An exploration into self-extending systems in early literacy in

English of Grade One isiXhosa speaking learners

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to explore the ways in which a small, purposefully sampled group of Grade One isiXhosa-speaking children began the process of becoming literate in English as their second language. The research looked specifically for evidence of strategic behaviours in reading and writing which, according to Clay (2001, 2005), form the foundation for self-extending systems and have the potential to accelerate learning. The research was guided by the principles of Clay's early intervention Reading and Writing Recovery. By Clay's definition, self-extending systems are literacy processing systems that work, that is, they enable children to continue to learn to read by reading and to write by writing. Within this context, the research explored the role of oral language in learning to read and write in English. Consideration was given to the potential for transfer of the principles that underlie Reading Recovery to South African mainstream classrooms in an attempt to raise literacy outcomes for all. This is a particularly urgent need in South Africa where many attempts to turn around poor trajectories of literacy learning do not seem to have the desired long term effects. The results of the research showed that the children began to actively engage in their English literacy learning within a network of strategies, primarily motivated by making meaning of their texts. The findings of the research suggested that a mismatch of needs and instructional procedures was evident here in this formative stage of second language literacy learning. The results suggested that children who were already educationally at risk for a multitude of reasons, were being set back even further by instructional approaches that were unresponsive to their linguistic needs.

Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature *UO Donoghue*   Date *20/4/2012*

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Thank you to so many for their contributions to this research. Specific mention must be made of my supervisor, Sarah Murray, for her astute and gentle "expert othering" and to you Patrick, Kathryn and Sarah for your unfailing enthusiasm in all that I undertake. Thank you for helping me to "Go beyond the known" (Clay, 2001, p. 127).

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are used with invariant meanings in this research study.

RR:	Reading and Writing Recovery (Clay, 2001.): A research-based early literacy intervention.
LARR:	The LARR Test of Emergent Literacy (Downing, Schaefer and Ayres, 1993)
EAL:	English as an Additional Language
SLA:	Second Language Acquisition
L1:	The first / home language
L2:	The second language
FAL:	First Additional Language
LoLT:	Language of Learning and Teaching
DBE:	Department of Basic Education, South Africa
ANAs:	Annual National Assessments
NCS	National Curriculum Statement (South Africa, 2003)

Definition of terms and concepts specific to the research

Self-extending systems

Clay's definition of self-extending systems is used as follows (2001)
A self-extending system

> can be thought of as bringing about new forms of mediation, or altering an existing
> working system to become more effective, or compiling more effective assemblies
> of systems. Such changes would come from powerful interactions with teachers,
> from building larger reading vocabularies, from comparing and evaluating
> decisions, from extending a network of strategies for problem-solving, and from
> increasing the range of texts read and therefore the opportunities to work the
> system. (p. 136)

Strategic behaviours:

The term 'strategic' is used by Clay (2001, p. 127) "in the limited sense of knowing how to

work on words, sentences and texts to extract the messages they convey." Strategic

behaviours are the foundation for constructing a self-extending system (ibid, p. 123). Self-

correcting and self-monitoring behaviours are evidence of the construction of a self-

extending system.

Literacy 'acquisition' as opposed to 'learning'

I have used the terms 'acquisition' for conceptual consistency. I suggest, however, that the

terms acquisition and learning could both be used to reflect both the explicit and implicit

nature of becoming literate.

Second language / additional language acquisition

I have used the term 'second language' to refer to both the second and additional languages (Saville Troike, 2003, p. 2).

Reading Recovery ®

Reading Recovery ® refers to the Reading Recovery Programme which is the result of Marie Clay's research. The implementation of the RR Programme requires intensive training and accreditation as a RR teacher. This research draws on the principles which underpin the Reading and Writing Recovery approach referred to as RR in this research (Clay, 2001, 2005).

Chapter One: The Context of the Research, its Motivation and Rationale

1. Introduction

Although a number of personal and professional factors conflated to motivate this research, it was at heart a simple response to the reports of downward trends in literacy in South Africa and, in particular, in the Eastern Cape. This first chapter serves to contextualise the research study within the South African educational context and to give a rationale for my undertaking of the research. Guided by the theoretical principles of Reading Recovery (Clay, 2001, 2005) (hereafter referred to as RR), within a socio-constructivist research paradigm, the research explored the early literacy behaviours in English of a sample group of six children for whom English is their second language and their Language of Learning and Teaching (hereafter referred to as LoLT). This seemed to me to be a relevant conversation to have in the current South African context where English is both the second language and the LoLT for the majority of learners and for whom, in many cases, this prevents their full participation in the learning of the classroom.

The children were chosen as being representative of the literacy achievement levels in their Grade One class. The names used are not the children's real names. Both quantitative and qualitative data were combined within a single case study to construct a picture of the ways in which these children begin to engage with English. The single case study design afforded close and detailed observations of the research participants. I chose this particular research site for the school's policy of English language instruction within an isiXhosa-

English bilingual context. The primacy of the child's home language as a medium of instruction was, and is, beyond debate but was not a part of this research.

2. *Overview of the research*

The study was framed by the theoretical principles of Marie Clay's research-based intervention, RR (2001) and her Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (hereafter referred to as OS) (2005). The central focus of the research was an exploration, by both systematic and participant observation, of the ways in which these children begin to construct literacy processing systems in English as an additional language. The research explored whether or not these children began to develop a network of strategic behaviours in their literacy learning. The research report discusses the potential of these early strategic behaviours for setting a child on a successful path towards the development of self-extending systems in reading, writing and oral language in English. The idea of self-extending systems was compelling in its potential for accelerated literacy learning and disruption of the formation of ineffective behaviours at this formative stage. A key factor in the research was the possible relevance of the RR instructional approach in the South African bilingual context.

The research data was collected over a period of twenty weeks between January and June at the beginning of the children's Grade One year in 2011. I chose The OS (Clay, 2005) to both collect and analyse the data because of its focus on strategic literacy behaviours and its potential for observation of a child's early literacy processing. Although the emphasis was on children constructing their own learning, the role of a teacher was vital in creating the scaffolding structures within which the children were able to construct their learning. To this end, the participant observation method afforded me the role of "knowledgeable

other," a Vygotskian term (Ellis, 1997, p. 48) used to describe the process in which children learn concepts that would be beyond them without the help of this knowledgeable other.

The research design was a single case study of a Grade One class in a primary school on the outskirts of a small town in the Eastern Cape. As a case study it provided detailed quantitative and qualitative data that arose from the researcher-child interactions in the intervention phase and from the use of Clay's Observational Instrument (Clay, 2005). As a case study it enabled the researcher to observe and acknowledge the interactions that occurred between the researcher and the children as they began to build their literacy processing systems in English. It also enabled some observations of the immediate classroom context and its wider social community beyond school. Cognisance was taken of this socio-cultural context as one that shaped the outcomes of the study. Also relevant was the broader socio-historical-political context which has inevitably shaped the instructional and literacy discourse of the school.

3.   *Rationale for the research study*

I chose to research literacy development in an additional language because this is the situation for the majority of children in South Africa. It is an area where many misunderstandings of second language learning in English impact negatively on the learning progress of many children for whom this is a reality. I suggest that, for this reason, many children are labelled as having learning difficulties instead of having their particular linguistic needs recognised. I further suggest that, because their bilingual identities are not affirmed, it may be possible that they are prevented from becoming

invested in both the first and second language learning process and from actively constructing meaning from this process.

I chose Clay's theoretical model of early literacy development because of its claim that, through early intervention, it is possible to establish a successful reading and writing trajectory. It does so by aiming to produce learners "who develop the strategic base for the complex literacy processing which they will need to engage as ten, twelve or sixteen-year old readers" (Clay, 2001, p. 219). Clay's OS (2005) allows observation of the literacy processing behaviours of children in their learning before these can be evaluated on standardised tests. Thus, a view of children as competent / emerging learners was enabled. This competence-based view of children's learning is consistent with my own personal pedagogical aspirations and belief system.

In the negativity around literacy in South Africa, Clay's theoretical framework presented an opportunity for children to become empowered stakeholders in their own literacy learning. This type of quality, self-sustaining learning may be a more productive way forward for teachers and children in the second language teaching and learning situation. I would hope that this research could contribute something to discussions on the nature of literacy processing in English as an additional language for South African children and open up further questions for research.

Further justification for this research project arose from my own teaching experience in the field of special education and, more specifically, in the field of specific learning difficulties. My experience of remedial literacy teaching led me to an interest in the difficulties that children experience in their learning of literacy skills and to a recognition of the personal and collective strengths, competencies and particular difficulties they bring

to the process. My personal experience has been of remedial programmes that are defined by educational systems and systems of thinking that, albeit unintentionally, limit their effectiveness. It has been my experience that they unintentionally widen the gap and reinforce the idea of learner deficit.

Educational trends in inclusive practice in South Africa and on a global level have resonated with my deeply held beliefs about the ability of all children to learn. It has been my passion to turn around children's negative learning experiences and explore ways in which they can actualise their individual learning potential. At a fundamental level this means challenging deficit thinking and assumptions. I have increasingly found that inclusive educational practices hold far greater potential benefit for children and that RR (Clay, 2001, 2005) supports the basic principles of inclusive education in its focus on the success of all children. My work within the RR approach to literacy has convinced me that this approach provides a transformative way forward in thinking about literacy achievement in a second language context.

I chose the research site for its policy of instruction in English where learners are second-language speakers of English. This site provided an example of the barriers imposed on children in South Africa by their lack of English proficiency. My intention was to observe the extent to which effective self-extending systems could develop in English as an additional language and how the bilingual language context impacted on the learning of English. Large classes pose a significant constraint to effective teaching and this is the norm in South Africa, particularly in the lower socio-economic sectors. One of the goals of my research was to examine the extent to which it was possible to adapt the RR approach to large classes based on an assumption that the approach could possibly accelerate the acquisition of literacy in English.

The research was a single case study within a social constructivist paradigm. The social constructivist orientation of the research opened up possibilities for significant change in literacy outcomes for children by affording them opportunities to play active and increasingly independent roles in their learning. In exploring self-extending literacy systems,both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in ways that were consistent with the research methodology. The case-study design enabled an in-depth, detailed exploration and analysis of the real life context within which the six children took hold of their early literacy learning. In line with social constructivist theory, the research was undertaken collaboratively with the research participants and was open to new knowledge constructions in the process.

One of the goals of this research was to explore the notion already voiced by researchers such as Clay (2001, 2005), Fountas and Pinnell (2001), and Kidd (2011) that standardised, large-scale assessments were not able to provide the instructional feedback needed as impetus for change in literacy outcomes particularly in second language contexts. I considered the notion that traditional, primarily phonics/skills-based approaches, were limiting and denied literacy learners of English in a second language context access to the varied scaffolding networks they needed to build the language. I wanted to show how the use of the RR observational instrument (Clay, 2001, 2005) could provide this alternative assessment tool. With this knowledge the implications for additional language literacy instruction could be more credibly considered.

The research was conceptualised and implemented as two distinct design phases. The first phase was the intervention in the form of one-to-one tutoring sessions. This was ongoing throughout the twenty-week research period and guided by RR principles. The second

phase was the administration of structured systematic observations using the OS (Clay, 2005) at four weekly intervals over the twenty-week research time frame. In both design phases, the children were removed individually from the classroom environment so that close and uninterrupted observations could be made of their literacy behaviours in a one-to-one situation. As teacher-researcher, I took up two different roles during these two parts of the research. These were:

1.   An active participant-observer role during the intervention phase of the research.
2.   A neutral observer during the structured systematic observation phase of the research.

My tentative proposal was that the identification of such strategic behaviour held the potential for more sustainable literacy learning. If so, this would necessitate a review of instructional methods based on a view of literacy, bi-literacy and bilinguality as a socio-cultural resource and of children as active agents in their own learning. This would mean acknowledging the years of prior learning, or of the "funds of knowledge" (Moll in Fuller and Hood, 2005, p. 65), that every child brings to his/her school experience. It would mean placing children's competencies and expertise at the centre of the instruction process in ways that build their bilingual identity. In undertaking this research I acknowledge the powerful reality of poverty and the educationally limiting effects of social-economic disadvantage. I sought, however, a competence-based approach that considers what is possible, rather than one framed by deficits.

4. *The research context.*

My research site was a Grade One class in a primary school in a township on the outskirts of a town in the Eastern Cape Province. There were forty-three children in the class and the language of instruction was English. Literacy was developed separately in isiXhosa, the home language of the majority of the children. The educational goal was for children to acquire literacy simultaneously in English and isiXhosa, with English as the LoLT. The school has a Roman Catholic tradition and currently caters for children from Grade One through to Grade Nine.

The school was originally intended to serve the black and coloured communities in the township when South African communities were politically divided along racial lines. When the Bantu Education Act was passed in 1955 the Catholic Church refused to hand over the school to the Government and, as a result, all Government financial aid was withdrawn from the school. The school continued on its own terms but was ultimately handed over to the Government in 1980 and was forced to close in the mid 1980's as a result of the country's political turmoil.

Despite the political turnaround of 1994, children from the township schools were being excluded from the formerly white schools in town because of their lack of fluency in English and lack of financial resources. The Assumption Sisters, and one in particular, realised the vision and the desire of local parents and children of this community, of re-establishing an English-medium primary school in the town. The motivation was to provide an opportunity for children from township schools to gain access into the so-called 'advantaged' schools in the town by increasing their competence in English (Rosaire, 2010, p.2). The vision was to give children a year in their Mother tongue (isiXhosa) and

then introduce them to English in Grade 2. The approach was based on the Molteno

Project Programmes 'Breakthrough to Xhosa' and 'Bridge to English'.

The Molteno Project is a programme for teaching initial literacy using the mother tongue.

It is a child centered programme that capitalizes on authentic instructional practices such

as the Language Experience Approach (LEA), a literature-based method that uses

children's own dictated stories as the basic text for the children's reading and writing. In

this way it is similar to the principles of RR. It was reported that the pupils involved in the

Molteno project made substantive progress in their literacy abilities when compared to

children receiving more traditional instruction (Duncan, 1995, p. 1). The original policy of

the school was that in Sub A (Grade One) the mother tongue of the pupils, isiXhosa, was

to be the LoLT. The Sub B's (Grade Two) were introduced to English by means of the

Molteno Project's Bridge to English, and English became the medium of instruction in

Standard One (Grade 3) (Rosaire, 2010, p. 8).

As permission and financial support for the school was unforthcoming from the

Department of Education, the school was unofficially opened in April 1993. "Given the

parlous state of education in Black schools, it was not considered an irregularity that the

unregistered school was actually operating illegally" (Rosaire, 2010, p. 5). It was finally

officially registered with the Department of Education in December 1993. In 2000, the

Chairperson of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) described this

school as "exactly what the parents in our townships want…a first-class school in our own

back yard" and the "first English-medium school in the township" (Rosaire, 2010, p. 12).

In a personal communication with Rosaire (June 2011), she expressed her disappointment

at the paucity of literacy resources available in isiXhosa to the Grade One teacher at the

time and commented that this remains the situation to date. She also expressed her dismay

at the large classes and that the school had extended to Grade 8 and 9, the original intention of the school being to cater for children up to Grade Seven.

5. *The school's current situation.*

The school has both an isiXhosa teacher and an English teacher. There is a preschool where the LoLT is isiXhosa. In a personal communication with Sister Rosaire (June 15 2011), I was told that learning the letters of the alphabet in English, saying the alphabet in English and being able to write your name are expected outcomes of the preschool curriculum. Whilst the value of learning in one's mother tongue is unquestionable, and well-documented in the literature, this was not the focus of this study.

The school has a library, which has a history of being a hallowed place. The teacher who oversees its use is very proud of the way it looks – it is her responsibility to keep it clean and orderly and she does this herself. She has two librarians (a Grade Nine and a Grade Seven boy), who come in at break-time and tidy the books. A small but regular group of children come in at break-time to read (a large group when it is raining). The majority of books are in English and I was privileged to overhear one little girl reading aloud to herself from an English story-book in a determined way. Whilst my observations showed me that the value of the library as a literary resource was fully recognised, it was not used to develop children's literacy skills.

In my initial interview with the Headmaster (September 2010), he told me that he had had a relatively large percentage of children psychologically assessed, so as to gain the required number of points which allow his application for more funding and staff allocations. This policy is detailed in the SIAS Document (Screening, Identification,

Assessment and Support) (DoE, 2008). It entails the allocation of points regarding a child's level of special educational need. The point system is weighted on a continuum of special needs and extra funding and/or support is allocated to the school on the basis of these points. Having children assessed to qualify for extra points emphasises the need that teachers have for remedial support, intervention and expertise. It may also explain the overrepresentation of children who are learning English as an additional language in the special needs category. This serves to underscore the challenges faced by teachers in terms of large classes and the need for infrastructural support. It also suggests our limited understanding of, and ineffectiveness in addressing, the nature of bilingualism and the bi-literacy and educational needs of bilingual children.

6.   *South African language policy.*

Language policy in South Africa has been the source of heated debate and revision for many years. The implementation of the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) in May 1997 (South Africa, 1997, p. 1) was part of a national plan to build a new non-discriminatory South Africa. It was intended to facilitate communication and build respect across all groups in South Africa. Whilst acknowledging societal and individual multilingualism as the norm, it proposed an additive approach to bilingualism. This meant maintaining the home language whilst "providing access to and effective acquisition of additional languages(s)" (South Africa, 1997, p. 1). The policy vested the right to choose the LoLT in the individual as long as this choice was in accord with the promotion of multilingualism. The LiEP is a continuous process. To further promote its goal, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Document (hereafter referred to as CAPS) (DoE, 2011) is to be implemented in South African schools in January 2012. CAPS is a revision of the National Curriculum Statement (2003). It states that, from 2012 schools must introduce a

first additional language (FAL) in Grade One classrooms whereas previously they could choose to wait until Grade Three.

This research site is typical of many schools in the Eastern Cape in which the majority of children speak isiXhosa as their first language, English as their second language and use English as the LoLT. At this school it was the choice of parents to have their children educated in English so as to gain wider access to schools in the area. The children learnt isiXhosa simultaneously but the amount of instructional time given to it accorded it a lower status within the school. The Grade One teacher's first language (hereafter referred to as L1) was English and the isiXhosa teacher's L1 was isiXhosa. The current principal speaks fluent isiXhosa and English.

Instruction in isiXhosa took place during the first part of the school morning on a Tuesday and Thursday and English literacy learning took place from 10.30a.m. until the school's closing time at 12.15 p.m. English instruction continued on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. IsiXhosa was heard on the playground amongst the children as they played and they switched seemingly easily from isiXhosa to English when speaking to a teacher. In conversations with me they drew on the linguistic resources of their friends when in search of an English word. It is likely that a significant amount of social support was derived for the children from these playground and peer interactions. This social cohesiveness was also probably a by-product of large classes and of the teacher being unable to meet the needs of all the children in the class.

7.   *Goals of The Research Study*

7.1.   To collaboratively explore how Clay's Observation Survey of Early Literacy

Achievement (2005) can identify strategic problem solving in reading and writing in English and the extent to which these processes can support each other in literacy acquisition.

7.2. To adapt, through collaborative exploration, second / additional English literacy instruction to children's competencies in such a way that it enables them to develop self-correcting and self-monitoring behaviours which are the foundation for self-extending systems (Clay, 2001, 2005).

7.3. To examine the extent to which oral language can support literacy learning in EAL.

8. Research Questions:

8.1. How do bilingual readers and writers engage with text in EAL in the early stages of their literacy learning?

8.2. What strategic problem solving behaviours are evident in the ways bilingual readers and writers engage with text in their additional language in the early stages of literacy learning?

8.3. How can the oral language resources of these beginning readers and writers in English be used to support their development of reading and writing as self-extending systems?

8.4. How meaningfully can the data derived from the Systematic Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) be used to increase instructional effectiveness and monitor changes in literacy acquisition?

9. Other South African research in the field of RR and early literacy

9.1. Nathanson (March 2008): A School-Based Balanced Approach To Early Reading Instruction For EAL Learners Grades 1 – 4. PhD Thesis, University of

Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch, Western Cape. Nathanson conducted a reading intervention in the Western Cape aimed at helping teachers to maximise teaching time through RR which she described as a theoretically sound approach that balanced language experience and skills (phonics and word level instruction). She used The Observation Survey Of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 1993) in a pre and post-test design. The data was used to give feedback to teachers to guide their instruction. The overall results of her research support a balanced transactional perspective of reading (Nathanson, 2008, p. 144). She reported significant gain to both teachers and learners as a result of the intervention but found that long-term, sustained development was necessary to maintain the high levels achieved as a result of the research (ibid, p. 163).

9.2.   Kidd, N. (2011). A Levelled Literacy Intervention for Foundation Phase Learners. M.Ed Thesis. University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch. Kidd's research responded to the reported poor literacy levels in the Western Cape by designing, a literacy intervention programme based on RR principles (Clay, 1993). She used the Observation Survey assessment tasks (Clay, 2002) as the main research instrument within a pre-test, mid-test and post-test design. Three grade three learners who were experiencing difficulties in their literacy acquisition were chosen for the study. A control group of four averagely-performing learners was also selected for comparative purposes. This programme was designed to accelerate the learning process of struggling learners through strategy use and use of levelled texts. The intervention supported the effectiveness of RR as an individual early intervention strategy in that the learners receiving additional support reached the average level of the control group.

9.3.   Hodgkiss, J. A. (February 2007). A Case Study: Tracing the Development of Emergent Literacy in a Grade R class. M.Ed Thesis. Rhodes University,

Grahamstown. Hodgkiss (February 2007) traced and recorded the emergent literacy development (based on the work of Clay, 1996) of a class of Eastern Cape Grade R children over a period of two months. Her intention was to ascertain whether Grade R teachers could reach the South African DoE Assessment Standards by following emergent literacy principles. She found disparities between L1 isiXhosa and L1 English-speaking children on the basis of gender, socioeconomic status and language proficiency. Her cautionary note to teachers was to understand the influence of these factors in literacy acquisition so as to prevent the inevitable consequent gaps in achievement.

