Africa', *South African Journal of Education* 42(Suppl. 1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v42ns1a2219>
- Desta, M.A., 2020. 'An investigation into teachers practices of teaching early reading and practical problems in its implementation', *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* 5(1), 97–108. <https://doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v5i1.608>
- De Witt, M. & Lessing, A., 2016. 'The influence of a school readiness program on the language and phonological awareness skills of preschool children in rural areas of South Africa', *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood* 41(1), 106–114. <https://doi.org/10.1177/183693911604100114>
- Department of Education, 2008. *Foundations for Learning Campaign 2008–2011*, Government Gazette No. 306, 30880, 14 March 2008, Department of Education, Pretoria.
- Department of Basic Education, 2011. *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS): Grades 4–6 English First Additional Language*, Government Printers, Pretoria.
- Duke, N.K. & Cartwright, K.B., 2021. 'The science of reading progresses: Communicating advances beyond the simple view of reading', *Reading Research Quarterly* 56(S1), S25–S44. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.411>
- Faber, J. & Fronseca, L.M., 2014. 'How sample size influences research outcomes', *Dental Press Journal Orthodontics* 19(4), 27–29. <https://doi.org/10.1590/2176-9451.19.4.027-029.ebo>
- Hassan, S.G.M., 2015. 'Suggested strategy for developing critical literacy', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 5(9), 170–175.
- Irvine-Niakaris, C. & Kiely, R., 2015. 'Reading comprehension in test preparation classes: An analysis of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in TESOL', *TESOL Quarterly* 49(2), 369–392. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.189>
- Kendeou, P. & O'Brien, E.J., 2018. 'Theories of text processing: A view from the top down', in M. Schober, D.N. Rapp & M.A. Britt (eds.), *Handbook of discourse processes*, 2nd edn., pp. 19–33, Routledge, New York, NY.
- Klapwijk, N.M., 2012. 'Reading strategy instruction and teacher change: Implications for teacher training', *South African Journal of Education* 32(2), 191–204. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v32n2a618>
- Klapwijk, N.M., 2015. 'EMC' = comprehension: A reading strategy instruction framework for all teachers', *South African Journal of Education* 35(1), S25–S44. <https://doi.org/10.15700/201503062348>
- Küçükler, H. & Kodal, A., 2018. 'Foreign language teaching in overcrowded classes', *English Language Teaching* 12, 169–169. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v12n1p169>
- Kumar, R., 2019. *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*, 5th edn., Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

- Likhoeli, M.B., 2020, 'Challenges in teaching and learning of reading comprehension in English language: A case of Grade 10 in selected secondary schools in the Quthing District', M.A. dissertation, National University of Lesotho.
- Makalela, L., 2014, 'Teaching indigenous African languages: The effects of translanguaging for multilingual development', in L. Hibbert & C. Van der Walt (eds.), *Multilingual universities in South Africa: Reflecting society in higher education*, pp. 88–104, Multilingual Matters, Bristol.
- Marpaung, M. & Sihombing, H.B.M., 2019, 'Contextual factors in guessing words' meaning in reading by the EFL learners', *Jurnal Littera: Fakultas Sastra Darma Agung* 1(2), 219–228.
- Mistar, J., Zuhairi, A. & Yanti, N., 2016, 'Strategies training in the teaching of reading comprehension for EFL learners in Indonesia', *English Language Teaching* 9(2), 49–56. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n2p49>
- Mokgadi, T. & Hove, M.L., 2024, 'Whose reading translates into mastery in English First Additional Language at Intermediate Phase?', *Reading & Writing* 15(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v15i1.449>
- Molwantoa, A., Olifant, F.M. & Cekiso, M.P., 2025, 'Exploring Grade 8 English First Additional Language learners' reading comprehension challenges', *Reading & Writing* 16(1), a556. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v16i1.556>
- Morrison, T.G., Wilcox, B., Bird, L., Murdoch, H.B., Burse, H. & Helvey, M., 2020, 'Inference types in instructional materials for elementary students', *Reading Psychology* 41(5), 420–433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02702711.2020.1768985>
- National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) 2013, *National report 2012: The state of teaching and learning in the foundation phase*, Department of Basic Education, Pretoria.
- Olifant, T., Cekiso, M. & Rautenbach, E., 2019, 'Teachers' perceptions of Grades 8–10 English First Additional Language learners' reading habits, attitudes and motivation', *Reading & Writing* 10(1), a254. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v10i1.254>
- Nurhayati, D.A.W. & Fitriana, M.W., 2018, 'Effectiveness of summarising in teaching reading comprehension for EFL learners', *Indonesian Journal of Language Teaching and Linguistics* 3(1), 33–50. <https://doi.org/10.30957/ijoltl.v3i1.403>
- Progress In International Literacy Study, 2021, *PIRLS 2021 international report: South African children's reading literacy achievement*, Centre for Evaluation and Assessment, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.
- Pretorius, E.J. & Klapwijk, N.M., 2016, 'Reading comprehension in South African schools: Are teachers getting it, and getting it right?', *Per Linguam* 32(1), 4–20. <https://doi.org/10.5785/32-1-627>
- Rule, P. & Land, S., 2017, 'Finding the plot in South African reading education', *Reading & Writing* 8(1), a121. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v8i1.121>
- Salem, A.A.M.S., 2017, 'Scaffolding reading comprehension skills', *English Language Teaching* 10(1), 97–111. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n1p97>
- Sandon, M.T., 2017, 'L2 Japanese learners' responses to translation, speed reading, and "pleasure reading" as a form of extensive reading', *Reading in a Foreign Language* 29(1), 113–132. <https://doi.org/10.64152/10125/66730>
- Shelly, S.A., 2015, 'Effect of extensive reading in second language learning: A study on development of linguistic skills in reference to reading', Ph.D. dissertation, BRAC University.
- Songbatumis, A.M., 2017, 'Challenges in teaching English faced by English educators at MTsN Taliwang, Indonesia', *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching & Learning* 2(2), 54–67. <https://doi.org/10.18196/ftl.2223>
- Stevens, E.A., Park, S. & Vaughn, S., 2019, 'A review of summarising and main idea interventions for struggling readers in Grade 3 through 12: 1978–2016', *Remedial and Special Education* 40(3), 131–149. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932517749940>
- Stoller, F.L., 2015, 'Viewing extensive reading from different vantage points', *Reading in a Foreign Language* 27(1), 152–159. <https://doi.org/10.64152/10125/66707>
- Taylor, N. & Taylor, S., 2013, 'Teacher knowledge and professional habitus', in N. Taylor, S. Van der Berg & T. Mabogoane (eds.), *Creating effective schools*, pp. 201–232, Pearson Education, Cape Town.
- Zimmerman, L. & Smit, B., 2014, 'Profiling classroom reading comprehension development practices from PIRLS 2006 in South Africa', *South African Journal of Education* 34(3), 1–9.