10. *Overview of the chapters*

10.1. Chapter One.

Chapter One contextualised the research study in the field of early literacy in English as a second language and within the South African educational situation. It described the problem of low literacy levels in South Africa and the Department of Basic Education's initiative (2011) in addressing these. In describing the theoretical socio-constructivist framework of the research, it placed emphasis on the research site and key participants as central to the study. It described RR principles (Clay, 2001) and justified the use of Clay's OS (Clay, 2005) in exploring early literacy acquisition in English as a second language. It explained the potential of strategic behaviours in accelerating literacy learning and the benefit of this to South African children within an inclusive educational model.

10.2. Chapter Two

Chapter Two documents the relevant literature on RR and its emphasis on processing systems in English from a socio-psycho-linguistic perspective. For the purposes of this research, it extends this into a discussion on early literacy in English as a second language. The chapter draws insights from the literature on the nature of literacy acquisition in a second language. The benefits of bilingualism are put forward. The discussion uses Clay's (2001, 2005) literacy processing theoretical framework as the primary vantage point from which other theories are viewed. The key focus in this chapter is on the potential value of strategic behaviour to literacy acquisition in English as a second language. This strategic behaviour is evidence of, according to Clay (2001, 2005), the beginnings of a child's inner control of a literacy processing system, which has the capacity to extend itself. The result of this is the construction of an independent self-sustaining literacy processing system and, in the context of this research, within a bilingual identity.

10.3. Chapter Three

Chapter Three describes the socio-constructivist orientation of the research as well as its design and methodological orientation. It justifies the use of a single case study design as the design most suitable to developing an in-depth understanding of the early literacy behaviours of this small purposefully sampled group of bilingual children. It describes how both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through participant and systematic observation and the use of both Clay's Observation Instrument (Clay, 2005) and The LARR (Downing et al, 1993). Interviews, field notes, work samples and oral transcripts add to the descriptive interpretation of the research.

10.4. Chapter Four

Chapter Four presents the quantitative and qualitative results of the research. The results are organised so that they show strategic behaviours and change over time as indicators of the development of early self-extending systems. Quantitative data are presented in graph and table form. Line graphs show time series to emphasise change over time in the children's scores. Qualitative data are presented in descriptions of literacy events and interactions. Diagrams give samples of the children's work and diagrams and tables illustrate features of the text where appropriate.

10.5. Chapter Five

Chapter Five draws the data and the literature together into a discussion that assesses the strength of the approach to the field of early literacy in English as a second language in South Africa and more specifically in the Eastern Cape. It examines consistencies and non-consistencies between the research findings and selected literature in this field. It concludes with a consideration of the possibilities for an alternative literacy paradigm in South Africa.

11. *Summary and conclusion.*

This chapter described the South African educational context of the research study. It described how low literacy levels in English and African languages are of concern to those invested in education and how these are undermining the country's goal of a democratic and literate society. It briefly documented the Department of Basic Education's initiative (South Africa, 2010) in addressing this problem. It explained how the situation is made more complex by that fact that the majority of South African children learn in English, a language that is not their mother tongue. Significant systemic constraints compound the

difficulties. This research explored alternative ways of describing these difficulties in acquiring early literacy in English by placing them within a developmental model of literacy acquisition. This enabled an alternative approach to intervention into the cycle of deficit thinking around the children's (lack of) progress.

Chapter Two: The Theoretical Context of the Research Study

1.Introduction

This chapter situates the research study within the relevant literature on early literacy acquisition in English as a second language. Central to this research is an understanding of the historically derived educational inequities in South Africa in particular with regard to their role in shaping unequal literacy outcomes in English where, for the majority of children, English is both their additional language and the LoLT. It is therefore likely that many children are learning in a language they do not fully understand and are prevented from full access to and participation in the learning that takes place in their classroom.

The chapter is premised on the importance of early successful bi-literacy experiences that build effective foundations for successful subsequent literacy experiences. The key question is what can be done in South Africa to raise levels of literacy for the majority of our school children and, more specifically, how can we best intervene to prevent inefficient strategies from being formed. Such intervention pays forward into more successful learning in the higher grades by preventing early literacy learning difficulties. Important conversations have already begun in South Africa as to how this can be achieved and this research hopes to contribute to these.

In any intervention, the primary consideration needs to be of the children themselves. It needs to take notice of what they bring to their learning situation in terms of their bilingual identity and prior learning and the implications that these hold for teaching and learning. This research advances a model of literacy acquisition based on the principles of Marie

Clay's RR (2001, 2005). RR is intended to accelerate learning by helping children to build literacy processing systems that work. These efficient literacy-processing systems are self-extending because they "expand and extend in speed, range, effectiveness and complexity" (Clay, 2001, p. 305). They enable the young child, through the development of strategic behaviours to learn to read by reading and to write by writing. In this way, they enable a child to take ownership of the literacy acquisition process. Clay's extensive research was initially undertaken in English monolingual contexts and has been successfully used in other countries. The OS has been translated into Spanish. More recently her research has been extended to the acquisition of English as a second language by researchers Escamilla, Mora and O'Leary (2009), Ashdown (2000) and Neal and Kelly (1999).

The purpose of this research was to explore the relevance of Clay's RR theoretical approach in this bilingual isiXhosa-English context and to determine the significance of self extending systems for children acquiring literacy in English as their additional language. Clay's OS (2005) provided the framework within which the research data were organised, analysed and interpreted. The recognition of the bilingual context of this research, and what it means to be bilingual in the educational context, was central to the findings. This chapter brought together some of the thinking around literacy acquisition in English as a second language. This was primarily from a socio-constructivist view of children as active agents in the construction of their own learning embedded within a social community.

In the research I have suggested that standardised testing provides a limited and limiting view in terms of expectations and achievement for both teachers and children in South Africa and contributes significantly to thinking around the literacy achievements for groups of bilingual learners in deficit terms. This provides the research rationale for the

discussion of Clay's observational approach by questioning the value of large-scale

standardised testing in English where English is the second language. My research argues

for the suitability of a systematic observational approach in early literacy in the South

African instructional context for additional language speakers of English. I suggest that it

offers a way of intervening into "the cycle of deficits" (Clay, 2001, p. 223) and of

directing attention to a child's competencies rather than deficits.

Clay's theoretical position is informed by her belief in the capacity of children to actively

participate in their own literacy learning through interaction within a community. Through

active agency, participation and interaction with a more knowledgeable adult, the child

takes increasing inner control of the processes of reading writing and oral language. This is

consistent with social constructivist thinking. My research explores and extends this

theoretical position to the second language acquisition context. This is guided by a socio-

psycholinguistic, developmental view of literacy learning. Such a theoretical position

explains literacy as being underpinned by cognitive and linguistic processes and as

existing in a social-cultural context as a social practice where many variables interact to

produce different outcomes. Clay's RR approach is useful in acknowledging the individual

differences that occur in literacy outcomes but in having as its purpose, the production of

common literacy outcomes for children despite their many individual differences.

2. The South African context: literacy learning in EAL

Post-apartheid education in South Africa reflects the deep inequities that were the

consequence of political motivations. Fleisch (2007, p. 2) elaborates on this, saying that

"when learners' average scores [in large-scale assessments] are disaggregated, the picture

tells a devastating story of unequal learning." These deep inequities are most evident in

areas of low socio-economic status (Manuel, 2011, p. 12; Fleisch, 2007, p 3). Under-provisioning, insufficient teacher training, demoralization of teachers with constant curriculum revision and uncertainty, teacher absenteeism and huge classes are amongst some of the challenges of the South African educational system (Manuel, 2011, p. 12; Pretorius and Currin, 2010, p.68).

In 2011, the situation does not seem much improved. Key challenges are again identified as: "low levels of literacy and numeracy in our schools, low competence and skills levels of at least half of our teachers; poor infrastructure in some areas; poor teaching and learning in some schools and low grasp of English" (Manuel, 2011, p.12). The Minister of Basic Education in South Africa, Ms Angie Motshekga, is quoted as saying (Khumalo, November 18, 2011):

> Significant numbers of Grade 3 and Grade 6 learners did not attain the required literacy and numeracy levels in the exam conducted country wide in February 2011. Of the Grade 3 learners only 35% of them are on a proficient literacy level and only 28% of them are on a proficient numeracy level. Only 28% of the Grade 6 learners are on a proficient literacy level and only 30% of the Grade 6 learners are on a proficient numeracy level.

Manuel (2011, p. 12) makes comment on Provincial Education Departments that "frustrate the best efforts of schools instead of complementing them." Fleisch, (2007, p. 3) refers to the "bimodal distribution of achievement" which contours the landscape of South Africa's education system. He says most international studies attribute this to the limited set of linguistic and literacy codes that children from poor and working-class families possess. This disadvantages them when they get to school. Lotz-Sisitka (2011) says that the South African educational system is not operating within the cultural framework of the majority of its learners and is not creating sustainable learning practices. These factors are crucial to

the understanding of literacy in South Africa as being "historically situated and patterned by social institutions and power relationships" (Barton and Hamilton, 1998, p. 2).

Whilst the reasons for these low performance levels are complex, it seems that large class sizes exacerbated by under-resourcing and a LoLT that is, in most cases, different to the child's home language can be isolated as being the significant reasons for this low performance (DBE, 2011, p. 23; Obanya, 2004, p. 16). Wagner in Bloch (2000) isolates the problem as one in which

> Poor second language proficiency is a principal cause of high repetition and wastage rates, and of low achievement in academic subjects in primary and secondary schools, with profound consequences for employment and other externalities of schooling. (p.16)

Fleisch (2007, p. 111) says another profound inequity is found between urban and rural schools. He refers to the 'English language infrastructure' in urban schools as a result of which children are exposed to environmental print, have greater access to the media and experience more of a multilingual learning situation. He suggests that English can be accurately called an additional language in the urban areas. By contrast, for those in the rural areas, it is "essentially a foreign language" (Fleisch, 2007, p. 111). Fleisch (ibid, p. 111) continues saying "It is often language resources in the home, the community and the school that make the critical difference between academic success and failure."

Despite these reports of failure, several initiatives are afoot to try to improve this situation. Manuel (2011, p. 12) says that "While education has always been a high priority for this [the South African democratically elected government of 1994] government, since 2009 it has become the single highest priority, or apex priority as it is called." Motshekga (DoE,

2011; allAfrica, 2011) emphasizes the Department of Basic Education's most recent

initiative in addressing this situation:

> The strategy to address the poor performance in literacy and numeracy must be a
> national one that integrates all the provincial initiatives in this area ... the strategy
> will target classrooms and teachers as key levers for change in learner performance.
> It will be guided by the department's 2012 priority of consolidating the work
> around the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), Annual National
> Assessments and the workbooks. (p. 1)

Henning and Green (2011, p. 1) report on their initiatives at teacher education level to

"begin to give substance to the framework of systematic longitudinal research trying to

find some information on the inner workings of the schools, universities, teachers, teacher

educators and the larger system, all of which in some way are not serving the children of

the country well enough."

3. *Standardised assessments*

The attainment of democracy in 1994 in South Africa held significant implications for the

national curriculum. In the interests of socio-political transformation, a very open-ended

constructivist, outcomes-based curriculum was implemented in 1997. Inclusive education

(2006) was a cornerstone of this curriculum. The central feature of the curriculum was the

idea that all learners could achieve but at their own pace and in their own way. Teachers

were, however, ill-prepared for the pedagogical shifts required and learners weren't

achieving what they should (Jansen, 2011). As a result, South Africa moved from an

outcomes-based to a standards-based curriculum, which was more explicit about what

should be achieved at the end of each grade. Systemic evaluations were introduced, and

most recently Annual National Assessments (ANAs) (DBE, 2011) so that the DBE could keep track of learners' educational progress.

The 2006 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (Howie, Venter, van Staden et al, 2006) is an international comparative study of the reading literacy of young students. It placed South African learners as the lowest-scoring participants in the study and the Eastern Cape, where this research is situated, as the lowest scoring province. The results of the 2011 ANAs (DBE, 2011) show that the situation remains dire. Despite their valuable monitoring effect, these systemic evaluations have, in many ways, negatively shaped research and thinking in the field of literacy in South Africa. They have provided compelling evidence of the crisis that South African schools are facing in respect of literacy learning but they have failed to feed positively into the instructional process. Shepard describes large-scale assessments as having an effect of being "imprisoned in the identity of a bad pupil and an opponent" (2000, p. 10) and it is possible that this is the effect that has developed in South Africa. Pretorius and Currin (2010, p. 63) raise a major concern saying that, although large-scale studies such as the PIRLS Study, validly show poor performance in reading, they do not (cannot), show how reading performance is affected by the language in which it is assessed. The teaching to state-mandated tests, which inevitably follows, exacerbates the dilemma (Delpit, 2006, p. 221).

Bloch (2006, p. 43) expresses a similar concern for the over-reliance on standardized assessments saying that "the initiatives we promote can become no more than pockets of innovation, unless the current mode of mass education undergoes major changes, not least because it functions - in the name of progress and equity, as a mechanism for uniformity and standardisation." She refers to "the obsessive use of standardised tests which rather

than ensuring high standards of 'basic literacy' may lead to "an instrumental approach to literacy teaching." She (ibid) continues saying that

> Classroom practice has arguably become visibly shaped by assessment criteria … impacting upon teachers' understandings of the nature of literacy development. A surface approach to literacy is likely to profile forms and features of text at the expense of meaning and purpose, so that from a child's perspective, naming and knowing may appear to be given precedence over using and understanding language in meaningful contexts. (p. 43)

It is the assumptions created by standardised testing and the way these shape classroom instruction, that contribute to the discourse of deficit and the perpetuation of certain assumptions about children's ability or inability to learn. The view that all children are capable of learning something, is central to remedial intervention and to inclusive educational practice. Further, Moraes (1996) argues the need for recognition of the child's individual reality which is overlooked in large-scale standardized testing, saying that:

> There exists little room for standardised tests within the conception of a dialogic-critical pedagogy for bilingual education, since these standards are not reflective of students' culture and daily experiences. Therefore, within a dialogic-critical pedagogy, ways of assessment must consider the progress of students based on the knowledge that students create in the classroom as well as the knowledge they bring to the classroom. (p. 122)

This emphasis on standards has had further unintended consequences such as some learners being unable to reach the required standards for various reasons. Learners who fall short of the norms set by standardised assessments are labelled in ways that suggest deficiency. Clay contests this notion of deficit. She says that when we watch children work in "systematic and repeatable ways we begin to uncover some of our own assumptions and notice how wrong these can sometimes be" (2005, p. 9). By this she means that, when we

begin our interaction with what children can do, we discover how potentially capable all children are in their learning and use their competencies to advance their learning. Datta, citing Bernstein (2000), similarly challenges the idea of deficit in the following way

> If children are labelled culturally deprived, then it follows that the spontaneous realisation of their culture, its images and symbolic representations, are of reduced value and significance. Teachers will have lower expectations of children, which the children will undoubtedly fulfil. (p.23)

Datta (ibid, p. 23) says that such assumptions or reductive views [of cultural deprivation] lead to low expectations and seriously impede children's potential to achieve. Within the social constructivist thinking of this research, Au suggests that this challenging of deficit thinking provides a way to rethink "the social construction of success and failure in learning to read in school" (1998, p. 302). It is clear that the cycle and perception of educational deficit in South Africa needs to be broken in some way.

Pretorius and Currin's all-important question is whether this trajectory of reading failure can be turned around and "what kind of intervention is needed to raise reading levels...[for] whole cohorts of children who start off poorly in reading and remain poor readers relative to other readers" (2010, p. 68). Clay maintains that "when we measure the outcomes of teaching with tests, the instruction of the learners is already over... It is almost too late to change the fate of students based on what these scores reveal" (2005, p. 5). Through systematic observation, Clay's RR (2001, 2005) establishes the competencies that all children bring to their early reading and writing behaviours before they can be measured on any standardised test. Cognisance of these competencies is vital for shaping the instructional process and creating effective and sustainable teaching and learning

practices. In this way it may be possible to alter the course of this trajectory of poor literacy acquisition and set children on more successful careers as readers and writers. Clay claims that "all children are ready to learn more than they already know; it is the teachers who need to know how to create appropriate instruction for each child whatever his [her] starting point" (2005, p. 10). Delpit (2006, p. 221) speaks of this same reality in which change is possible and initiated firstly by changes in teachers' attitudes and actions.

Learning in EAL continues to be the source of much debate and controversy in South Africa. The essence of the debate is captured by The Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) (About PRAESA, 1992), in the following way:

> Most South Africans want (and need) to be proficient in English because of the immediate and obvious economic and social benefits of English. However most South Africans are unable to acquire a sufficient degree of proficiency in English under the present educational and social conditions so as to empower themselves…Despite the indispensable value of learning in one's home language, English is the 'lingua franca' in South Africa and increasing globalization entrenches the necessity of proficiency in English. (p.1)

From a different perspective, Escamilla, Mora and O'Leary (2009, p. 4) de-politicise the debate somewhat by saying the question of whether or not we should teach in English in our multilingual world is a redundant one. They say the question should rather be "What kinds of rigour should we be seeing in our English classrooms?" Similarly, Baker (in Datta, 2000, p. viii) refers to the fast-moving rise of English as an international language in our global world and the need, therefore, to learn English effectively. A further challenge to us in our multicultural and multilingual South African society, is to teach English in a way that gives children the opportunity to transfer from one language to another and to bear in mind that "most bilingual children have two sets of referential and social

knowledge" (Datta, 2000, p. 23). Fisher and Williams reinforce this point saying that "Literacy ... brings valuable ways of thinking about ourselves and our world" (2000, introduction). It is crucial that these ways be taken into account in the instructional process.

4.   *Language policy in South Africa.*

Since the inception of democracy in 1994 South Africa has recognized eleven official languages. There has been much discussion and debate about language policy and the role of English in this new democracy. The LiEP (South Africa, 1997) gave School Governing Bodies the responsibility for choosing the LoLT in their school. Most schools in the Eastern Cape choose to have isiXhosa as the LoLT from Grade R to 3, and English thereafter. The Language Policy required that schools introduce an additional language as a subject in Grade 3, but could choose to introduce it earlier if desired. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (DoE, 2003) provided Assessment Standards for Additional Languages from Grade R onwards. However, the Report of the Ministerial Review (2009) recommended that English be introduced as a subject from Grade One onwards. As a result, the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DoE, 2011) will require schools to introduce an additional language in Grade One.

This emphasises the need for increasing the quality of English teaching for bi/multilingual learners alongside the development of their L1. Shifts in our thinking need to take place, firstly about bilingualism as a resource and secondly about the kind of teaching that will enable both the home language and the LoLT to support each other. In the South African multilingual context a project undertaken by PRAESA (2003) aims to introduce English

and isiXhosa bi-literacy to isiXhosa speaking children. Their goal is to improve the instruction in both languages and to raise the status of isiXhosa.

To accommodate this shift in thinking about bilingualism, it may be helpful to think about young children as "emergent bilinguals" rather than English Language Learners. Garcia, Kleifgen and Falchi (January, 2008) expand this point:

> English language learners are in fact emergent bilinguals. That is, through school and through acquiring English, these children become bilingual, able to continue to function in their home language as well as in English, their new language and that of school. When officials and educators ignore the bilingualism that these students can and often must develop through schooling in [the United States], they perpetuate inequities in the education of these children. That is, they discount the home languages and cultural understandings of these children and assume their educational needs are the same as a monolingual child. (p. 26)

This recognition of a bilingual identity is central to providing a relevant and meaningful instructional response.

5. *Challenging the deficit model*

Although the South African DBE's national initiative to lift the education system as a whole, in the form of ANAs (DBE, 2011) is a valuable and necessary one, Clay (2001) raises a cautionary note:

> it is important to think clearly about today's school improvement programmes which aim to raise the general level of achievement. Lifting the average scores in schools will increase rather than decrease the need for early intervention...[such] programmes designed for success will unquestionably create larger gaps between those who can easily meet the challenges and those who have several counts against them when it comes to school learning. Higher general levels of

achievement will create larger gaps between the average and the lowest achievers in literacy acquisition unless special measures are put in place. (p. 216)

To this end, one of the purposes of RR at a systemic level is to lift low achievement levels to average levels of achievement. My research tentatively explored the potential of RR principles to achieve this in a second language context and to show ways in which the assessment can feed more positively into classroom literacy instruction in the bilingual context.

This competence-based view of literacy acquisition places children's competencies and expertise at the centre of the instruction process in ways that allow them to become independent learners (Delpit, 2006, p. 225; Clay, 2001, p. 219). Fuller and Hood (in Comber and Kamler, 2005, p. 64) say this affords learners, especially those marginalised by the literacy programme, the opportunity to "negotiate new and powerful identities…and disrupt processes that place them at risk." This may provide more sustainable, inclusive and relevant ways of thinking about literacy learning in the South African context. Datta says that when educational policies are positive towards bilingualism and cultural diversity "they create a powerful learning resource for bilinguals not only at the cognitive level, but also for personal, social and economic fulfilment" (2000, p. ix).

6.   *Inclusivity in educational practice*

By paying attention to what the child is already able to do, learn and achieve the school builds on the prior experience of the child. Consistent with socio-constructivist thinking, however, children do not simply take on a "fully-determined social world" (Prinsloo and Stein, 2004, p. 69). They also shape the interaction, and so learning and teaching occurs in a bi-directional way. Smidt (2009) says this brings with it an

> Understanding [of] the child's experiences, culture and cultural tools, networks of support and communication, and significant others (adult and peer). This allows us to begin to build another world for the child to learn in and from, and to offer another culture to which the child contributes. (p. 75)

By acknowledging the child's world of experience and knowledge, we can affirm his/her bilingual identity and possibly facilitate a greater personal investment in the acquisition of literacy as a meaningful practice.

Central to inclusive education practice is a view of the child as "an already competent learner" (Rinaldi in Smidt, 2009, p. 74). Kearney (2011, p. 1) talks of inclusive models that, in her view, lift all learners and have the potential to bring about socially just and inclusive societies. She suggests that this extends to communities and societies and is "a very powerful potential consequence of a seemingly specific programme of learning" (ibid, p. 1). This is the vision to which South Africa aspires. Inclusive education was very much part of the new curriculum ideology in South Africa. Its goal and vision was to re-construct a South Africa free of the prejudice and discrimination brought about by apartheid (DoE, 2006, p. 9).

Inclusive education is underpinned by a belief system that all children can learn if barriers to their learning are removed. The key to inclusive practice in the NCS (DoE, 2003) is ensuring that barriers are identified and addressed by all relevant support structures (DBE, 2011, p.5). These barriers to learning and participation are often social constructions. Vygotsky (in Smidt, 2009, p. 164) claimed that "disability is determined by the social aspects of ... impairment." He believed that inclusion lessened negative perceptions and labeling and he developed a unique model of inclusion called 'inclusion based on positive

differentiation' (ibid, p. 164). By this he meant that children with special educational needs must be viewed in terms of their strengths and that they should not be treated with low expectations and a watered-down curriculum. RR is essentially inclusive in its claim that all children are ready to learn something and that instructional programmes that proceed from children's competencies are better equipped to serve their needs (2005, p. 17).

7.   *Models of second language acquisition and becoming literate in EAL*

This research asks how children engage with English as a second language and LoLT as they begin to acquire literacy in that language. This necessitates an understanding of bilingualism and second language acquisition (hereafter referred to as SLA) as both shape and inform the literacy instructional process. Bilingualism, simply put, refers to the ability to speak two or more languages, or to be proficient in many languages (DBE, 2010, glossary). Appel and Muysken (2005, p. 2) differentiate between societal and individual bilingualism, societal bilingualism being a relevant definition for this research study. Societal bilingualism in the South African context describes a situation in which English, as a consequence of colonialism, is the widely-accepted language of learning and teaching. This colonial association makes the use of English problematic as it was perceived as being "the necessity of limited choices"(Janks, 2010, p. 139).

Although educational policy developments in South Africa continually try to address the bilingual situation in terms of increasing accessibility to education and more equal outcomes for all children, it remains a complex and unresolved issue. Ramirez says that "instruction and content which fail to fully consider the role of language development, especially bilingualism, or the relevance of learning activities and materials to the lived experiences of the learner, at this point, seem to be the major obstacles to literacy

development among bilingual students" (2000, p. 30). This statement can be accurately applied to the current South African situation.

An unfortunate consequence of Outcomes Based Education in South Africa has been the undermining of teacher's confidence in their traditionally-held roles (Jansen, 2011, p. 70: Bloch, 2000, p. 34). Ramirez (2000, p. 20) emphasises the importance of promoting positive teacher values, beliefs, and attitudes towards second language learning and English Language Learners in the instructional process. Rupley, Blair and Nichols (2009, p. 119) similarly, emphasise the importance of the teacher to student learning. Although in RR an interactive space is opened up between the teacher and the student, Sylva, Hurry and Peters (1997, p. 375) describe how the teacher's behaviour is the most important component of the instructional scaffold. Where the teaching-learning process is made vulnerable for any reason, as it is in South Africa, serious consideration needs to be given to the rebuilding of teachers' professional identities.

Bialystok explains that it is very difficult to come up with anything definitive on the nature of bilingualism in children because of their "fragile linguistic and conceptual systems" (2000, p. 114). In addition, children's learning is developmental and must, of necessity, change with time and because of time. Bialystok says, however, that all the current models providing evidence on bilingualism, "agree that both language sources are active when one of them is being used" (ibid, p. 102). It is therefore important to take into account both of a child's languages when planning the literacy acquisition process. Factors such as a child's level of proficiency in the second language and the circumstances of the L2 learning seem to be significant in how the development of a second language occurs (Bialystok, 2001, p. 103) and thus also impact on the nature of literacy acquisition.

8.   The advantages of bilingualism to literacy acquisition

An understanding of bilingualism as a potentially powerful resource in learning English as a second language is essential to this study. It seems to be missing in everyday discourse around bilingualism in South Africa at the classroom level. Datta (2000, p. 40) says how important it is that educators work in ways which support children drawing on their first language and literacy experiences and that view bilingualism as an asset. The advantages of bilingualism are evident in the literature from a number of perspectives. Wolf, speaking from a cognitive-linguistic perspective on learning a second language, says that "an early exposed bilingual brain appears to have certain cognitive advantages over a monolingual brain in terms of linguistic flexibility and multitasking" (2007, p. 107). Obanya (2004) explains how being bilingual brings an advantage to the learner in that

> consolidation of the first language lays down deep language structures in that L1. The acquisition of further languages (through the educational system) is considered as a further build up to the deep language structures already acquired in the first language. The benefits of this extend to positive self-concept and improved learning outcomes. (p. 24)

Bialystok (2001, p. 122) says that bilingual children do not have to relearn the fundamental principles of language structure when learning a second language. These are already known from the metalinguistic knowledge that grew out of first language acquisition. Veii and Everatt's research (2005, p. 250) also seems to indicate this. They say that the bilingual child develops the ability to apply strategic knowledge of processing in one language, across both languages. "This seems to occur irrespective of the language in which the child develops these strategies and knowledge" (ibid, p. 250).

Ramirez (2000, p. 22) says that literacy instruction in a second language is made effective by the mediation of several factors. These factors are the balancing of meaning and skill development in teaching, the developing of cultural connections between content and pedagogy, ensuring strategic alternation of the first language and English in instruction, connecting home and school literacy experiences and providing writing activities to help students make sense of print literacy.

Research conducted from a social constructivist perspective addresses the manner in which school literacy learning activities can be restructured to allow students to acquire academic knowledge by building on the foundation of their personal experience or everyday concepts (Au, 1998, p. 300). Such authentic literacy activities have the benefit of exposing children to texts that exhibit the characteristics of true discourse (Nuttall, 1996, p. 177). Au makes the statement for literacy learning to be meaningful, ownership must be its overarching goal (1998, p.300). If bilingual children are to take ownership of their literacy learning, it becomes particularly important to acknowledge that they have two sets of knowledge and two worlds and that instructional approaches need to encourage investment in the second language. Enabling ownership of literacy means allowing children to draw on their own experiences and interests and developing authentic literacy activities not activities contrived for practice. Garcia et al speaks of the importance of recognizing these "everyday practices [as] sites of knowledge construction" (2008, p. 44).

Saville-Troike (2006, p. 137) says that literacy in the L1 facilitates acquisition of competence in an L2 under conditions of formal instruction. Early school settings hold great influence in the shaping of young children's literacy practices and perceptions. – they can be constraining or open up possibilities. Clay (2005, p. 17) says that most children can become literate if the conditions for learning are right for them. Bialystok

reinforces this view saying that "provided that social conditions are appropriate and the contextual situation is supportive, it would follow that bilingual children should equally enter into the literate world of both (or more) languages" (2001, p. 155). It is essential, therefore, to acknowledge what learners bring to the interactive pedagogical space in terms of their L1 and L2, and to recognise that they already have the means to communicate in their L1 (Ellis, 1997, p. 5).

9.   How is RR situated in the wider theoretical context of SLA and literacy acquisition

SLA and literacy acquisition are primarily explained by the psycholinguistic and the sociolinguistic models. A brief description is provided of each so as to understand how RR is theoretically situated. RR holds a transformative or developmental view of children's literacy learning that describes the ways in which "early primitive decision-making is refined and expanded into more efficient decision-making" (Clay, 2001, p. 51). It is a theory of "how an initially simple processing system changes over time to become a complex processing system" (ibid) and how responses change, or develop, from being "simple, slow and separate…[to responses that are] complex, fast and interactive." The use of RR principles to guide this research is premised on the thinking that what happens in one language activates knowledge sources in the other (Bialystok, 2001, p. 134).

9.1.   The Psycholinguistic Model

According to Ellis (1997, p. 57), the psycholinguistic model of SLA is the one that is the most prevalent in explanations of how second languages are acquired. The model emphasizes the mental or cognitive processes involved in acquisition and how these are represented in the brain (Saville-Troike, 2006, p. 3). The key concepts in this model are

that the learner's first language (L1) exerts an influence, positive or negative, over the learning of a second language (L2). The L1 provides "input from the inside" (ibid, p. 52) and transference is not explained as interference but as a cognitive process.

Key to psycholinguistic theory is the concept that processing operations are at work in SLA. Whether or not the learning and acquisition of an L2 is a conscious process is a highly controversial issue according to Ellis (op cit, p. 55). Variations amongst learners in their L2 learning and acquisition are accounted for by social and psychological factors. From a psycho-linguistic perspective, Ellis says it is interaction that "serves as the bedrock of acquisition of a second language" (1997, p. 48).

Consistent with psycholinguistic explanations for literacy acquisition, Clay speaks of shifts in scientific knowledge about learning that support the idea that "some part of the cognitive process is learned or realised through experience" (2001, p. 17) and that, by engaging in literate activities, we create the necessary linked pathways in the brain. Prinsloo and Stein expand on this saying that it is in young children's early encounters with school that they "develop 'theories (and experiences) of the values, constraints and possibilities of language, literacy and other communicative modalities" (2004, p. 69). In extending this to an understanding of emerging bilingualism it is evident, therefore, that successful early literacy/bi-literacy experiences are essential.

The psycholinguistic stance of RR means that the same ways of conceptualising literacy systems in the L1 (as in RR) can be extended to the conceptualisation of literacy systems in the L2. Ashdown (2000); Escamilla et al (2009) and Neal and Kelly (1999) report the successful use of RR with English Language Learners.

9.2. The Socio-linguistic Model

Another explanation for SLA is the socio-linguistic view that children's literacy practices are shaped by and embedded in their socio-cultural communities. Vygotsky (1978) is a well-known proponent of the theory that underpins this model, claiming that language is a shared social activity, historically and culturally shaped and that children learn within communities rather than strictly as individuals (Saville-Troike, 2006, p. 112). Moraes describes how "it is impossible to acquire a second language outside of social constraints...the role of culture becomes an important focus of language acquisition" (1996, p. 122). Lyons corroborates this by explaining how recent discoveries in neuroscience reveal that culture, experience, the context for learning, and social interactions, "play major roles in who we are...how we learn and what we learn" (2003, p. 8). She says that each brain is uniquely structured as a result of different experiences (ibid, p. 24).

Knowledge, from a socio-cultural view, cannot simply be transmitted. It is historically accumulated and culturally developed (Fuller and Hood, 2005, p. 65). "It has to be constructed afresh using previous experiences and strategies gleaned outside and inside school" (Wells in Bloch, 2006, p. 14). Important principles that underlie this theory of active agency in literacy learning are "learning by doing, regulating one's own learning, building individual meaning in a situation or experience and learning with and from others" (Loughran, 2010, p. 35). Sociolinguists claim that these principles need to be built into the literacy instructional process allowing for transactional and collaborative practices to take place.

Clay (2001, p. 6) acknowledges the role of external factors, such as local cultural contexts, in the literacy-learning process and comments on how these can either constrain or

promote the opportunities to learn (ibid, p. 306). She sees the outcomes of literacy instruction as shaped by their local contexts and how societies deliver educational services to children (ibid, 2001, p. 6).

10.   RR (Clay, 2001, 2005)

RR is a research-based, theoretically accountable early intervention developed by Clay and her followers at the University of Auckland, New Zealand from 1969 to the present day. It is an early intervention "designed to reduce the incidence of reading difficulties" whatever the reason for this low achievement (Clay, 2001, p. 217; Mowat, 1999, p. 1). It provides a one-to-one tutoring programme for first graders who are having extreme difficulty learning to read and write (Askew, Fountas, Lyons, Pinnell and Schmitt, 1998, p. 3). The intention of RR is to establish a successful reading and writing trajectory and to intervene before dysfunctional learning strategies take hold. In the context of this research it therefore provides a way to alter perceptions around traditional ideas of deficit thinking within the field of literacy learning in EAL.

RR aims to produce "a working level of literacy skills" (Clay, 2001, p. 237). It is a "complex constructive model of literacy" (ibid, p. 220) that views literacy as making a necessarily complex demand on the process of learning. Clay is concerned with the ways in which children take increasing inner control over the processes of oral language, reading and writing by the acquisition of strategic activities to problem-solve novel aspects of print. This ensures that the learner can continue to learn to read by reading and to learn to write by writing and this is what Clay calls a "self-extending system" (2005, p. 36).

My research tentatively explores the existence and potential of these self-extending systems in the acquiring of literacy skills in English as a second / additional language and attempts to explore their usefulness in creating success and independence for all children in the classroom context. Schwartz claims that "research indicates that Reading Recovery students not only become average or better readers in first grade, they develop a self-extending learning system, which enables them to continue learning in the regular class setting without further intervention" (1997, p. 1). RR (Clay, 2001):

> has a view of constructive children guided by observant, flexible and tentative teachers, taking children along different paths to common outcomes and shaped by local cultural contexts. These contexts change continuously depending on the history of how societies deliver educational services to children and account for variations and inequality in literacy outcomes. (p. 6)

This is a compelling feature of the RR approach. This capacity to advance one's own competencies would go some way towards preventing what Chall, Jacobs and Baldwin identify as the "Grade Four slump" (1990, p. 14) in reading. They attribute the cause of this to a lack of preparation for the stage at which a child is expected to begin to use reading as a tool for learning and analyzing new ideas, facts and opinions. This Grade Four stage requires "more knowledge of word meanings, more advanced word recognition, greater facility in decoding, greater fluency in reading printed text in order to make a shift from concentrating on recognition of words to concentrating on meanings and ideas" (ibid). Pretorius and Currin's research (2010, p. 68) suggests that this shift is difficult for L2 learners: "Because the transition from decoding syllables or words on a chalkboard to meaningful reading texts does not happen easily…Reading as a tool for learning…is thus never properly developed, in either the home language or the LoLT." This is a justification for the development of an instructional approach that develops the capacity for the

individual's strategic control over literacy processing systems (Clay, 2001, p. 127) which is here applied to both the L1 and the L2.

RR's potential to help children extend their literacy processing capacity makes learners somewhat independent of teachers so that some of their progress results from them advancing their own competencies. RR is, therefore, an early intervention that provides the learner with "the potential for subsequent successful progress" (Clay, 2001, p.6). This potential to make faster than average progress enables children experiencing difficulties in reading and writing to catch up with other children in their class. Clay regards children as "constructive individuals pushing the boundaries of their own knowledge, rather than groups led through each step by a teacher" (2001, p. 306).

The daily lessons expose the children to a variety of reading and writing experiences that are designed to help them develop their own effective strategies for literacy acquisition. Instruction is a progressive and accumulative process. It is powerfully and best described by Clay (2005, p. 33) in the following way:

> A kind of end-point of early instruction has been reached when children have a self-extending system of literacy behaviours which means that they learn more about reading and writing every time they read and write, independent of the instruction. When they read texts of appropriate difficulty for their present skills, using their knowledge of oral and written language and their knowledge of the world, they use a set of operations or strategies 'in their heads' which are just adequate for reading and writing the more difficult bits of the text. In the process they engage in problem solving, a deliberate effort to solve new problems using familiar information and procedures. (p. 33)

Clay's developmental model of literacy concerns itself with "a study of change over time in growing organisms, attempting to describe or explain or optimize development" (2001, p. 305). Clay believes that literacy learning involves "bringing one competency into a working relationship with another competency" (2001, p. 300).

This literacy learning is made possible by complex working systems in the brain which are present in their primitive forms from the time that literacy awareness begins. They change and develop over time to more complex processing systems (Clay, 2001, p. 302). This is supported by findings from neuropsychology that reading is brain-based behaviour, facilitated by cognitive processing in interaction with the individual's environment and social context (Lyons, 2003, p. 8). This holds implications of for literacy acquisition in a second language in that it is brain-based behaviour and positioned on a developmental continuum within a socio-cultural context.

11. The Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (OS) (Clay, 2005)

Ellis (1997, p. 4) says that one approach to understanding what processes learners engage in when learning a second language is to collect samples and analyse them carefully. Clay's OS (2005) provides such an approach. It offers a window into the thinking / strategic competence that has the potential to occur with a young child. It places an intense focus on what the learner brings to the literacy situation and teaching proceeds from this point. Ways of increasing instructional effectiveness and responsiveness are an important part of this focus. The Systematic Observation Tasks developed by Clay (2005) are particularly valuable analytical tools in this respect. They allow systematic observation of learning rather than of outcomes and provide detailed observations that can provide relevant feedback to literacy instruction. They allow the teacher to find out about "the

child's existing repertoire, how s/he is getting to his/her responses and whether s/he is relating information from one area of competency to another" (Clay, 2005, p. 144). This affords a valuable analysis of a child's responses as s/he builds a literacy processing system in EAL.

The OS (Clay, 2005) consists of six observation tasks (described in detail in Chapter Three of this study) that allow teachers to closely observe the child at work and, in the case of this research, the ways in which the child engages with literacy tasks in English. The tasks provide both quantitative and qualitative data that guide a teacher's instructional decisions. This observational methodology seems a more helpful way of understanding how bilingual children acquire literacy in English as their second language. Guided by the findings of this observation, this research tentatively proposes ways that may possibly increase the rate of learning in this language and make literacy instruction in English as a second language more meaningful and sustainable within instructional constraints faced by South African teachers.

12. The role of mediation and the zone of proximal development in RR

Some aspects of RR are congruent with a Vygotskian approach (Sylva et al, 1997, p. 373). The dialogic exchanges that occur between the teacher and child acknowledge the active agency of the child in the learning process. Clay's (2001, p. 215) pragmatic view that children "as readers and writers...[and] ...speakers, learn through quality interactions with expert adults" is consistent with Vygotsky's conceptualisation of the role of mediation (Sylva et al, 1997, p. 375). This mediatory role is regarded by Vygotsky (in Smidt, 2009) as central to the construction of learning:

It is through the mediation of others that the child undertakes activities. Absolutely everything in the behavior of the child is merged and rooted in social relations. Through this process children are inducted into culturally mediated ways of remembering things. (p. 33)

In RR the teacher imposes demands for "the conscious realisation of text-solving processes" (op cit, p. 375).

The validity of my role of participant observer in this research study depends strongly on this concept of mediation and Vygotsky's conceptualization of a Zone of Proximal Development (hereafter referred to as the ZPD). Vygotsky (1978, p. 86) describes the ZPD is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers". The ZPD defines "those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state (ibid, p. 86) i.e. "what a child can do with assistance today, she will be able to do by herself tomorrow" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 87). In RR the teacher's continual monitoring of children's responses to teaching behaviours means that the ZPD is in "everyday explicit use as teachers push children to the outer bounds of their competence." (Sylva et al, 1997, p. 375). The purpose of instruction is to provide children with experiences in their "zone" (Lyons, 2003, p. 49). The teacher's behaviour is the most important component of this structuring, or scaffolding (ibid, p. 375; Lyons, 2003, p. 49).

Teachers are not "the only agents in this complex construction of what counts as literacy," but "they are central to its formation in the early years. They are particularly important in contexts where children do not have access to a range of literacy resources in their homes"

(Prinsloo and Stein, 2004, p. 81). "How different teachers engage with literacy pedagogy has important consequences for the kinds of readers and writers these children will become" (ibid, p. 82). Pretorius and Currin's research (2009, p.67) shows the importance of a successful start in reading and how a reading backlog develops for whole cohorts of children who have had a bad start (ibid, p. 75). They stress the need for "realistic 'catch-up' strategies and at the same time a need for a "preventative approach to develop a successful reading trajectory in the home language in the early years." Clay's RR approach may provide a very realistic way forward in this regard.

13. *Competing models of literacy learning*

Current definitions of what it means to be literate have been extended to include reading, writing, listening and speaking. Saville-Troike (2006, p. 137) says that the activities that have highest priority in academic competence are reading and listening. Those with highest priority for interpersonal competence are listening and speaking. Becoming literate has resulted in much debate as to how it is best-acquired. At its most simple, the debate contrasts code/skill-based approaches and whole language approaches. Code-based approaches to literacy acquisition proceed from part to whole with a skill-based emphasis on the correctness of surface forms (Hempenstall, 2004, p. 729). This phonics approach aims to equip children with the tools for decoding text on the assumption that meanings will emerge on their own (Bialystok, 2001, p. 156). By contrast, whole language approaches proceed from whole to part in which all language skills are seen as developmental and interdependent (Matson, 1996, p. 1) with the emphasis on the meaning of the text. Bialystok (2001, p. 155) says that the premise behind whole language debates is that meanings in written texts predominate as they do in spoken language.

Bialystok (2001, p. 156) says few reading programmes ascribe so dogmatically to either position and recognize the merits in each position. Matson (1996, p. 2) refers to the growing preference for a balanced model in literacy instruction. Clay's theoretical model can be described as a balanced combination of both models. Clay (2001, p. 305) says that top down /bottom up models of reading are "unfortunate because they oversimplify what is a network of invisible relationships." She stresses the importance of working with continuous texts and writing simple messages, saying that this is the beginning of building a literacy processing system. She suggests that the texts we give to beginning readers who are experiencing difficulty, are too sparse and our pacing too slow and that richer texts themselves provide supporting structures whereas many remedial materials do not.

RR seems to be largely compatible with what Datta (2000, p.32) calls a 'Construction of Meaning Approach.' This approach incorporates both the skills-based approach and the whole language approach. It provides the learner with an opportunity to co-construct with a teacher, meanings by active and creative participation. Datta (ibid, p. 32) cites Wilks in saying this is a very valuable way for bilingual children to "construct themselves as readers." [and writers and speakers] (my addition). Ramirez (2000, p. 18) endorses this saying "...a reading task is more meaningful when the content draws from the specific cultural experiences of the reader. The provision of culturally relevant material contributes significantly to literacy learning." This is consistent with socio-cultural theories of literacy practices.

The traditional view of literacy instruction in both the L1 and L2 context in South Africa is largely, a phonics/code-based one (Bloch, 2000, p. 21). The child is generally perceived as needing to reach a state of readiness before literacy learning can begin. Progress is

perceived as proceeding according to set of sequenced steps and stages. This can feed into a discourse of deficits rather than competencies.

14. *The role of phonology and orthography in L2 literacy acquisition*

The phonology of a language is represented in its orthography and gaining access to a language means, therefore, acquiring both its phonology and orthography. Acquiring literacy in an L2 is, therefore, an added challenge to the process of literacy acquisition. Different languages make different demands but generally, the greater the transparency of the language, the greater the accessibility to the sound system of that language. Paying attention to orthographical differences and similarities in the L2 instructional design is important because differences in the orthographic depth of languages translate into differences in processing (Bialystok, ibid, p. 178). The writing system and the orthographical depth of a language interact to determine what strategies children will need to use when learning read the language (Bialystok, 2001, p. 180). This will impact on the success children will be able to achieve as they acquire literacy skills.

Successful learning of the phonology of a language is the one predictor consistently proven to be effective in accounting for children's early ability to read, particularly in alphabetic languages. (Bialystok, 2001, p. 165; Hempenstall, 2004, p. 730). Stanovich (1986, p. 362) refers to it as "the primary specific mechanism that enables early reading success." Learning the relationships between letters and sounds provides children with a self-teaching mechanism that enables them to independently learn word-specific print-to-meaning connections (op cit, p. 165).

Rupley et al (2009, p. 120) refer to the role of phonological awareness as a prerequisite of successful reading in a second language. They cite empirical evidence that suggests that a large number of students with strong phonemic awareness transfer phonemic proficiency from their primary language to a second language particularly where the languages share common phonemic, alphabetic and orthographic features. Bialystok (2001, p. 170) says that "if children can establish basic concepts of phonological awareness in any language, then reading and writing will be facilitated no matter what language initial literacy occurs in."

The research findings of Veii and Everatt (2005, p. 250) with regard to bilingual literacy development in Herero and English, suggest that "basic phonological processes predict[ed] roughly equivalent levels of variability in literacy in both languages." Their finding that "cross linguistic transfer of phonological awareness skills from the L1 to L2 reading development" is highly relevant (ibid).

As regards phonological acquisition, RR places an emphasis on "holistic and balanced approaches using natural language ... word level skills are taught explicitly but in relation to the learner's need and the context in which they are used" (Limbrick, 2000, p. 7). The result is not a debate as to whether a top down or bottom up approach is more beneficial but that an integration between the two is necessary (Cazden and Cordeiro, 1992, p. 4). Clay (2001, p. 276) in holding RR accountable to "the discourse of new research," says the research in the 1980's on phonemic awareness served to corroborate her belief in the effectiveness of learning to hear sounds in words. Clay (2001) holds to her original position on the role of phonological awareness in reading and writing, in which every interaction with printed text is an opportunity to develop phonemic awareness and attention is called to letters "embedded in print" (p 229). Kuball and Peck cite Clay (1997,

pp108/109) in saying that phonemic awareness passes through eight developmental stages from a pre-phonemic to a phonemic stage and that children master these stages when they are developmentally ready.

15. *Reading in EAL*

A developmental perspective of literacy is one that views reading and writing as natural consequences of gaining proficiency in a language (Bialystok, 2001, p. 154). Clay (2001),within her developmental view of literacy acquisition, defines reading as

> a message-getting, problem-solving activity, which increases in power and flexibility the more it is practiced. It is complex because, within the constraints of written language, verbal and perceptual behaviours are purposefully directed in some integrated way to the problems of extracting sequences of information from texts to yield meaningful and specific communications. (p. 1)

It is this purposeful integration of knowledge sources that is essential to the development of self-extending systems in literacy. Chall, Jacobs and Baldwin (1990, p. 8), in similarly describing reading as "a complex of abilities and skills that change with development," differ from Clay in claiming that there is a stage of 'learning to read' (reading acquisition) and another later 'reading to learn,' (the ability to gain information from texts) (1990, p. 11). Clay (2001, p. 305) finds this division unhelpful. She says that it has made it harder for the lowest achievers in a class to make progress who, according to this model, rarely get past the first phase. She says (ibid, p. 35) "A different metaphor, that of organismic growth, would leave us free to hypothesise that the changing organisation of literacy learning can be viewed as creating the primitive forms of necessary working systems from the time when literacy awareness begins."

Datta (2000, p. 28) says a crucial development in children learning to read in a second language is the knowledge "that speech sounds are encoded in print and that print carries meaning." The implications of this are that oral language needs to be developed in the L2 to provide a resource for the learning to read. Reading in an L2 cannot be predicted, however, simply on the basis of oral fluency (Bialystok, 2001, p. 179). This suggests that links between the oral and written systems need to be made deliberately and explicitly.

The L2 is usually (though not necessarily) a bilingual's weaker language and this can be problematic because the weaker language takes more effort to produce. Bialystok (2001, p. 181) notes that the child reading in the L2 may read more slowly and may transfer strategies that a native speaker would not. Ramirez (2000, p. 22) says that some of the proficiencies that contribute to successful reading in a second language are:

- the skills and knowledge to understand how phonemes or speech sounds are connected to print;
- the ability to decode unfamiliar words;
- the ability to read fluently;
- the development of background information and vocabulary sufficient to foster reading comprehension and
- the development and maintenance of a motivation to read. (p. 12)

Datta (2000, p. 34) isolates motivation as being the most powerful factor in literacy learning. Lyons (2003, p. 69) says that the experience of pleasure and confidence and resulting expertise in learning to read is a vital component of the acquisition process. This is important as children who have not experienced success in their literacy learning can fall into a self-perpetuating cycle of deficit. Stanovich (1986, p. 360) refers to this as "The Matthew Effect" a situation in which reading difficulties compound themselves and distances between good and poor readers increase. It is well-documented that emotional

and behavioural problems develop along with cognitive difficulties in learning to read, and that these interfere with learning (Lyons, 2003, p. 97; Hempenstall, 2004, p. 741).

16.   *Writing in EAL*

Writing is a particularly important aspect of becoming literate in a second language. Clay (2005) says writing involves the

> visual learning of letter features and letter forms, and patterns of letters in clusters or in words and requires the writer to combine this with what he knows about the conventions of the printer's code. Writing also involves the young writer in listening to his own speech to find out which sounds he needs to write, and then finding the letters with which to record those sounds. (p. 20)

Writing differs from reading in that the writer must pay attention to all the information in print and analytically take it apart. Children learning to write in a second language must learn the orthography of the language at the same time as learning the language itself. This presents specific challenges to the child becoming literate in a second language.

17.   *The reciprocity of reading and writing and possible benefits for bilingual children becoming literate in EAL*

Lyons (2003, p. 102) says that writing plays a significant role in early reading progress. Clay (2005, p. 11) emphasizes the reciprocity of reading and writing saying that they are two different ways of learning about written language and that both processes depend on proficiency in oral language. Clay (ibid, p. 11) says that it is important, particularly for the lowest achievers, to link the processes of reading and writing because of their shared features. This contributes to faster than average learning. She isolates the following features shared by reading and writing:

- Left to right direction and controlling serial order
- Drawing on language information stored in memory
- Making and recognizing visual symbols
- Using visual and sound information together
- Holding the message so far in the mind
- Drawing on the known words and structures of language
- Searching, checking and correcting
- And managing to bring these different activities together as a message is constructed. (p. 20)

In further support of this interdependence, Clay (2001, p. 21) describes the breakthrough that occurs when the young writer is secure enough to "draw into his writing the flexibility with which he expresses himself orally." It needs to be considered that the second language learner does not have this flexibility of oral language behaviour in his/her L2. Bialystok (2001, p. 222; Verhoeven, 1990, p. 90) says that bilingual children have frequently been shown to have a smaller vocabulary in each of their languages than their monolingual peers at least in the early stages of language learning. This would impact upon the flexibility with which the second language was used in both speaking and writing.

A central premise of Clay's developmental approach (2005, p. 139) is that reading and writing change over time. Clay (ibid) says: "I think of reading progress as being able to read increasingly difficult texts with accuracy and understanding." Chall et al's definition of reading (1990, p. 8) also emphasizes the need for texts to become increasingly complex linguistically and conceptually so that change can be promoted.

18.   *Oral language in second language literacy acquisition*

Tannen (in Langer, 1987, p. 91) describes the bidirectional influence that oral and written language have on each other and claims that learning written language is very similar to learning oral language. Clay's research (2001, p. 15) extends this position saying that children can be observed making links between reading, writing and oral language from their earliest attempts at writing messages. She claims that "The successful early reader brings his [or her] speech to bear on the interpretation of print. His [or her] vocabulary, sentence patterns and pronunciation of words provide him [or her] with information which guides his [her] identification of printed words" (Clay, 2001, p. 90).

All of this underscores the important position that oral language holds in literacy development. In second language learning oral language becomes an important resource and beneficiary as children work towards the end goal of reading and writing (ibid, p. 93). Datta (2000, p. 29) supports this view saying that learning to read is primarily based on oral work. Clay (2001, p. 103) says that perhaps the only specific piece of learning that is prior in literacy activities is "that one's speaking becomes linked" to these activities. Bilingual learners draw on two languages orally and therefore, potentially, have the resources of two languages at their disposal.

Datta (2000, p. 15) suggests that bilingual children's spoken fluency can accelerate their literacy learning as, if and when used appropriately, allows them to make deeper meanings. Bloch (2006, p. 9) describes language as "a personal-social invention" and says that, as such, oral language is best learnt 'naturally' in social situations. This is because it then allows exposure to and interaction with significant people who model the use of the language (or languages, in the case of bilingual situations). As a result motivation is high and emotional satisfaction is "tied intimately into the experience" (ibid,

p. 9). Literacy acquisition needs, therefore, to capitalize on the resources children bring to school and use them in the instructional context particularly in the first and early stages of literacy learning. This research aims to describe some of the oral language competencies the children bring to the literacy learning process and to ascertain how beginning reading instruction in their second language can tap into these oral language strengths by "linking and patterning new literacy learning and language powers from the start" (Clay, 2001, p. 95).

19.   *Strategic behaviours and bilingualism*

Clay makes very specific use of the term 'strategy'. She uses it to describe "in-the-head neural activity initiated by the learner" (2001, p. 127). Strategic behaviours, according to Clay (ibid), are "ways of working on words, sentences and texts to extract the messages they convey." Strategic activity refers, therefore, to "what goes on in any of the aspects of processing when the brain picks up information, works on it, makes a decision and evaluates the response as well as to the overarching execution of that sequence" (Clay, 2005, p. 34). Such "in-the-head activity is hidden from the teacher's view and can only be inferred from the child's behaviour such as searching, cross-checking, linking, making decisions and evaluating those decisions" (Clay, 2001, p. 129). Ellis (1997, p. 78) raises the point that the use of learning strategies has not, as yet, been incorporated into a model of psycholinguistic processing and that the approach to date, has simply been to describe and quantify their use.

Datta (2000, p. 67) says the best teachers of reading in the bilingual context, are those who help children to become independent readers quickly and this promotion of strategy-use encourages independence in the construction of the literacy process. Clay (ibid) elaborates

on this by identifying various factors that need to be present if children are to become

independent. She claims that children can become independent readers and writers if:

- The early behaviours are appropriate, secure and habituated
- They learn to monitor their own reading and writing
- They search for several kinds of information in word sequences, in longer stretches of meaning and in letter sequences
- They discover new things for themselves
- They check that one kind of information fits with other available information
- They repeat themselves as if to confirm what they have read or written
- They correct themselves, taking the initiative for getting words right
- They solve new words by these means. (p. 22)

Although strategic behaviour is a self-initiated response to interaction with text, teachers

can create structures that encourage the use of strategies. This is important because "A few

items and a few powerful strategies can set a beginning reader on a path towards a self-

extending system quite early" (Clay, 2001, p.131). This strategic behaviour produces

learners whose reading and writing improve whenever they read and write (Clay, 2001, p.

22).

Verhoeven (1990, p. 90) says that the strategies employed in the L2 are very similar to

those employed in the L1. Building the capacity for strategic behaviour is central to RR.

Through mediation and the provision of responsive environment, the teacher monitors the

shaping of these strategic behaviours. Opportunities are presented which allow children to

actively engage in all sources of information and this puts children in control of what they

know (Askew and Fountas, 1998, p. 126). Bialystok (1981, p. 261) says that "without the

benefit of these strategies, the language learning process will proceed in the same general

manner but may be less effective in utilizing available information to greater advantage."

"Powerful learning occurs" when children monitor and correct their own mistakes (Forbes, Poparad and McBride, March 2004, p. 565). This sets the stage for subsequent gains in reading competency. High achievers self-correct more frequently (ibid), which means they make more constructive use of their errors than less efficient readers. This self-tutoring may be one reason why good readers read more and get better by doing so. Clay (2005, p. 14) says that one of the features of good readers is that they are able to ask themselves very effective questions and put "information-seeking processes into effective sequences." Collins (1994, p. 2) also makes a distinction "between good readers and poor readers. Good readers tend to use the most effective strategy that leads to a thorough processing of the text." Askew and Fountas (1998, p.126) say that children who become passive in their confusions, often fail to progress. Clay (2001) sums up the position on strategic behaviours by saying that children who are not yet constructing successful literacy experiences for themselves, are

> failing to build a network of perceptual and cognitive strategies for decision-making as they work across texts; they are failing to pull together separate processing activities into smooth, integrated sequences; and they are failing to develop cognitive control mechanisms. If they do not have opportunities to do successful processing, such changes will not occur. (p. 133)

Whether strategic control involves conscious attention to text is a matter of debate. Vygotsky identifies a stage in the development of literacy, of "active conscious control over knowledge" (in Fisher et al, 2000, p. vii). This conscious control over one's thinking or over the processes of literacy, lead Fisher et al (ibid, p.viii) to claim that "this active conscious control is within the grasp of every child if they are given the right kinds of help such as scaffolding, mediation and guided reading / writing." Attending and processing are said to go hand in hand (Loughran, 2010, p. 82). Lyons (2003, p. 38) cites Clay in saying

that, in order to be successful, young readers and writers must focus their attention in three different ways:

1. By their direct attention outward to print;
2. By being able to switch attention from oral language to printed language in the text;
3. By directing attention inward and thinking about many sources of information simultaneously to gain meaning from text.

It is by actively participating in literacy activities that children will learn to pay attention to more hidden relationships in texts "new literacy learners working with limited and inaccurate knowledge of letter forms, of letter-sound associations, or of words ... can be observed extending their own knowledge, going beyond the information given" (Clay, 2001).

Clay differentiates 'strategic behaviour' from metacognitive strategies, which belong to a more advanced stage of reading with older children (2001, p. 565). Self-correction and self-monitoring are strategic behaviours that may lead to metacognition (a process characteristic of older proficient readers. It now appears that as young children develop literacy skills, they are already exhibiting signs of emergent metacognitive awareness and control (ibid, p. 565). Strategic behaviour must therefore over time, develop into a heightened metalinguistic awareness and knowledge.

20. *The importance of the L1 and linguistic transfer to the L2*

Alexander (2000, p. 17) and Obanya (2004, p. 9) strongly emphasise the desirability of learning in one's home language. This is further endorsed in the Department of Education's policy of additive bilingual education (South Africa, 1997). The role of the L1

is an important component of metalinguistic ability. Ramirez (2000, p.19) cites a series of studies that find that the best entry into literacy is through the use of a child's native language and that literacy in a child's home language provides the knowledge, concept and skills bases that transfer to reading in a second language. These studies support the view that having the opportunity to transfer from one language to another is crucial in the bilingual learner's literacy development and that teaching should activate connections between the two languages (Bialystok, 2001, p. 102; Datta, 2000, p. 28). Ashdown (2000, p. 29) says, however, that where literacy instruction is not optimal in the L1, instructional practices that best support the literacy achievement of English language learners must be identified if inequalities in reading achievement are to be reduced. The role of metalinguistic strategies may enhance this learning.

Bialystok (2001, p. 122) says that metalinguistic ability is one of the ways in which bilingual children distinguish themselves from monolingual children. Ramirez (2000, p. 21), Garcia (1999, p. 1) and Bialystok (2001, p. 123) claim that bilingual children develop metalinguistic awareness earlier than monolingual children. Bialystok (ibid, p. 144) says that metalinguistic ability provides continuity between the acquisition of an L1 and an L2 because having two language systems increases metalinguistic abilities and metalinguistic abilities. This facilitates the acquisition of a second language because the template for language learning is already available.

Garcia (1999, p. 3) suggests that "a key predictor of young bilingual children's reading ability is their ability to transfer knowledge … from one language to another." Ramirez (2000, p. 27) stresses the importance, however, of teachers understanding that literacy instruction in one language is not necessarily the best instructional method in another language because of differences in orthography and lexical access. For example, in

English consonants are taught first, in Spanish vowels are taught first, as in isiXhosa. In isiXhosa a syllabic approach works well, and the techniques for teaching phonics in English cannot be directly applied to isiXhosa (Murray, personal communication, April, 2011). These instructional mismatches may hinder the development in one or both languages.

Mora (2009, p. 10) says that although oral language comprehension and receptive language skills grow rapidly in the early stages of L2 learning, literacy skills require metalinguistic knowledge in order to develop. Apel et al (2011, abstract) say minimal research has been conducted on the simultaneous influence of multiple metalinguistic, linguistic, and processing skills that may impact on literacy development in children who are in the process of learning to read and write. They refer to a growing literature base providing evidence of the importance of tapping into multiple sources of metalinguistic knowledge when providing instruction in early reading and spelling. Pretorius and Currin (2009, p. 74) say that "the direction of transfer in biliteracy development when the L2 is the dominant language of literacy is clearly an area that requires further research."

21. Summary and conclusion

This chapter emphasized the importance of successful early bi-literacy experiences. It presented the two sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic models of second language acquisition and explained how RR positioned itself within these two models. It described the potential of RR to effect a successful trajectory in literacy learning in English as a second language by providing opportunities for networks of strategic behaviour to develop. Clay's research shows that this builds a foundation for later efficiency in reading and writing. The limiting effects of large-scale standardized assessments were put forward

and the claim made that these do not sufficiently inform the instructional process, particularly in the context of second language learning. The chapter developed the discussion of early literacy acquisition in a second language and the recognition of English language learners as emergent bilinguals. In its emphasis on the development of inner control of literacy processes, the discussion explained how mediation and the ZPD are crucial factors in the child's construction of a literacy processing system. In contrasting the two code-based and whole-language theoretical models of literacy acquisition, the more balanced view of RR and the benefit of this to L2 acquisition were described.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

1. Introduction

This chapter describes and rationalizes the design and methodology of the research study. The research study asked mainly descriptive and exploratory questions around the identification and description of the strategic processing behaviours used by children in their early stages of English literacy learning where English is their additional language and LoLT. The role of the oral use of English was also explored in terms of the extent to which it supported and strengthened this learning. As such it is best contained within a mixed-methods case study where both quantitative and qualitative data are integrated within a single study. As a case study, it concerned itself with the actual lived experiences of the participants emphasising their active participation and collaboration. The data were augmented by both conversational and more formal interviews with the Grade One class teacher and the isiXhosa teacher over the twenty weeks, by selected transcripts of the children's oral language, by the researcher's field notes and by insights from the literature. The research is presented as a sequential narrative.

There were two distinct and parallel parts to the data collection over the twenty weeks of the research study. These parts were:

1. Administration of The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) as a pre (baseline) and post-test. Thereafter, administration of The OS Tasks (Clay, 2005) in a T1, T2, T3, T4, T5 test design at intervals of four weeks to each of the six children in the sample group in a one-to-one pull-out situation;

2.   My ongoing active participant observations with each one of the children in the

     sample group in one-to-one pull-out tutorial sessions over twenty weeks. This

     comprised the intervention phase of the study.

Clay's Observation Tasks (2005) were used to identify and monitor the strategic/problem

solving behaviours used by the children in the sample group as they learned to engage with

reading and writing in English as their additional language in their early of stages of

literacy learning. The standard administration procedures of the OS Tasks ensured the

validity and reliability of the data. These administration procedures are described in some

detail in this chapter. The raw scores obtained from The LARR and Clay's OS (2005)

provided the quantitative data for the research. Data collection, analysis and interpretation

drew on Clay's theory (2005) as well as my own experience and knowledge. The study

contains terms that are specific to RR approach (Clay, 2001, 2005) and thus, require

definition to establish a common understanding. These terms are defined in this research as

they are found in the literature and can be found in a separate section at the beginning of

the study.

My own role as researcher was that of both an active participant–observer (in the

intervention phase) and a neutral observer during the administration of The LARR

(Downing et al, 1993) and The OS (Clay, 2005). In qualitative case study research, "The

personal self is inseparable from the researcher self" (Cresswell, 2003, p. 183). I therefore

expected to make instructional decisions during the intervention phase, based on my own

professional knowledge and experience. Consistent with social constructivist theory, the

shape of my research afforded the six sample children and teachers an active and

participatory role within the process.

The underlying premise of the study was that children have the potential to be active constructors of their own literacy learning and that, in interaction with an expert / teacher, their learning can be accelerated. The bilingual identity of the children brought an added dimension to their learning of a second language and needed to be acknowledged as a resource. The children's social and cultural context played a vital role in the shaping of this bilingual identity. Central to the study was the notion that we construct and reconstruct our social reality. This came to be an increasingly important part of the study as the progress made by the children in the sample contested some of the individual predictions made about them.

The children in the sample group were selected with the purpose of representing low, middle and high achievement levels in their Grade One class at the start of the year. This was to provide a way to describe differences between the proficient readers and writers and those not making the same rate of progress. On the basis of the research findings, some tentative comments were made on the classroom instructional processes in place. Transfer of the principles to the whole-class situation formed an important part of the ongoing discussion with the class teacher and was an important part of the discussion presented here.

2.   *Time frame of the research study (see Gant Chart Appendix 2)*

2.1.   October 2010: permission obtained from the headmaster and the Grade One class teacher to conduct a pilot study and thereafter the six-month research study.

2.2.   January 2011:

- six children chosen by the class teacher for the research sample;

- signed permission received for each child to participate in the research;

- my familiarization with the research site, gaining of acceptance and some credibility;

- my tentative interactions with the children in the representative sample in both individual and group contexts with the purpose of exploring the nature and scope of the research.

2.3. January to June 2011. Undertaking of the research study over twenty weeks at the single research site in 2 distinct parts:

Part 1:

January 2011: administration of The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) in January 2011) as a pre-test / baseline assessment in preference to The Concepts About Print Task (Clay, 1996) used in the pilot study.

February to June 2011: administration of the remaining five Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005)

- Observation Task 2:   Letter identification,
- Observation Task 3:   Reading Words,
- Observation Task 4:   Hearing and recording sounds in words,
- Observation Task 5:   Writing vocabulary.

at four-weekly intervals individually to each of the six children in the sample group in one-to-one pullout sessions.

Part 2:

February to June 2011:individual tutorial sessions with each child once a week for approximately half an hour at a time over twenty weeks. The twenty-week time frame is the time given to individual children in the RR programme as the optimum amount of time needed to set them on self-extending systems. School and public holidays, school activities and teacher union strike action occasionally disrupted this schedule.

2.4.   February to June 2011: ongoing informal discussion of the progress of the children with the Grade One class teacher and isiXhosa teacher.

2.5.   June/July 2011: formal interviews with Grade One class teacher, isiXhosa teacher and the Headmaster towards the end of the twenty-week research period.

2.6.   June 2011: post test administration of The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) to each of the six children in the sample group in a one-to-one pullout session.

3.   *The research domain*

The research domain is early literacy learning in English as a second / additional language and the emergence of reading and writing as self-extending systems. The research explored and examined strategic behaviours used by Grade One children in learning how to read and write in English as an additional language and the extent to which oral language supported this learning. A pull-out design maximized the potential for observation and interaction with each child in the sample group. A tentative adaptation of the principles of RR as a theoretically grounded literacy intervention, to the research site was explored. The research showed how Clay's OS (2005) had the potential to be used as an alternative research-based method of measuring progress in early stages of early literacy acquisition. From this perspective, progress is explained as change over time (Clay, 2001, p. 305) and is thus situated within developmental theories of learning. The approach provides a way to challenge and reconstruct traditional ideas of standardised testing and consequent deficit thinking within the field of literacy learning in English as an additional language.

4.   *The research questions*

4.1.   How do bilingual readers and writers engage with text in EAL in the early stages of their literacy learning?

4.2   What strategic problem solving behaviours are evident in the ways bilingual readers and writers engage with text in their additional language in the early stages of literacy learning?

4.3.   How can the oral language resources of these beginning readers and writers in English be used to support their development of reading and writing as self-extending systems?

4.4.   How meaningfully can the data derived from the Systematic Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) be used to increase instructional effectiveness and monitor changes in literacy acquisition?

The goals and questions of this research were positioned within a social-constructivist/interpretivist methodological stance and were best addressed by the use of a mixed-methodology single case study design. The research questions were specific to the research setting and context. In addressing them, use was made of specific observational instruments, Clay's Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (2005) and The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) as a baseline assessment. The body of relevant literature on acquiring early literacy in a second language, added further insights and "reference[d] related research to aid in defining questions and drawing conclusions" (Yin, 2004, p. xix).

5.   *Reasons for selection of the research site*

The research site was chosen for its policy of literacy instruction in English in a bilingual context. This afforded an opportunity to explore the ways in which children interacted with text in English as their second language and to ascertain the influence, if any, of their first language, isiXhosa on the literacy process. It also afforded an opportunity to explore the role of the children's oral use of English as they developed their early literacy processing systems.

6.   *The research participants.*

6.1.   The children (* not their real names)

Six children from the Grade One class were selected by their class teacher to participate in

the research study. They were representative of the high, medium and low achievement

levels in the class in their literacy learning according to baseline testing done by their class

teacher at the beginning of the year. The children were the key participants in the study.

The class teacher identified two children at each level, thus six children participated in the

study for twenty weeks at the start of their Grade One year. The rationale behind the

choice of high and low achievers was to observe and identify what it is that they could do

that made them either effective or ineffective in their literacy acquisition in English. These

achievement bands are shown by means of colour coding in a key in appendix 8.

Table 1: Biographical data of the six children in the research sample (* not their real names)

	Date of Birth	Chronological Age (years and months) as at 01.02.2010	Grade
Zusakhe*	23.08.2004	6y 5m	One
Yonda*	18.04.2004	6y 9m	One
Yambeka*	30.12.2003	7y 1m	One (repeating the grade)
Alutha*	12.05.2004	6y 8m	One
Lukho*	9.01.2004	7y 0m	One
Kamve*	13.03.2004	6y 10m	One

6.2.   The Grade One class teacher

The Grade One class teacher is a young female PGCE graduate whose first language is

English. She does not speak isiXhosa. She was key to the study in providing descriptions

of progress of the children participating in the study, in describing her teaching approach

in literacy and in discussing ways in which principles of RR could feasibly provide benefit

to literacy learning and teaching at class level. She is trained to teach at Intermediate level and has taught herself to cope with a Grade One class. She said it has been difficult.

6.3.   The Grade One isiXhosa teacher

The isiXhosa teacher has a formal primary teaching qualification and primary school experience of teaching isiXhosa as an L1. She speaks both isiXhosa and English but her first language is isiXhosa. Formal literacy learning in IsiXhosa is central to the policy of the school and occupies thirty percent of the Grade One week. Whilst, initially, her role in the research study was uncertain, her input became invaluable as the study progressed in providing insights into the progress of the individual children, in developing understanding of the teaching methods used and as the importance of a bilingual identity emerged.

6.4.   The Headmaster

He was significant in his role as leader of the school, in communicating policies to the staff at the school and in accessing infrastructural support for the school.

7.   *My role as researcher*

As researcher, I took up two different roles during the two parts of the research.

1.   An active participant-observer / teacher-researcher role during the intervention phase of the research.

2.   A neutral observer role during the administration of the OS (Clay, 2005) and The LARR (Downing et al, 1993).

My active-participant role at the intervention stage afforded me the opportunity to bring my own knowledge and experience to bear on my interactions with the six children. This was in line with social-constructivist research methodology in which the researcher's voice is necessary to the unfolding research. As Gillham (2000, p. 27) says, in case study research the researcher is the instrument and the researcher's voice is that of the "passionate participant" actively engaged in the "reconstruction" of phenomena (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 112), in this case the challenging and reconstruction of deficit notions around literacy in an additional language. As researcher in the social-constructivist paradigm, I brought my worldview to the research and was influenced by my professional training and experiences (Cresswell, 2003, p. 8). Case study research design and participant observation are consistent with this view of knowledge construction and reconstruction.

8.   The Research Paradigm and Methodology

8.1. The Social-Constructivist Theoretical Framework

The research was situated within a social-constructivist theoretical framework (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). Social-constructivist theory posits that knowledge is the result of active interaction between our underlying mental structures and our social environment. This mental activity is both individual and social. This subjective and relative view of constructions of reality means that local context and culture assume a position of central importance (Smidt, 2006, p. 27). The implication of this is that "Interactional constructions are alterable as they become more informed and sophisticated – they are dependent for their form and contents on individuals or groups holding those constructions" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). Previously held constructions, therefore,

can be reconstructed. This "alterability" (ibid) is crucial to this study and is a strong justification for the use of the social-constructivist paradigm.

In this theoretical context, reading and writing as psycholinguistic developmental processes, are shaped by local and historical cultural contexts" (ibid, p. 6). RR theory (Clay, 2001, 2005) acknowledges social factors and the influence of local contexts on literacy learning but seeks to re-construct perceptions around achievement. The social-constructivist perspective of reading and writing as transactional processes affords a view of children actively constructing their own learning with the guidance of an expert. RR is premised on "a view of constructive children guided by observant, flexible and tentative teachers, taking children along different paths to common outcomes" (ibid, p. 6).This would mean engaging in authentic literacy activities not activities contrived for practice (Moll in Au, 1998, p. 300). The work of Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 36; Au 1998, p. 300) is central to this theoretical paradigm particularly the notion of the learner moving from socially supported learning to individually controlled learning. This requires a research methodology, therefore, that allows for the emergence of individual variations in learning and for local contexts and children's prior knowledge to be acknowledged and considered.

"Social constructivism offers implications for reshaping schooling in ways that may correct the gap between the literacy achievement of students of diverse backgrounds and that of mainstream students" (Au, 1998, p. 1). It adopts a theoretical belief system that cognition and learning are situated in culture and that new understandings are constructed in an interaction between the prior knowledge of the learner and the knowledge embedded in or assumed by the task (Moll, 2006). As researcher, this theoretical paradigm gave me a position from which to contest the notion of deficit in the context of my research.

A number of theoretical positions inform and shape this research but this study is primarily situated within the theoretical framework of Clay's RR approach (2001, 2005). Clay's research has resulted in a view that literacy processing is made possible by "complex networking systems in the brain" (Clay, 2001, p. 1).The focus of the research is on the construction of processing systems in English as a second language. As it is not possible to observe processing activity in research such as this processing ability is deduced from systematic observations of strategic behaviours whilst engaging with literacy practices in English L2 context. The research was also shaped by a developmental theory of children's literacy acquisition and RR (Clay, 2001, p. 301) takes a view that reading and writing are developmental processes that change over time.

8.2. Case study research design

Case study research has the power to challenge existing assumptions (Gillham, 2000, p. 101) and was thus an appropriate methodology for this research. A further justification for case study research design was because it acknowledges that knowledge is acquired in a transactional and subjectivist way (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, 116). In case study design "The investigator and participants / object of investigation are interactively linked – the findings are literally created as the investigation proceeds," (ibid, p. 117). Thus, from this perspective knowledge is re-created in interaction between the investigator and participants. This is the most distinguishing feature of the case study research approach (ibid, p. 117).

Yin (1994, p. 38) distinguishes three main types of case studies: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory, used for the exploration of processes, activities and events (Cresswell, 2003, p. 183). This research was predominantly a descriptive and exploratory case study in

that it aimed to describe a specific phenomenon in the context of literacy learning in EAL. It also attempted to answer questions of how the children engaged with literacy in English as their additional language in reading, writing and oral language in the early stages of second-language literacy learning.

The research study was a single case study because it focused on a single case, namely six purposefully sampled children in a single grade in one school. It was descriptive because it described the interactions of the children with the researcher during the intervention lessons and with the observation tasks in detail. It was explanatory because it attempted to answer some 'how' and 'why' questions with regard to the context. Clay (2001, p. 272) describes this type of research design as "single-subject research design: researchers repeatedly observe the performance of individuals at close intervals during learning." In this way they are able to "create a very detailed picture of change in performances" (ibid, p. 273).

The research sought to provide detailed descriptions of the strategic behaviours that were in evidence with the administration of the Systematic Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005). Descriptions of the interactions that took place between the researcher and the six children and the interactions between the six children and the observation tasks were central to the study. Case study requires "thick description" – a process whereby the researcher pays close attention to the fine grain of what she is observing and then reflecting on it (Gillham, 2000 p. 19).

My research was best suited to a case study design because it was concerned with the subjective reality of its participants, their lived daily experience, and the ways in which they constructed meaning for themselves through their literacy experiences. Case studies

investigate real-life events in their natural settings (Yin, 2004, p.xii; Gillham, 2000, p. 1). This is consistent with the social-constructivist paradigm. One strength of the case study method is when the real life event and its setting cannot be separated (ibid , p. xii). The case merges in with the context so precise boundaries are difficult to draw (Gillham, 2000, p. 1). This was the case in this research study. The active engagement of the children with English was inseparable from the school and community context that shaped these literacy practices.

The case study was founded on the basic philosophical assumption that human behaviour, thoughts and feelings are partly determined by their context and that how people behave, feel and think can only be understood if one gets to know their world and what they are trying to do in it (Gillham, 2000, p. 1). A case study, therefore, can be described as an empirical enquiry that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 1994, p. 13). In other words, a case study deliberately considers the contextual conditions (in this case the classroom culture and surrounding socio-political environment), because it believes they may be highly significant to the phenomenon under study.

Yin (2004, p. xiv) distinguishes between the case and the case study. In this research, the case was the real-life set of events from which the data were drawn. In this research the "case" was an abstract process (self extending systems). The "case study" was the substance of the research inquiry – "the research questions, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, interpretations and conclusions" (ibid).

Case studies are most suitable when the researcher desires to understand complex social phenomena such as classroom interaction within a real-life context and is interested in answering 'how' and 'why' questions (Yin, 1994, p. 14). This further justifies the choice of case study design. One of the major advantages of the case study design with regard to this research in particular, is that it not only allows for but actually endorses, a focus on just one or two cases or examples. This allowed me to conduct a deeper and more substantial study of the participants' literacy processing behaviour.

8.3. Mixed methods single study research design

Whilst the necessary distinction is made between quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis, this is achieved within a single integrated study.

Yin, (2006, p. 41) says it is important in mixed method design, that the focus is on mixed methods within the single study: "The focus on a single study is critical to mixed methods research. Implicit in the prominent role played by a single study is the valuing of mixed methods in producing converging evidence, presumably more compelling than might have been produced by any single method alone." Yin (ibid) says this combination of phases / parts within a single study, qualifies for description as a mixed methods research design. This research study met this criteria for mixed methods research design in that it contained two distinct parts. These parts were:

8.3.1. Part 1 of the research design

The design of this phase is consistent with Cresswell's definition of a "single-subject pre-experimental procedure in which the researcher studies a single group and provides an intervention during the experiment" (2003, p. 166). There is no control group with which to compare the results. The phase involves multiple observations. The aim of Phase 1 was

to identify and explore the use of strategic behaviour through standardised, reliable means and to ascertain progress in its use as change over time. The administration of The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) at the beginning of this phase, established a baseline from which to operate. Thereafter five of Clay's Observation Tasks (2005) were administered individually at intervals of four weeks to each of the six children in the sample in a pull-out one-to-one intervention. The data collection procedure was in the design of T1, T2, T3 over 20 weeks.

8.3.2. Part 2 of the research design

This Phase 2 took the form of a pull-out one-to-one intervention based on RR principles (Clay, 2001, 2005) in this additional language setting. Tutorial sessions based on RR principles were administered individually to each child in the research sample over a consecutive twenty week period between January and June in his/her Grade One year. Each child participated in a daily session or at least three sessions per week. The intervention was a way of further observing and understanding strategic behaviours in English as a second language.

8.3.3. A visual representation of the two parts in this research study.

Cresswell (2003, p. 168) suggests a visual representation to show how the mixed methods operate in a single study. A visual representation of this particular research study might look like this. The five Observation Tasks were administered at 4-week intervals (shown in green) and the intervention (shown in blue) ran simultaneously and consistently throughout the 20 weeks.

```
Weeks :     1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10  11  12  13  14  15  16  17  18  19  20
Observation
Tasks:      xxx-----------xxx-------------xxx---------------xxx---------------xxx--------------xxx
Intervention: 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-
```
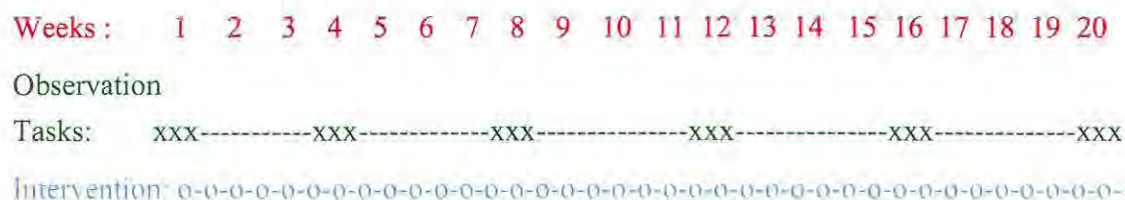
Figure 3. 1:A visual representation of the two parts in this research study (Cresswell, 2006, p. 168)

8.4. The quantitative methodology of the research

Quantitative data extends the range of evidence and qualifies what we have learnt from other sources. This is part of the internal validity of a case study (Gillham, 2000, p. 86). The quantitative data were collected by administration of five of the Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) at four weekly intervals over a period of twenty weeks. They were administered individually to the six Grade One children in the sample. The administration of The Observation Survey (Clay, 2005) yields a raw score for each of the individual observation tasks. These raw scores gave this study the hard evidence of numbers, which were described with the use of inferential statistics (Gillham, 2000, p. 80). Inferential statistics allow the researcher to draw inferences and describe the significance of changes following an intervention (ibid). I used this counting and measuring aspect of quantitative data to show the progress being made by each child in the specified indicators measured by the observation tasks. It was not the measurement of progress per se that was important in this study, however, but the suggestion that this progress indicated the development of strategic behaviours and self-extending systems.

Gillham (2000, p. 7) points out that it is what lies behind the objective evidence that is of interest in case study design. The administration of the Systematic Observation Tasks

(Clay, 2005) over twenty weeks allowed tentative conclusions about developmental processes to be drawn. These Tasks provided quantitative data crucial to analysing change over time but the study was also qualitative because the interpretation of data relied heavily on my largely subjective interpretation of observations and findings, particularly in the identification of strategic behaviours. As Babbie (2007,p. 286) says, their "significance defie[d] simple quantification."

8.5. The qualitative methodology of the research

Qualitative methodology has "an inductive, evolving methodological design" (Cresswell, 2003, p. 144). This allows themes and/or perspectives to emerge through the data analysis. In qualitative methodology "an inductive logic prevails. Rules and procedures are not fixed but open and emerging" (ibid, p.8). Qualitative methodology is made up primarily, of observational data which provides "rich, context-bound information leading to patterns or theories that help explain a phenomenon. The use of theory in qualitative study needs to be inductive, not testing or verifying a theory" (Cresswell, 2003, p. 94). Qualitative data is essentially descriptive and inferential in character (Gillham, 2000, p. 10).

The collection of qualitative data for this research took place in its natural setting. The researcher went to the research site to conduct the research and, in so doing, was able to be highly involved in the actual daily experiences of the participants. Qualitative research involves active participation by the participants and a sensitivity on the part of the researcher towards them. The building of rapport and credibility is necessary. Qualitative data requires a fundamentally interpretive approach in which "the researcher filters the data through a personal lens. This personal interpretation is inescapable" (Cresswell, 2003,

p. 182). Rasmussen (2009, pp 46-47) helps rationalize this subjective orientation, however, by citing Patton:

> While qualitative research might arguably be seen as being subjective, in that it relies on interpretation, Patton ... prefers to avoid the terms objectivity and subjectivity, and strives for "empathic neutrality". He says that "empathy is a stance toward the people one encounters, while neutrality is a stance toward the findings". A researcher who is neutral tries to be non-judgmental, and strives to report what is found in a balanced way. (pp. 46-47)

Gillham (2000, p. 7) says the participant-observer case study researcher can never take up a neutral position. He/she must acknowledge his/her role in what they discover in the research.

Qualitative methods allow a researcher to "explore complexities that are beyond the scope of more 'controlled' approaches" and to study the "informal reality" of what is really happening in a social setting, such as a classroom (Gillham, 2000, p. 11). Such an approach was necessary in this research study to capture the interactive complexities of the situation beyond the controlled administration of the Observation Survey (Clay, 2005).

This being a qualitative study, it allowed scope for the unfolding of the research process by enabling new insights and perspectives to emerge as the research evolved. I aimed to capture these in a detailed and descriptive narrative. The single unit of analysis was the early reading, writing and oral language behaviours of bilingual Grade One children in English. Implicit in this was the systematic observation of each child's progress and the instructional adjustments that could be made using the data gained from the Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005). The insights gained were used to make tentative suggestions as to how the RR approach could be adapted to the whole-class instructional context.

The qualitative data comprised selected transcripts of oral language, field notes, interviews and descriptions of the interactions that took place between the researcher and the children during both the intervention and the administration of the observation tasks. Interpretations of the data sought to find evidence of strategic behaviors in reading, writing and oral language. This qualitative and largely descriptive data was stored and analysed according to the theories underpinning RR (Clay, 2001, 2005).

8.6. Systematic and participant observation methodology

Gillham (2000, p. 47) says that observation is both fallible and highly selective. To make it less so Gross, Giacquinta and Bernstein in Yin (2004, p. 99) say observational evidence requires:

1. An observational instrument;
2. A scheme for coding the resulting observations;
3. An awareness of the representativeness (or non-representativeness) of the sample of times and places when observations are being made.

Clay's observational instrument OS (2005) helped this research to meet these criteria.

8.7. Interviews (Appendix 5)

Interviews in socio-constructivist research are like "night goggles" in that they enable us to see that which is not normally on view (Rubin and Rubin, 2005, p. vii). Gillham (2000, p. 59) says interviews are indispensable to case study research and that the semi-structured interview can be the richest single source of data. The interview with the headmaster was a pre-structured one with open questions. It took this format because of the Headmaster's

preference (see appendix 5c for transcript). The questions were specific to school policy and context, the views of literacy instruction held and the curricular emphasis in literacy practices. The interview with the Class teacher was a conversational and ongoing one (see appendix 5a for transcript). The data collected from the interviews were intended to triangulate the findings by corroborating or contesting them and to provide further first-hand descriptions of literacy behaviours. An interview with the isiXhosa teacher was undertaken (see appendix 5b) to provide an understanding of how the teaching of isiXhosa takes place and what impact this may have on the teaching and learning of English as an L2. All of these interviews were transcribed. The confidentiality of the interviewees was preserved throughout.

8.8. Voice recording and selective transcription of children's oral language (Appendix 12)

The oral interactions with the children were selectively transcribed where they were relevant and illustrative of the research questions. These selected transcriptions were analysed to identify the ways in which oral language can support early reading and writing behaviours and to identify competencies and strategies (both collective and individual) that can inform the instructional process. There were times when the voice recorder was obtrusive and brought a performance aspect to the children's oral language interactions. As the study progressed I tried to rely more on writing up what was said afterwards. I sacrificed accuracy for authenticity.

8.9. Site-based field notes (Appendix 6)

I recorded my observations of daily interactions between children and teachers and between teachers themselves. On an ongoing basis, I discussed my "findings" with the

Grade One class teacher. I began to identify categories, key concepts, themes and recurring patterns of belief within the data (Nathanson, 2008, p. 87).

8.10. Work samples (Appendix 13)

Work samples are an important piece of evidence in case study research and are included in this report. They provide a way to help the reader gain insight into the research process (Gillham, 2000, p. 91). They were included in this research report where they substantiated or contested the research findings.

8.11. The literature

Clay's theory of RR shapes and guides much of this research. Gillham (2000, p. 12) says "Good theories are fertile – they account for a lot of data…[but]…that theory is not primary, evidence is (ibid). The literature relevant to this research is, therefore, used in dialogue with the case.

9. *Methodological procedures of Part 1.*

9.1. The LARR (Downing et al, 1993)

In place of the Concepts About Print (Clay, 1996), I used The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) as it seemed more user-friendly (see appendix 4b for examples). One of the advantages of using The LARR (ibid) is that its purpose is for use with young children who are starting formal schooling. It is ideally administered within the first seven weeks of school. This version of The LARR (1993) is based on the original LARR test which was constructed as part of a study of reading readiness in Canadian schools and was based on original research by Clay, Downing, Elkonin, Francis and Reid (Downing et al, 1993, p. 1). This new test is a shorter version. It helps to identify those children who have some

knowledge of reading and writing in English and those who don't. It is a reflection of their personal experience with these processes. Its name, emergent literacy, seeks to reflect the continuously developing nature of reading and writing. Low scores are to be interpreted with caution in the case of assessment where the child's first language is not English. Explanations can be given in the first language if necessary. For the sake of consistency I have decided against use of the L1. My intention was to measure what children could do so score comparisons are not made. I interpreted the raw bands as score bands as described in The LARR (Downing et al, 1993, p. 20).

9.2. The Systematic Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) as an observational and analytical tool

Clay's Observation Tasks (2005) "are opportunities for the child to reveal what he knows and can do" (ibid, p. 21). A central tenet of Clay's thinking is that "Everything the child said and did [during the observation task] tells us something" (2005, p. 53). The tasks provided systematic observations of learning, not of outcomes, an important distinction for the purposes of this study. The Systematic Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) were developed in research studies and are derived from a theory of

> how young children come to master the complex tasks of reading and writing continuous texts. They have the qualities of sound assessment instruments with reliability and validity and discrimination indices established through research. Their design draws from theories of measurement, the psychology of learning, developmental psychology, studies of individual differences, social factors and the influence of contexts on learning. They are designed to allow children to work with the complexities of written language. They do not measure general abilities ... they tell teachers something about how the learner searches for information in printed texts and how that learner works with that information. (pp.2 &13)

The Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) are used in this study as a means of both collecting and analysing data on children's reading, writing behaviours and oral language behaviours in English as a second language. The Tasks provide ways of enabling teachers to look closely at how children are learning to operate on print in the classroom. They provide insight into the instructional emphasis in the literacy programme. Progress, according to Clay (2005, p. 102) lies in the nature and quality of teacher-child interactions. Structured observation as in this research is about sampling behaviour. Continuous observation is used to achieve a representative pattern (Gillham, 2000, p. 47).

The Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) "were designed to make a teacher attend to how children work at learning in the classroom" (ibid, p. 13). Classroom products are often shaped by the teacher's way of teaching or by her expectations. "Sometimes a different kind of observation task will confront the teacher with a new kind of evidence of a child's strengths or problems" (Gillham, 2000, p. 13). These Observation Tasks tell teachers something about "how the learner searches for information in printed texts and how that learner works with that information." They provide a way of recording the small amounts of progress made by individual children (Clay, 2005, p. 11).

10.   Methodological procedures of Part 2. The intervention (one-to-one tutoring sessions)

10.1.   The principles of the RR one-to-one tutoring sessions

Clay (2001, p. 300) describes the RR lessons as simple tasks which call for complex learning: they comprise "learning how-to-do literacy things which should be useful for more independent work in classrooms." The RR lesson format was followed in the intervention phase with each individual child (shown in appendix 1). The lessons in the

intervention phase were structured in accordance with RR principles. Each lesson was built on the teacher's observation of the child and these observations formed the basis of instructional decisions made by the teacher for subsequent lessons. Each lesson was grounded in oral exchanges. The content of the lessons was based on interactions with the children and sentences reflected their own oral utterances. I encouraged each child to talk about something that was personal to him / her so as to make it personally relevant and meaningful to each child. These oral utterances were then written down in a book (blank pages were used) and used in what Clay (2001, p. 32) calls the cut-up sentence task. In line with RR principles, writing was initiated by the child and originated from his/her own personal experience. Difficult words were co-constructed using sound sequencing boxes. In sound sequencing boxes, the child wrote sounds s/he could hear and knew and I, as teacher and researcher, wrote sounds that the child had difficulty with thus sharing the task of writing the sentence.

10.2. The cut-up sentence task

The cut-up sentence task is particularly useful in providing evidence of strategic behaviour and was part of every tutorial session with each child. Clay (2001, p. 32) describes the cut-up sentence activity in the RR lesson component is "an assembly process of words." The focus is on the reciprocity of reading and writing (Clay, 2001, p. 29) and strategic behaviour becomes particularly evident as a result. The cut up story is an opportunity to orchestrate strategic behaviours on familiar material and shows the teacher what the child is paying attention to in print. Clay (ibid) says the cut-up story shows how the child:

- assembles sentences;
- consolidates one to one correspondence of words spoken and words written;
- co-ordinates directional behaviours;
- practises checking behaviours and monitoring behaviours;

- breaks oral language into segments (not just phonemes); and
- gives attention to a word among other words in a way that no activity for studying words in isolation can ever teach. (p. 30)

10.3. The Running Record of Reading

As each child's reading developed, it became possible to take a running record of his/her reading. A running record provides the teacher with rich information about how the child "approaches problem solving alone, monitoring, choosing, confirming or revising, making appropriate links and self-correcting" (Clay, 2001, p. 235). During the running record of reading, the teacher is a neutral observer, helping only when the child is truly stuck. This part of the lesson helps the child become used to problem solving on text and gain confidence in using new reading strategies. Instructionally, the aim is for 90 - 94% accuracy in reading or higher as this represents a level in which the child is able to benefit from understanding by being able to read the text but also being challenged to put his/her strategies to use.

11. The Systematic Observation Survey Tasks (Clay 2005)

Clay (2005, p. 11) says observational data must be reliable as test data to be acceptable as evidence. According to Clay (ibid, p. 11), systematic observations have four characteristics in common with good measurement instruments. They provide:

- a standard task
- a standard way of administering the task
- ways of knowing when we can rely on our observations and make valid comparisons
- a task that is like a real world task as a guarantee that the observations will relate to
- what the child wants to do in the real world (for this establishes the validity of the observation). (p. 12)

This is expressed in her simple equation (ibid, p. 12): standard task + standard administration + standard scoring procedures = sound measurement conditions which can be compared. Clay (2005, p.13) makes the point that not all of the observations we undertake of children's learning have to be on standard tasks but those used to demonstrate change over time must be, such as is the case in this research study.

11.1. Rationale of The Observation Survey (Clay, 2005)

I used the following by Clay (2005) to provide the rationale for use of The Observation Survey of Early Achievement in this research:

> Early identification of children at risk in literacy learning has proved to be possible and should be systematically carried out not later than one year after a child has entered a formal programme. This gives the shy and slow children a chance to settle in and adjust to the demands of a teacher. It also overcomes the problems of trying to identify those who fail to learn to read before some of them have had a chance to learn what reading is about…for what percentage of the children having reading difficulties was it really a question of never having got started with appropriate learning patterns? (p. 142)

The Observation Survey aims to provide a "powerful second-chance intervention" with its own checks and balances to give quality assurance and quality control" (ibid, p. 143). All the Observation Tasks were developed through research studies. They have qualities of sound assessment instruments with reliability and validity and discrimination indices established in research (Clay, 2001, p. 13).

This Observation Survey (Clay, 2005) provides an alternative to standardised assessment and views progress as change over time. It is useful, therefore, for challenging some of the deficit assumptions we hold around second-language literacy in South Africa.

"Standardised tests sample from all behaviours and they do not discriminate well until considerable progress has been made by many of the children" (Clay, 1991 in Clay, 2005). My motivation in using the Observation Survey was not to identify the children making slow progress but to identify the strategies used by young bilingual learners in their learning to read and write and speak in English as their additional / second language. It seems that research into second language acquisition by young children is very limited because it is developmental (Ellis, 1997, p. 35 ; Bialystok, 2001, p. 186) and because processing cannot be directly observed. The identification of strategic behaviours provides motivation for changes in instructional methods in EAL.

11.2. A Description of The Observation Survey Tasks (Clay, 2005)

The Observation Tasks measure how learning is proceeding in each of the following areas: letters, how print is written down, how to form letters and write words, and something about letter-sound relationships. The observation tasks are not test devices such as multiple choice tests – they are "valid measures of real-world literacy activities" (Clay, 2005, p. 13). They reflect what it is that the learner is mastering or struggling to master. This makes them particularly useful in exploring the ways in which children engage with English as their additional language.

In all, there are six Systematic Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) for individual administration and I have included all of these for description below. For reasons previously explained I excluded the Concepts About Print Task from the systematic observation process and, instead, used The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) to establish a baseline measurement. I administered the other five Observation Tasks in English individually to each of the six children at four-weekly intervals over the twenty-week

research period starting as early in the new Grade One school year as possible (January). Although scaled stanine scores are provided for comparisons with other children, I did not use them because their New Zealand standardisation procedures make them invalid for South African populations of children "Stanines are scores which redistribute raw scores according to a normal curve in nine groups from 1 (a low score) to 9 (a high score) (Clay, 2005, p. 121).

11.2.1. Observation Task 1: Concepts About Print (CAP) (Clay, 2005, p. 37) (Appendix 4a for examples of test items)

This observation task shows what the sample children know about written language (Clay, 2005):

> It taps into what learners have been noticing about the written language around them in their environments. By establishing what they already know teachers can advance their understanding and short-circuit habits of exploring print that are not helpful. It is not a prediction device or indicator of readiness…Retesting at spaced intervals will show that change is occurring…To be a successful reader a child must come to control all the concepts tested by this task. (pp. 41&48)

I found that this task was too open to misinterpretation by the six children in this sample and that there were too many concepts that could be interpreted ambiguously by a second language learner of English (see appendix 4a for examples). My interactions with the pilot study sample children in 2010 suggested to me that the procedure for understanding the CAP (Clay, 1996) was too complex and would not give the best reflection of their understanding in English. This was particularly the case with the back to front and upside-down sentences and words as shown in appendix 4a. The children's exposure to written language was too limited at this stage to give them the best opportunity to present their knowledge.

11.2.2. Observation Task 2: Letter Identification (Clay, 2005, p. 83) (Appendix 7 for Letter Identification Task and Score Sheet)

This observation task is intended to find out which letters the child can accurately identify and those s/he cannot. Administration is standard as detailed in the observation survey. The child is given a sheet of letters and asked to read across the lines so that the letters are not read alphabetically but randomly. The child is asked to give the name, the sound or the word beginning with that letter – all show identification in some way from all the other letters. The child's responses are scored on a scoring sheet, both correct and incorrect responses. All three kinds of responses are sub-totalled and then totalled. I recorded the data as raw scores. Score comparisons are of particular value as this shows progress and the intention is for the child to reach "perfect scoring" – that is s/he completely master the letters in the alphabet (Clay, 2005, p. 88).

11.2.3. Observation Task 3: Word Reading (Clay, 2005, p. 91) (Appendix 7 for Word Reading Task and Score Sheet)

The word lists in this observation are taken from most frequently occurring words that a child is likely to have opportunities to learn. The number of words accurately recognised is recorded. Fifteen words have been taken from the most frequently occurring words in the Ready to Read (classroom reading materials) series which is a New Zealand Reading series. The words used in this test are representative of words that occur in South African schemes of reading, however. The number of words a child could read indicates the extent to which he had accumulated a reading vocabulary of the most frequent words in the reading materials referred to by Clay.

The test administration is very specific: there is a practice word and thereafter no help is given. The word list is not to be used for subsequent teaching. The score obtained on this

word reading task indicates the extent to which a child is accumulating a reading vocabulary of the most frequently used words in the Ready to Read series in his/her first year of school. These words would have the same predictability for words in South African reading series as they are common high frequency words. Scores on the word reading task should move gradually from low to high levels over the child's first year of reading. Successive tests indicate progressive change in the child's reading of words.

11.2.4. Observation Task 4: Writing Vocabulary (Clay, 2005, p. 101) (Appendix 7 for Writing Vocabulary Observation Sheet)

This task shows how a child is building control over a basic writing vocabulary. The number of words accurately written is recorded. Ten minutes is given for the child to write all the words he/she knows from memory / personal knowledge. Prompts / suggestions can be given provided these do not interfere with the child's thinking. Each completed word is scored as one point if it is correctly written. A sheet for recording words was provided.

11.2.5. Observation Task 5: Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (Clay, 2005, p. 111) (Appendix 7 for sentences and scoring standards)

This task is a way of observing the child's control of sound-to-letter links. The evaluator asks the child to record a dictated sentence. It is an authentic task not just one devised for testing. The number of phonemes accurately written is recorded. Five alternative sentences are provided to avoid a practice effect. Scoring is according to procedures outlined in the observation survey. Credit is given for every phoneme that the child writes correctly if the sound can be recorded that way in English – one point is given for every correctly recorded phoneme with a possible score total of 37. Progress is defined as changes from low to high scores as the child's competence increases. Specific scoring criteria are given. Qualitative information is also important in interpretation.

11.2.6. *Observation Task 6: Records of Reading Continuous Texts (Clay, 2005, p. 49)*

Running records of a child's reading of continuous text are a way of plotting progress and allow a description of how children are working on text. It assumes a gradient of difficulty in the text. Books are selected at 90% accuracy ie no more than 1 error in 10 words. A running record of reading provides an assessment of reading. It is taken as a child reads orally from a text. Clay (2005, p. 48) sets great store by the running record as she says it is a way of observing, describing and recording a child's reading behaviours. It is not about right or wrong words. It provides a description of how children are working on a text and can help teachers assess what the reader already knows, what the reader is attending to and what the reader overlooked. This allows teachers to prompt, support and challenge individual readers and see their progress with greater clarity. "The prime purpose of a Running Record is to understand more about how children are using what they know to get to the messages of the text, or in other words what reading processes they are using" (Clay, 2001, p. 50). The running records were analysed according to reading behaviours outlined by Clay (2001, pp. 27 – 30) in the observation survey.

11.3. Recording of the results of The Observation Survey (Clay, 2005)

There is a record sheet for each observation task and precise guidelines for the administration of each observation task so that the records of each task can be compared with earlier or later ones. In so doing, reliability and validity can be achieved. The child's responses are scored to indicate concepts that are yet to be learned. Retesting at spaced intervals of one month indicates how each child is gaining control over the concepts contained in the Observation Tasks and of the changes that are taking place in the child's literacy behaviours. Clay (2005, p. 83) cautions that no single task provides a satisfactory

assessment of progress in early literacy. Collection and analysis of data for this research study was undertaken simultaneously.

Clay (2005, p. 123) provides two observation summary sheets that enable integration of the results of all six Observation Tasks under a list of headings. These analyse the ways in which each individual child in the sample is learning to operate on print and of the strategic problem-solving activities used by each child in the sample. This is particularly pertinent to this research study. I analysed each child's strategic behaviour using these summary sheets and then drew up one that reflected common patterns of strategic behaviour.

12. Data management (collection, analysis, interpretation and recording)

12.1. Principles and methods of data collection

Yin (1994, p. 78) identifies three principles of data collection:

1. Using multiple sources of evidence
2. Creating a case study data base
3. Maintaining a chain of evidence.

If these three are in place in a research design, he claims that the constructs of validity and reliability are strengthened. In this study I attempted to build these constructs of validity and reliability by collecting sources of evidence by using the following data collection tools:

- Insights from the literature (Gillham, 2000, p. 12)

- Use of The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) and as a pre-test/baseline and a post-test

- Use of an Observational Tool (Clay's Systematic Observation Survey, 2005) to collect both qualitative and quantitative data

- Interviews: qualitative data – structured and semi-structured interviews

- Selected transcripts of the children's oral language: qualitative data

- Field notes: qualitative data.

- Children's work samples / physical artefacts: qualitative data

Quantitative and qualitative data were primarily gathered in five ways:

1. The LARR (Downing et al, 1993)

   For the purposes of this research, a baseline of each child's literacy learning in English was established with quantitative and qualitative data from The LARR (Downing et al, 1993). The same test was used at the end of the research to measure progress as implied by increased scores.

2. Clay's (2005) observational methodology was used as a means of obtaining both quantitative and qualitative data on each individual learner. It provided data that gave a profile of each child's response to literacy tasks in this context. The primary focus was to identify and describe instances of the use of strategic behaviours in reading and writing to support claims of self-extending systems. Quantitative data was interpreted qualitatively. The Observation Task stanines (Clay, 2005) are standardized on New Zealand populations of children and cannot be generalised to South African children. They cannot, therefore be used with any validity or reliability in this research study. The quantitative data was used in raw score form to clarify qualitative processes and to provide evidence of change over time.

3. Participant observations, the primary focus being to identify strategic behaviours in the development of self-extending systems in reading and writing in English as an additional language.

4. The research also explored ways in which the children's oral language contributed to their development of reading and writing as self-extending systems in which oral language was a resource. It looked for ways in which the children used isiXhosa (their first / home language) as a resource in their learning of English. Oral transcripts were collected to explore the role of oral language.

5. Data were substantiated by information gathered in field notes and interviews, both structured and unstructured.

12.2.   Data analysis and interpretation

The Observation Survey (Clay, 2005) was used to provide the primary analytical framework within which the data for this study was both collected, analysed and interpreted. The data analysis looked for increases in scores indicating that the children had made progress as readers and writers over the twenty weeks of research. Clay describes progress as change over time (Clay, 2001, p. 305). This notion of progress as change over time is implicit in a developmental view of strategic processing behaviour in reading, writing and oral language. Data were thus organised to reflect this change over time.

Data analysis also looked for evidence of how the six children in the sample actively engaged with text in English as their additional language in the early stages of their literacy learning. It looked for evidence of problem-solving, as evidenced by self-correcting and self-monitoring behaviours in the children's engagement with text.

Inferential statistical analysis was used to analyse and interpret the data i.e. inferences were drawn, the extent of correlations were examined and the significance of differences between groups and the significance of changes following interventions were ascertained (Gillham, 2000, p. 80).

I explained the patterns of strategic reading and writing behaviours that emerged from the data according to RR principles in accordance with RR's view of children as active agents in their own learning. Analysis of each observation task was undertaken (micro-analyses) and then all the observation tasks were pulled together and analysed so as to create more of a "broad, panoramic view" – an holistic picture of strategic behaviours in literacy learning in English as an additional language - in line with qualitative research (Cresswell, 2003, p. 183). I was able to make inter-comparisons using the raw scores on each task but not intra-task comparisons because of the New Zealand standardization of the Observation Tasks.

Further analysis was made of each child's strategic activity on the observation tasks using Clay's summary statement 'An Analysis of the Child's Strategic Activity' (Clay, 2005, p. 127). This record sheet provides specific criteria that guide this analysis and enable the identification of useful strategic activity on text. The purpose of this was to integrate the results of the observation tasks and so to identify and analyse categories of strategic activity. Each child's responses were scored and analysed individually, then integrated to identify strategic activity. In the identification and analysis of strategic activities constant cognisance was given to the context of second language learners. I looked for patterns beyond those specified by Clay (2005) on the premise that these might indicate behaviours unique to learning in a second language.

13. Reliability and validity

The Systematic Observation Tasks have sound measurement qualities and thus provide internal validity to the study. They are standard tasks with standard administration procedures. In New Zealand raw scores are represented as stanines or normalized standard scores (Clay, 2005, p. 121) These norms are not relevant to this South African sample but the raw scores enabled comparison between the children in the sample and allowed measurement of increase in items of knowledge. The use of the OS (Clay, 2005) and The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) might allow the results to be tentatively generalised to other South African bilingual contexts where English is the second language (L2) and where literacy practices have been shaped by limited resources and deficit thinking. Yin (1994, p. 31) calls this " 'analytic generalisation' in which a previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study." Triangulation of data was achieved by using both quantitative and quantitative data and participant and systematic observation methodology to corroborate the findings and analysis. Interviews were intended to corroborate or contest the findings of the research or to follow new leads.

13.1. Threats to reliability and validity

Davies (2007, p. 236) says that "One of the risks that qualitative researchers run is to allow their own assumptions to drown the empirical need for them to pay due attention to the evidence that their data presents." This is known as researcher bias. Clay (2005, p. 12) makes this same point saying that observations have sources of error not found in standardised testing: What the observer knows about reading and writing will determine what that observer is likely to observe in children's literacy development. "You bring to the observation what you already believe" (ibid). In an attempt to guard against this inevitable bias, I have triangulated the data with interviews. Gillham (2000, p. 28) says it is important for the researcher to decentre herself – to look for "detached honesty." He

emphasises the importance of the researcher keeping an open mind and not assuming a knowledge of the research setting (ibid, p. 18).

14. Ethical principles.

Ethics is intrinsic to the constructivist process of inquiry (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 115). Ethical principles that underpinned this case study research were permission, honesty and trust. The process of confidentiality was explained to all participants and strictly adhered to. To this end, the children were given pseudonyms and the teachers and headmaster were referred to as Mr S, Miss S and Mrs M. This protected the identity of the participants. The research was carried out in a spirit of beneficence and all findings were shared with the key participants.

15. Summary and conclusion

The key intention of the research was to explore the ways in which emerging bilingual learners learn to read and write in English as their additional language and LoLT in the early stages of their literacy learning and to explore their potential for developing self-extending systems in reading and writing. To this end, this research took the form of a single case study in which the RR theoretically-based early literacy intervention and Systematic Observation Survey (Clay, 2001, 2005) were used. The research focused on one school, two participant teachers and six purposefully sampled children and took place over twenty weeks in the first months of Grade One (January to June 2011). isiXhosa was the home language of the majority of the children in the school and English was their L2 and LoLT.

Baseline data were established with the use of The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) and subsequent data were collected with the use of Clay's Systematic OS (2005). The research combined qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis in an integrated mixed methods design. The data were supplemented with observations made by the researcher in a participant role and with ongoing unstructured conversations with the class teacher. Formal interviews conducted at the end of the research process with the Class Teacher, isiXhosa Teacher and Headmaster provided additional corroboratory data. Ethical issues pertinent to case study research were discussed.

Chapter Four: Findings of the Research

1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the research process that took place over twenty consecutive weeks at the beginning of the Grade One year with six purposefully sampled children at the beginning of their Grade One year. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. These data were analysed for evidence of the ways in which the children in the sample engaged with English literacy during the twenty weeks of intervention. The children are all isiXhosa speakers becoming literate in English. The central focus throughout the study was on the exploration of strategic behaviours and the potential for self-extending systems of the individual children in the research as they interacted with English. The role of oral language in the development of these processing systems was explored.

This research study found evidence of and recorded the children's attempts to engage in literacy processing 'on-the-run" (Clay, 2001, p. 51). Clay (ibid) claims that such "moment by moment transcriptions …capture changes in processing systems, which occur rapidly over short time intervals." This evidence of strategic behaviour suggested in turn, the development of self-extending systems. The primary focus of the research was on the exploration of strategic behaviours that Clay (2001, 2005) suggests contribute to the development of self-extending behaviours. This was tentatively extended in this research to early literacy in English as a second language. Self-correction and self-monitoring strategies gave observable evidence of problem solving behaviours and these were, in turn, indicative of the development of self-extending systems in reading and writing. The data

were collected through individual interactions with each child in the sample group over twenty weeks. These data were analysed individually in accordance with RR principles.

The nature of the research allowed common themes to be drawn in describing strategic behaviours. This was also necessary for making comparisons between problem solving strategies of the high and lower achievements bands of children. The data were analysed for evidence that would support the reciprocity of reading and writing and for evidence of oral language as a resource for bilingual children in their learning of reading and writing in English.

The quantitative data were presented as raw scores. These raw scores quantified each child's results on The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) and the five Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) and provided the hard evidence of progress or change over time in the children's engagement with English text. This evidence of change over time was crucial to the exploration of strategic behaviour and self-extending systems. The quantitative data and the qualitative data were analysed descriptively and thematically to find corroboratory or contradictory evidence of strategic behaviour and to provide more detail on these behaviours.

As in case study theory, the individual was of paramount importance in the research process. Individual variation was noted and emerged as a significant theme prompted initially, by insights from the literature as a key feature of early literacy learning. The research gave evidence of wide individual variation. In presenting the results, references were made to individual children and examples given from individual behaviours to provide evidence of some of the interpretations made.

The research aimed to explore alternative ways of thinking about the assessment / evaluation of the progress of bilingual children in early literacy on the assumption that standardized measurements cannot effectively capture early progress in the way that observational methodologies can. I suggest that the bilingual identity of children in South Africa is insufficiently recognized and that instructional practices fail to develop both languages in ways that support each other. Some qualitative evidence was found to tentatively support this claim. Imperceptibly, unexpectedly and unquantifiably, changes occurred in perceptions around deficit thinking as the research process continued. As in social constructivist paradigms a new reality was indeed constructed in the interactions that occurred between all research participants.

The findings of the research held powerful implications for instructional programmes that take into account the needs and capacities that bilingual children have. Whilst the intention was not to influence change in the classroom, this is what began to occur as a result of the intervention with the children in the sample. On the strength of this, implications for system-wide application of RR principles and for literacy policy development are contained within the study. Discussion of these implications, however, is beyond the current scope of the research report.

The chapter is organized in the following way. A description is given of the main themes that emerged in addressing the research questions. The literacy environment of the research site is described to show how the literacy practices of the children are being shaped by instruction. Baseline data collected from The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) are given first to establish the literacy concepts the children possess at the start of the intervention. Thereafter the data collected from the administration of the Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) over twenty weeks are presented. Both qualitative and quantitative data

are organised around each research question to give accumulating evidence of the interpretations made. The data collected from the Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) are presented in a way that provides evidence of change over time, a necessary criterion for establishing strategic behaviours and self-extending systems. Examples are given of the children's observable problem solving behaviours. The qualitative data are built up from the teacher's moment-by-moment interactions with the individual children. The discussion of these results takes place in Chapter Five.

2. *The main themes that emerged in this study in response to the research questions and supported by the data*

i. Quantitative score increases for individual children in levels on item knowledge (letter identification, single word reading, hearing and recording sounds in words, written vocabulary and accuracy in reading text) give evidence of change over time.

ii. Relationships between item knowledge suggest the use of cross-checking strategies in early reading and writing in EAL.

iii. Self correcting and self-monitoring strategies give evidence of problem solving behaviour on English text in this bilingual context.

iv. Instances of linguistic transfer between English and IsiXhosa and/or vice versa suggest strategic behaviour, i.e. children drawing on their L1 to help them with their L2. This is specific to this bilingual context.

v. The use of oral language in either English and / or isiXhosa suggest its potentially supportive role in literacy learning in English as a second language.

vi. Lack of progress in self-generated writing vocabulary which may be attributed to low vocabulary levels in English reading and in writing in particular, and to lack of instructional emphasis on writing and reading as linked processes.

vii. Quantitative and qualitative differences in progress identify the children who are interacting with English text more efficiently and differently to children who are not making the same rate of progress.

viii. A further theme that emerged unexpectedly was individual variation and how important it is to take notice of individual variation in early literacy in the context of bilingualism.

ix. Change / reconstructions in perceptions around the bilingually contextualised literacy behaviour of the children on the part of any of the stakeholders. Unexpected evidence emerged for transformation of attitude / a turning around of deficit assumptions regarding the sample children even though this was not one of the goals of the study. Transformation is evident in both the numbers (test scores) in which children perceived as slow / low achievers turn around these perceptions and in qualitative interpretations of their reading and writing.

3.   *The literacy environment of the school and the Grade One classroom.*

The class teacher was predominantly guided by a skills-based / phonics approach to teaching reading and writing in English as an additional language. Central to this is a belief that repetition, drill and memorization are key to learning. A common occurrence in bilingual learning is the belief that learning two languages simultaneously causes confusion in both. The consequence of this is that speaking isiXhosa during English time was discouraged. Both the English and isiXhosa teachers kept the two languages strictly separate. This situation is expressed in the following extract from an interview with the Grade One class teacher (appendix 6a for full transcript of interview):

The children are learning to read and write two languages at once, their home language isiXhosa and English. Consequently I approach literacy with the

awareness that learning English may be a slow process and that they will need a lot of practice with English sounds. Initial phonics take a while to grasp but as the year progresses the rate of literacy learning seems to increase exponentially, in reading, writing and speaking. My goal is to provide the children I teach with a good foundation on which to continue their literacy learning. Along with meeting the necessary Assessment Standards I hope to give them a love for reading and learning and to build their confidence in English.

...I occasionally make up stories set in their context that they can relate to. Also stories such as The Lion King, The Hungry Caterpillar to stories set in South Africa and traditional African tales.

Typically in skills-based approaches, the teacher dominates the instructional process. This was consistent with findings in the research site. This is also, however, a product of big classes. The English teacher had a very clear expectation of success in English literacy learning in Grade One. This guided her instruction and interaction with the children.

The literacy curriculum is directed by very clear goals on the part of the class teacher. This clear formulation of goals is said to be one of the advantages of the skills-based approach (Hempenstall, 2003, p.744). The class teacher expressed her goals as follows:

I would expect the ability to phonetically decode new words as well as the ability to read high frequency words by memory where they were not phonetically spelt. I would expect the children to read all the blends we have covered fluently e.g. to know the effect that h after s, c, t has e.g. to read ship, chop, that.

I try to do writing of words that they can relate to, based on discussions we've had or that are culturally and contextually relevant.

With regards to handwriting, that they can form legible, neat letters, use correct spacing, write on the lines and use basic grammar such as capital letters, commas and full stops. I would expect them to be able to write 3 - 5 sentences of news etc that were coherent, sequential and had mostly correct grammar and spelling.

By way of illustration of the literacy environment of this Grade One classroom, I offer an extract from my observation of a phonics lesson in which the children were learning the /ee/ sound.

Table 2: Extract from my field notes of a whole-class phonics lesson

The children are learning the 'ee' sound. The teacher has written on the board 'The greedy queen bee flew to the reeds to feed on the sweet green seeds. She keeps it in the jeep for a week.' The children write this in their books. The teacher walks around and checks the spacing of their writing. To a group of children talking isiXhosa to each other she says "This is English class now, no Xhosa."

She says "come on" meaning work more quickly. One child takes this to mean "come to me." She continues to walk around encouraging independence. A specific classroom routine is in place and the children seem to be very aware of this. There are class leaders, a tidy-up crew and happy helpers. The classroom is a print-rich environment. When the children seem to be finishing writing down the sentence, the teacher stops them and calls them to attention. Who can read this, she asks pointing to the word 'jeep.' One child is chosen to read it and he responds 'jep' with a short e sound. The teacher corrects him and suggests they all read together. "What does greedy mean?" she asks.

"When you don't want anyone to eat your food" is the response.

The teacher reinforces this saying "Yes, when I don't want to share my food."

She calls a child by name "What are reeds?"

"a little grass" is the response.

"When you put it in the garden and then you water them and they become a beautiful tree" is another response

Teacher says "Do you mean seeds?"

Teacher asks "what is a jeep?"

"It's a car" is the response.

Shared reading is an effective way of modelling useful reading behaviours. Over the course of the research we made two 'Big Books' for the purposes of class shared reading (see appendix 11) for 'Things in the Grade One Classroom'. The following further extract

from the interview (July 2011) with the English class teacher explains her shared reading

lesson approach:

> In a shared reading lesson, we would first discuss the pictures in the big book, then
> read the story together and the children would write 2 or 3 sentences in their
> workbook about the story. They would then draw a picture of what they'd written
> about. Currently we are doing a mini theme of sorts called "My Toys" – we have
> read stories, written our own sentences and drawn our toys and we are now doing
> an oral entitled, "My Favourite Toy."

As regards to reading she [the English Grade One teacher] says "We [the children in the

class and I] do sometimes have drop and read times and I try to listen to the children read

individually although due to the nature of teaching a large, noisy class, this does not

happen as much as I would like."

Similarly, the isiXhosa teacher (July 2011) (Appendix 5b for full transcript of interview)

has clear goals in her literacy teaching. She expresses them as follows:

> isiXhosa is an indigenous language that instils pride and adds value to our culture
> as Xhosa people. And I would like to preserve our culture by teaching isiXhosa to
> our children so that they can communicate. Being able to compare .....code
> switching.....the basic words in isiXhosa as well as in English.....are important
> goals.

The isiXhosa teacher's approach to isiXhosa is one that builds communicative

competence. She explains her progression in her teaching as follows:

> I start with vowels and alphabet.
> I start building words from letters of the alphabet.
> From words I go to sentences.

This is a typically items/code-based view of literacy teaching and learning. It is useful in teaching the vital knowledge that letters have sounds.

4. *The quantitative and qualitative data.*

The qualitative and quantitative data collected in the research study are organised around the research questions. The first question asked by the research is how the children engage with English as their second language in the early stages of their literacy learning. In addressing this question, I established a baseline using The LARR (Downing et al, 1993). This data showed what literacy concepts each child had in English. I then presented the quantitative data from the Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) table and graph format to show how the six children engaged with the following indicators of literacy item-learning in English.

- Observation Task 2: Letter identification,
- Observation Task 3: Reading Words,
- Observation Task 4: Hearing and recording sounds in words,
- Observation Task 5: Writing vocabulary.

Descriptive / qualitative interpretations of quantitative data were made. Additional qualitative data in the way of field notes, descriptive interpretations of the quantitative data, relevant parts of interviews and illustrative segments of interactions with the children contributed to the unfolding picture constructed by both sets of data. Not all of the data can be presented here but examples chosen are illustrative of the patterns identified in the larger body of data.

A key is presented in the appendix (Appendix 8) to show how the children were selected by their class teacher, according to their initial proficiency levels in literacy relative to

their class, for the purposes of participation in the research. These colour-coded bands are used throughout the presentation of the quantitative data in this report.

5. *How do bilingual readers and writers engage with text in English as their additional language in the early stages of their literacy learning?*

5.1. The LARR (Downing et al) (1993)

The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) was used in place of the Concepts About Print (Clay, 1996) at the researcher's discretion and for reasons explained in Chapter Three. The LARR's validity for assessment of children who speak English as a second / additional language "depends exactly on what it aims to assess [and]... extreme caution should be exercised in interpreting low scores" (op cit, p. 19). This is particularly so in the context of this research where the children are being tested in English as a second language and their experience of formal testing procedures is minimal. My use of The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) was to position the children at the start of the research study in terms of their literacy knowledge and experience. I took full recognition of the fact that English was their additional language and took appropriate cautions in interpretation of the data. I used The LARR (ibid) to retest the children at the end of the study to ascertain what changes had taken place in their knowledge of English literacy concepts.

The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) gives a measure of how literate each child is in terms of taking notice of environmental print and meaning and is consistent with thinking on emergent literacy. It is a test of the concepts required to make progress in learning to read and write in English with an English-speaking teacher. Some of the early questions (Questions 1 to 5) are generic (eg recognising someone who is reading) and the subsequent

concepts are specific to concepts in English. The questions on The LARR (ibid) can be categorised in the following ways:

Questions 1 – 5:   test recognition of readable material in various forms
Questions 6 – 8:   test recognition of when reading and writing are taking place
Questions 9 – 19:   test understanding of the basic technical terms associated with reading

5.2.   Quantitative results of The LARR (Downing et al, 1993)
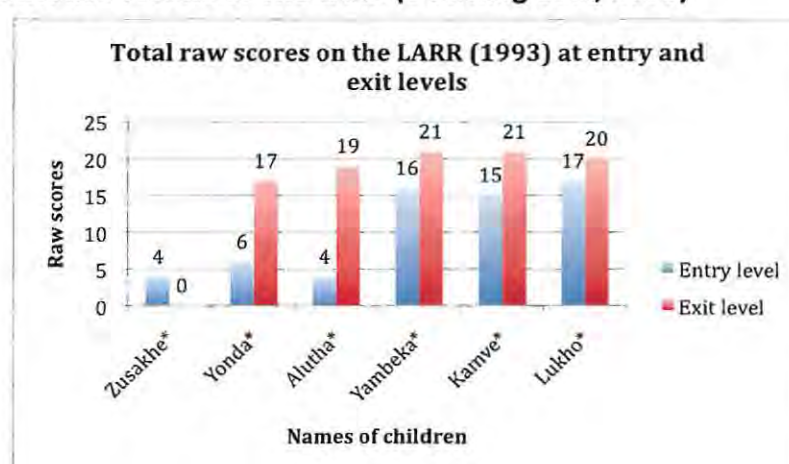
Figure 1: Raw score comparisons for each child on The LARR (1993) at entry and exit levels of the intervention

The LARR (Downing et al, 1993, p. 13) offers a few ways of interpreting the raw scores. One way converts them to as standardised scores. This means that the scores can be compared with other children of the same age. Another way of looking at the scores is by looking at the broad band within which the child's score falls. The children in this research sample fall outside the ages on the standardisation table. I have chosen to represent these children's scores as score bands as this avoids paying too much attention to small differences in scores and allows comparisons to be made between the individual score bands. The coloured bands in the table show the representative achievement levels of the children in the sample (see appendix 8 for key).

5.3. Quantitative and qualitative results of the 3 sections on The LARR (Downing et al, 1993).

5.3.1. Questions 1 to 5: Entry and Exit levels ("things that someone can read" – recognition of readable material in various forms)

Table 3: Points allocated to each child for correct responses on The LARR questions 1 to 5 at entry and exit levels of the intervention

Date	Children	Question numbers 1	2	3	4	5	Total
Entry level	Zusakhe*	1	0	1	0	0	2
Exit level							absent
Entry level	Yonda*	1	0	0	0	0	1
Exit level		2	2	2	2	1	9
Entry level	Yambeka*	2	2	2	2	1	9
Exit level		2	2	2	2	1	9
Entry level	Alutha*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Exit level		2	2	2	2	1	9
Entry level	Lukho*	2	2	2	2	1	9
Exit level		2	2	2	1	0	7
Entry level	Kamve*	2	1	2	1	1	7
Exit level		2	2	2	2	1	9
Total Possible		2	2	2	2	1	9

Success on this section of the test suggests an underlying responsiveness to language in general. This data shows significant increases on this section of the test from entry to exit points in the intervention for all children except Zusakhe*. Zusakhe* was a lower performing child who was absent from school for the last part of the research process. These increases in scores indicate an increased responsiveness to print and awareness of what print means. Kamve*, one of the higher achievers scored well at both the beginning and end of the intervention indicating her recognition of readable material in various forms. At the beginning of the intervention, in response to the request to circle the things that can be read she circled the whole section of writing in the book 'The Prince's Frog.'

At the end of the intervention, she circled each line of print indicating her increased knowledge of how print operates on a page. Lukho*, also a higher achiever, circled each line of the print in the initial test. In the follow-up test he wanted to circle the words he was able to read in addition to correctly fulfilling the requirements of the test. This indicates his increased awareness of print being made up of sentences and words. Yambeka*, in the middle band of achievement, started to circle each word on the test at the start of the intervention. This seemed to indicate a misunderstanding of what the test required rather than an unawareness of print on the page. Alutha* had been declared a "slow learner" at pre-school. He progressed from a nil score at the start of the intervention to achieving the highest number of points possible at the end of the twenty weeks, on this section of the test. It is difficult to ascertain his reasons for a nil score at the start of the intervention. They may have been difficulty in understanding what was required. Wide individual variation was noted.

5.3.2. Questions 6 – 8: entry and exit levels – recognition of when reading and writing are taking place

Table 4: Points allocated to each child for correct responses on The LARR questions 6 to 8 at entry and exit levels of the intervention

Date	Children	Question numbers			
		6	7	8	Total
Entry level	Zusakhe*	0	0	0	0
Exit level					absent
Entry level	Yonda*	0	0	0	0
Exit level		2	0	0	0
Entry level	Alutha*	0	0	0	
Exit level		2	1	0	3
Entry level	Yambeka*	2	0	0	2
Exit level		2	0	0	2
Entry level	Lukho*	1	0	0	1
Exit level		1	0	0	1
Entry level	Kamve*	1	0	0	1
Exit level		2	0	0	2
Total possible:		2	1	1	4

This section of the test is more specific to the processes of reading and writing and possibly social and cultural interpretation of these as literacy practices. The achievement bands of the children are irrelevant in predicting success on these test items. Over the twenty weeks, small changes took place here. The questions ask the children to circle each part of the pictures that someone can read; each person who is reading; each person who is writing. Question 6 asks for each person who is reading to be circled. Two points are scored if the 3 out of 4 pictures showing someone reading are circled separately. One point is scored if two of the pictures are circled separately. Yambeka*, in the middle achievement band, recognised all three people reading in both tests at the start and end of the intervention. Yonda*, a lower achiever and Alutha*, in the middle achievement band, scored zero points in the initial test and two points on the final test. Kamve*, a top achiever, scored one point in the initial test and then two points on the final test. Lukho*, a top achiever, scored one point in both the initial and final tests. According to The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) interpretation, for very little recognition of reading and writing as represented in this context, is taking place for Yonda* and Zusakhe* .

5.3.3. Questions 9 – 19: understanding of the basic technical terms associated with reading

Table 5: Points allocated to each child for correct responses on The LARR questions 9 to 19 at entry and exit levels of the intervention

Date	Children	Question numbers											Total
		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
Entry level	Zusakhe*	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Exit level													absent
Entry level	Yonda*	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
Exit level		1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
Entry level	Yambeka*	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	4
Exit level		1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	10
Entry level	Alutha*	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Exit level		1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	6
Entry level	Lukho*	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	7
Exit level		1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	9
Entry level	Kamve*	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	6
Exit level		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	10
Total possible:		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11

Only the more proficient readers and writers show change here in terms of numbers. This seems to be a distinct divider amongst the children between those who suggest greater proficiency and experience of literacy concepts and those who do not. To illustrate this trend, an analysis of each question follows:

Descriptive analysis of qualitative changes in children's responses to specific questions on The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) over the twenty weeks.

Over the twenty weeks the following changes were evident in the children's responses on The LARR:

Question numbers:

9 and 10.   All the children could distinguish between letters and numbers at both the start and completion of the intervention.

11.   No significant change occurs in recognition of differences between squiggles and words.

12.   No significant difference is evident in identification of top line of the story.

13. Consistently accurate recognition of words, letters and numbers is made by all the children.

14. The middle and top achieving children (four out of the six children) could not identify the last word in the sentence in the initial testing and were able to identify it in the final re-testing.

15. None of the children could identify capital letters at the beginning or the end of the intervention.

16. Two of the top achieving children and one child in the middle-achievement band, could identify a full stop at both the initial and final testing.

17. Only one of the children could recognize the first letter in a word at the end of the intervention. This was a child from the middle-achievement band.

18. The two children from the top-achievement band could recognize each thing that is a sentence in both initial and final testing. One child from the middle-achievement band could recognize a sentence at the end of the intervention but not at the beginning.

19. Three children, two from the top-achievement band and one from the low achievement band, recognized a name as distinct from an ordinary word at both testings. The second top-achieving child scored this correctly at the second testing. The name to be identified was Susan.

Supportive evidence of increasing literacy concepts is given in the interview with Miss S-, their English class teacher: "They [the children in her class] notice that writing goes from left to right, that the writing tells them about the picture and that they can write their own news and tell their own stories, which they love."

6. The OS (Clay, 2005)

The results of the five observation survey tasks obtained over 20 weeks are presented below. They provided quantifiable data (test scores), the intention of which was to ascertain progress as in change over time and to then infer / deduce strategic behaviours and changes in processing behaviours from this quantitative data. The qualitative data gathered through participant observation, interviews and field notes is referred to for additional, corroboratory and contradictory information. The raw scores from each

observation task, are presented in table form in appendix 8 and in graph form in the text. A line graph is used to show change over time (ie a time series graph).

6.1. Letter Identification (appendix 8)

The quantitative data are represented as raw scores collected at four-weekly intervals over twenty weeks. The aim of the task is to reach a perfect score in letter identification (54 letters: 28 lower case letters including typeset 'a' and 'g'; 26 capital letters). In interpreting these results, I have identified individual trends in letter recognition as well as overall general trends.
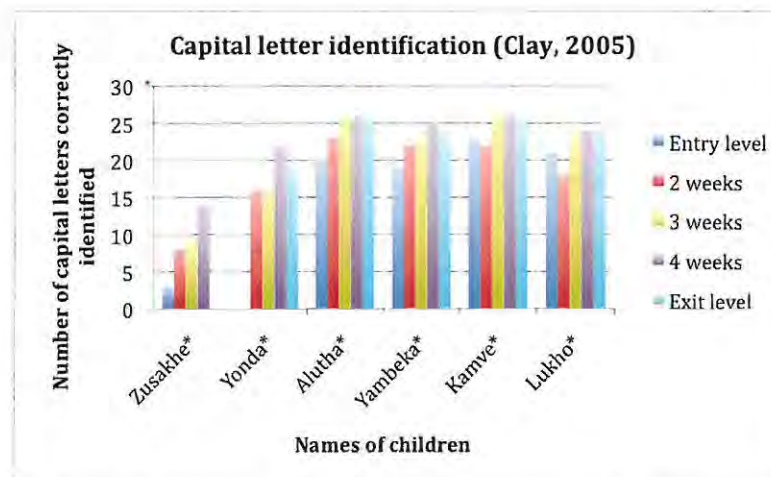
Figure 2: Raw scores on capital letter identification (total possible 26)
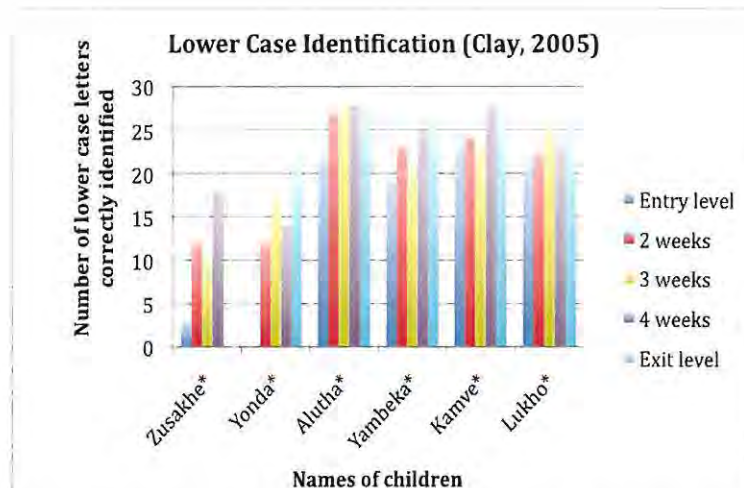
Figure 3: Raw scores on lower case letter identification (total possible 28)

6.1.1. Frequency analysis of means of letter identification over the 20-week period

This table shows how letters were identified over the twenty weeks. The numbers represent the number of times a letter was identified by a particular means. By way of explanation, the letter 'a' was recognized 5 times by name, 17 times by sound, once by a word association, none by name and sound together and zero by sound and word together.

Table 6: Frequency analysis of means of letter identification over the 20-week period

Letter	Name	Sound	Word Association	Name & Sound	Sound & Word
a	5	17	1		
f	4	20	1		
k	1	22	1		
p	1	19	1		
w	1	18	1		
z	3	22	1		
b	1	11	0		
h	3	14	1		1
o	3	23	0		
j	1	16	1		
u	0	10	0		
a	1	13	0	1	
c	3	15	0		1
y	0	20	0		
l	0	27	0		
q	6	15	1		
m	6	19	1		
d	4	14	1		
n	2	21	0		
s	3	22	1		
x	16	6	1		
i	1	24	1	1	
e	0	25	1		
g	0	21	1		
r	1	21	1		
v	0	18	1		
t	0	21	2		
g	0	15	1		

This data shows that the preferred mode of letter identification was by the sound of the

letter. Initially, no distinct patterns or trends were evident. Wide variations existed

throughout but a tendency towards sound associations developed over the twenty weeks.

Some small evidence is given of cross-checking strategies in name and sound

identification and sound and word associations (highlighted in yellow on table).

6.2. Observation Task 2: Word Reading

Task Administrations over 20 weeks	Entry (T1)	2 (T2)	3 (T3)	4 (T4)	Exit (T5)
Zusakhe*	0	0	2	3	absent
Yonda*	0	2	4	6	9
Alutha*	0	1	7	10	13
Yambeka*	3	6	6	10	13
Kamve*	3	5	8	11	13
Lukho*	2	7	11	10	6
Total possible	15	15	15	15	15

Figure 4: Raw scores on Word Reading Task (Clay, 2005) over 20 weeks at 4-weekly intervals

6.3. Observation Task 3: Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (appendix 8)

The raw scores in this table give quantitative data of the number of sounds correctly

recorded out of a total 37.

Task Administrations over 20 weeks	Entry (T1)	2 (T2)	3 (T3)	4 (T4)	Exit (T5)
Zusakhe*	0	11	13	11	absent
Yonda*	absent	8	10	17	14
Alutha*	7	17	22	26	30
Yambeka*	15	31	22	27	32
Kamve*	13	23	28	31	37
Lukho*	21	25	23	33	34

Figure 5: Raw scores on Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (Clay, 2005) over 20 weeks at 4-weekly intervals

An increase in scores is evident for all the children over the twenty weeks of intervention. For the middle to top achievers, the increases are steady and quite dramatic going from quite low levels of accuracy in hearing sounds in words to almost perfect scores. The children's responses on this task develop from hearing and recording the first sound in a word to hearing initial, final and some middle sounds in the word. Persistent difficulty is noted with vowel sounds and written representations. Directional control is achieved over the twenty weeks for children who, initially, did not show this and increased mastery of sound–symbol links is evident at different levels of proficiency for all the children.

6.4.   Observation Task 4: Writing Vocabulary Test (appendix 8).

This figure gives quantitative data showing the raw scores of the number of self-generated words in ten minutes.

Task administrations over 20 weeks	Entry	2	3	4	Exit
Zusakhe*	0	0	2	1	absent
Yonda*	6	5	10	7	8
Alutha*	6	6	9	7	8
Yambeka*	11	6	14	17	12
Kamve*	12	15	32	47	41
Lukho*	9	1	15	13	24

Figure 6: Raw scores on Written Vocabulary Task

The words on this observation task are self-generated. The words written by the children initially, are those families of words typically taught in phonics-based instruction such as bat, cat etc. Some words that had begun to appear in the children's oral stories began to be included in the later written vocabulary tasks (one of the children from the lower-achieving band, tries to write 'pie' a word from her story on shopping). In terms of numbers, the

children make very little progress in writing vocabulary. Significant distinctions emerge between the more efficient readers and those not making the same rate of progress.

7. *What strategic problem solving and self-monitoring behaviours are evident in the ways bilingual readers and writers engage with text in their additional language in the early stages of literacy learning?*

The data presented thus far is item-based knowledge showing how children have interacted with specific indicators of the literacy-learning process. Clay (2001, p. 172) describes this item-based knowledge as "a closed set of knowledge that become less important as proficiency increases." This set of knowledge is important, however, in establishing the foundation from which strategic behaviour can develop. The research data is therefore analysed for evidence of problem solving behaviour on text in reading, writing and oral interactions.

7.1. Problem-solving behaviours as evidence of self-extending systems in reading and writing

Clay gives specific descriptors that help to build the picture of each child's problem solving activity. These are observable behaviours that suggest the inner control of literacy processing is taking place. I have used these descriptors to analyse the running records of reading. The criteria are as follows:

a. **Repetitions.**

Moore and Gillis (2005, p. 22) say that readers who repeat words and phrases when they come to an unknown structure, want to give themselves time to figure out something ahead in the line or monitor for meaning. Clay (2001, p. 191) says

repetitions and re-running starts, as well as giving the opportunity to "take a fresh run at the text," "get closer and closer to the point of difficulty" in this order:

- line beginning
- phrase(s)
- word
- initial letter(s)

b. **Re-running starts;**

c. **Substitutions**. These are words that a reader uses to replace the expected response (Moore and Gilles, 2005, p. 21). Students who struggle with reading often use more substitutions than any other type of miscue. Reversals are a kind of substitution in which reader changes the order of two or more words;

d. **Phonetic attempts at words;**

e. **Insertions;**

f. **Deletions;**

g. **Pauses;**

h. **Appeals for help;**

i. **Self corrections;**

j. **Words supplied by teacher** (Clay, 2005, pp. 63-65).

These are tabled separately below for the sake of clarity. Representative examples from the data are given in each category.

Illustrative examples of problem-solving behaviours as they occurred over the twenty-week research period and given as evidence of self-extending systems in reading and writing

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a and b. Repetitions and re-running starts:

Where repetitions occurred, they mostly preceded a re-running start. For eg:

- 'They live in a house' *is read as* "They" *pause, rerun* "they" *pause* "live in a house."
- 'His car is red and blue' *is read as* "He "li" *pause and return to the beginning of the line where he re-reads* "His car is red and blue."
- 'Lukho* has DSTV at home' *is read as* "Lukho* likes" *pause and return to the beginning of the sentence where he re-reads* "Lukho* has DSTV at home."
- 'We are going to hop and skip' *is read as* "We are going to hop skipping rope" *pause and re-read as* "We are going to hop and skipping rope."

c. Substitutions

Reversals of visually similar letters were evident.

d. Phonetic attempts at words

'They like to skip' *read as* "They like to s-k-i-p (*sounded out*) skipping."

'I play skipping rope' read as "I like to skipping rose" *re-read and the word 'play' sounded out as p-l-play.*

'She is playing with her skipping rope' is *read as* "She is play *(pause)* "I forgot" *sounded out w-i-t-h and re-reads* "She is play with her skipping rope."

'They like to skip' *read as* "They like to skipping" *and then self-corrected by sounding out s-k-i-p.*

'Kamve* has a brother and a sister' *read as* "Kamve* his" *(pause)* "h-a-s a brother and a sister."

Yonda sounds out* 'up' *as* "oo-p" *and then self corrects to* "up."

Alutha sounds out 'let' as* "l-ee-t"

'Look at his Mom's cake' *is read and accepted as* "Look at him Mom's cake."

It is evident that meaning strategies predominated followed by phonetic attempts. Syntax is generally not noticed as an error at this stage. For example 'She is play with her skipping rope'

Lukho* is playing touch with his friends read as Lukho* is playing touch with his friends *read as* "Lukho* is playing t *(pause)* chocolate" *(sees the ch in touch).*

e. Insertions

None were evident

f. Deletions

None were evident

g. Pauses

Pauses became evident in the running records as the text increased in complexity and reading was accomplished on the run. Pauses usually preceded a self-correction of some kind.

h. Appeals for help

Very few appeals for help were made. Non-responses or "I don't know teacher" or "I forgot" or shaking of head were indirect ways of asking for help.

i. Self corrections were made towards the latter part of the twenty-week intervention.

j. Words supplied by teacher

Early trends were towards teacher–researcher supplying the unknown word. Non responses were indicated by a shake of the head or "I don't know teacher." I tried to only supply words when they were central to the meaning of the story or where non-reading of them had brought the reading to a halt.

The analysis of the running records in terms of frequency, showed initially a reliance on me as teacher-researcher to help or provide the unfamiliar words. This reliance changed and extended gradually to phonetic attempts on the part of the children, pauses and re-running starts occurred in their reading. Use of context and search for meaning guided the self-corrections. Using the pictures for support was an important way for the children of problem solving the text as were their own physical gestures to show meaning. Self-correcting is little in evidence in the children's early engagement with text. The more proficient readers begin to show problem-solving behaviours first and almost immediately once they are given text to read at a level that provides sufficient challenge. Clay (2005, p. 55) calls this an instructional level of text where the child achieves between 90 and 94% accuracy.

7.2. Strategies related specifically to progress in the L2

Within the bilingual context of this research study, additional learning strategies on the part of the children emerged even though they were minimally used:

- Use of oral English as a resource but not necessarily as part of a linked network.

- Use of isiXhosa to fill in the gaps or to explain the confusion.

- Drawing on contextually bound language and / cues.

- Use of picture clues.

- Use of gestures.

The last three strategies predominated – these are universal, almost language free ways of coping with an unfamiliar code. Kamve* made self-initiated use of a negative at the end of May (16 weeks into the study). She had been telling me how Alutha* was playing in the rain and got wet. I responded to her story by saying "I am going to play in the rain." She responded immediately saying "I am not going to play in the rain."

7.3. Self-monitoring behaviours as indicators of strategic behaviours

Examples of self-monitoring behaviours as indicators of strategic behaviours

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1. *Lukho*'s book titled 'Lukho* is going to eat some cake' is a familiar story to him. He has read it once on the previous day when he read 'Lukho* is going to eat some cake' as "Lukho* is go to eat some cake." This was treated as a teaching moment and the difference between 'go' and 'going' was discussed. When he re-read it the following day, he read it correctly without hesitation. He followed this up saying "I said 'go', now I'm saying 'going.'"*

2. *Yonda* monitors herself constantly. She is aware when she doesn't know something "I'm tinking, I'm tinking" she says or " Tink, splat" tapping on her head, hoping this will access the truant word / sound.*

3. *In writing self-generated written vocabulary Alutha* starts his list with the words 'come' and 'look'. Halfway down his list he writes them again, returns to the top of his list and crosses them off indicating to me that he is aware of having already written them (this can be seen in appendix 10d)*

4. *In the second last letter identification task (after 16 weeks), Lukho* names the letters by placing the article 'a' in front of the letter. He says "a /f/; a /w' and another /g/". I speculate that this shows an awareness on his part of letters as abstract symbols (referents) and that this constitutes, therefore, important metalinguistic knowledge for him.*

5. *After correctly reading the word 'up' Lukho* puts it in a sentence to show its meaning. He says "I am going upstairs" emphasising the 'up.'*

6.   *Lukho* reads 'It has candles' as "It has" pause "this is a big word" thus indicating his awareness of words in print.*

7.   *Kamve* wants to write the word 'write'. She writes 'wri' correctly but is then unsure. She then writes 'et' very lightly on the page to give herself an idea of how this option would look.*

7.4.   Strategic behaviours

At the start of the research study very few, or ineffective, strategic behaviours were observed when learners engaged with text. None of the six children seemed to know what to do when encountering words they could not read or write and seemed to rely on memory. Their oral language, reading and writing seemed to operate as separate systems. The first evidence of effective problem solving behaviour was observed 4 weeks into the intervention on 19 April 2011. Kamve*, one of the higher achieving children, read her self-generated sentence 'I play skipping rope with my friend Veve.' In reading this back, she read 'I play with my,' noticed her error and said "I start again." She then read the sentence correctly. On 20 April 2011, Kamve* again, read back her sentence 'This is Kamve*. She is doing her party.' She read, This is Kamve*. '/d/ his doing her party." She then returned to the sentence re-reading and self correcting her errors: 'She is doing her party.' This indicates her use of context and meaning to correct her error.

A second strategic behaviour is observed at this same point in the research study in my interactions with Zusakhe*, one of the lower-achieving children. In reassembling his cut-up sentence he turns a word around the right way indicating some sort of whole word recognition and awareness of the visual features of print. Also at this point in the research, Yonda* turns the word 'play' around the right way when reassembling her cut-up sentence. A third child in the study, Yambeka*, reads 'with' as 'her' and says "I forgot." She then re-reads it of her own accord, correctly. It seems possible that that these children are spontaneously developing strategic behaviours in their reading and writing of English

text. At this same stage in the research study, Yonda*'s self-generated sentence is "I play skipping rope." She reads this back as "I play a skipping rose pause rope." The insertion of 'a' is a syntactic error that seems common to this group of second language learners. The self correction of 'rose' to 'rope' is the end result of a fairly lengthy debate between Yonda* and I as to whether it is 'skipping rope' or skipping rose.' I observe here that she has taken 'rope' as correct. A further example of strategy-use by Yonda* is in her reading of the sentence 'She is a girl'. She reads 'He' instead of 'she', realises her error and says "No, he is a boy." She then correctly reads the sentence "She is a girl."

Thereafter in the research study a variety of strategic behaviours emerge in the running records of reading. An error analysis shows a cluster around substitutions of words based on the meaning of the text, self-corrections using phonetic attempts at decoding and meaning clues and re-running starts to self-correct the error in accordance with the meaning of the text. It is important to remember that the content of the story is well-known to the children as it is their own. The class teacher comments on the children's reliance on phonetic strategies:

> When it comes to writing their own news, some of the children will attempt to write it all themselves before asking me to check it and when it comes to words they don't know they will write it phonetically, e.g. byutiful, frends, iys crem, luvly etc. In reading they rely on phonics as well. Some of the children self monitor by using context, so if they read a sentence and then realise that one of the words doesn't make sense they will go back and attempt it again. They might also use the picture to help themselves or sound it out phonetically.

Some differences in approach between this and the RR approach are evident. In RR difficult words are co-constructed between child and teacher so that it becomes a teaching opportunity for phonemic awareness. The transfer of pronunciation errors into writing

where they appeared as phonological errors, occurred frequently. By way of example, when Alutha* was responding to the hearing and recording sounds in words observation task he wrote 'Da bus' for 'The bus'.

Sound boxes were used in the writing segment of the lesson to scaffold the writing task for the children. When unfamiliar words were encountered, the teacher-researcher and child co-constructed the word. The sounds in the word are recorded sequentially and it is this that makes it an authentic task.
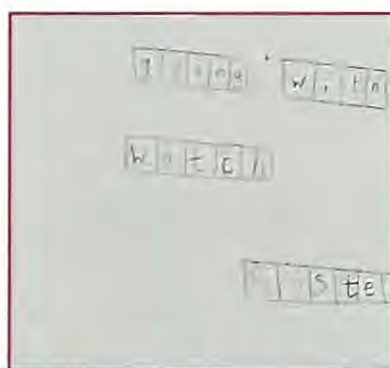
Figure 7: An example of sound boxes used to hear and record the sequence of sounds in words

Typically, the child writes sounds he / she can hear and the teacher writes the sounds the child cannot identify. This develops into strategic behaviour when some of the children start doing this themselves in encoding of words for writing their sentences. Kamve* tried to write 'skipping' and drew her own sound boxes to help in the task. Despite a determined effort, it was beyond her capability at this stage.
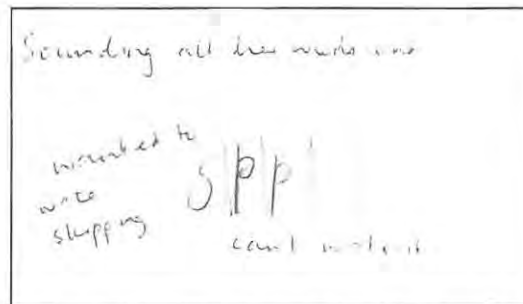
Figure 8: Kamve*'s example of self-initiated sound-box strategy

8. A view of progress as change over time (evidence of developing strategic behaviours)

8.1. Change over time in Letter Identification
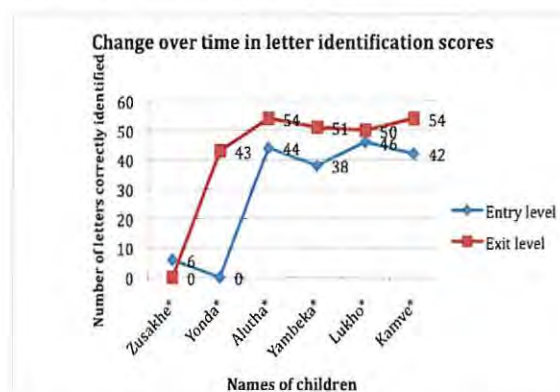
Figure 9: Change over time in letter identification of six sample children at entry and exit levels of the RR intervention
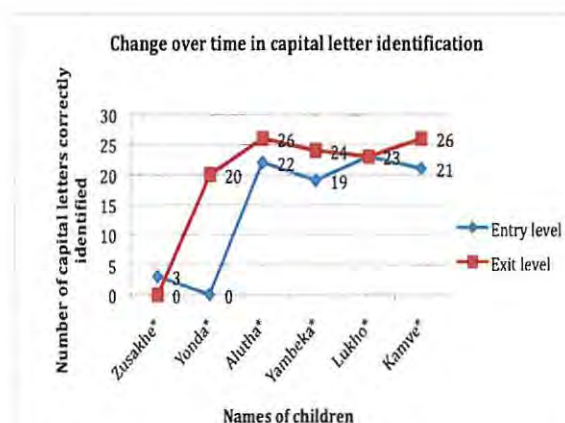
Figure 10: Change over time in capital letter identification of six sample children at entry and exit levels of the RR intervention
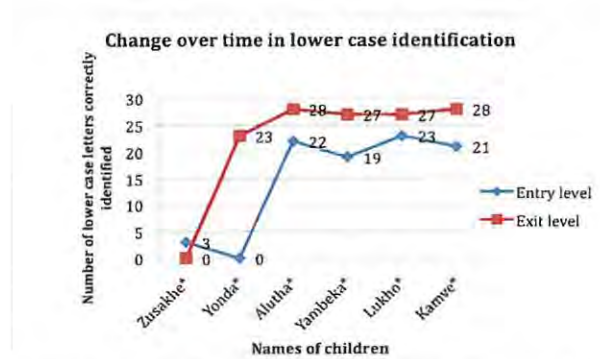
Figure 11: Change over time in lower case identification of six sample children at entry and exit levels of the RR intervention

8.2. Change over time in word reading scores.

Figure 12: Change over time in word reading scores of six sample children at entry and exit levels of the RR intervention

Alutha* progressed from a zero score on the word reading task to a score of 13 words correctly read out of 15 words. Yonda*, similarly significant in terms of entry scores, progressed from a zero score to a total of 9 words correctly read out of 15.

8.3. Change over time in hearing and recording sounds in words

The quantitative data indicate the child's ability to hear and record the sounds read to him / her in a dictated sentence.

Change over time in Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words
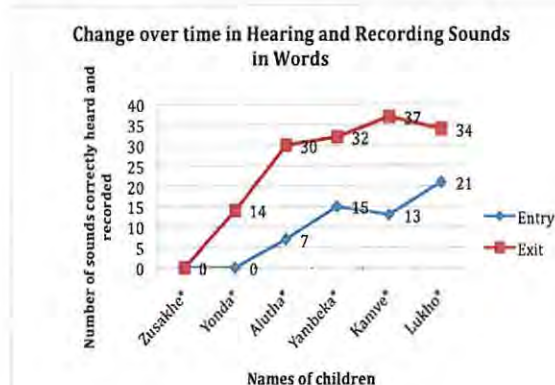
Figure 13: Change over time in raw scores of individual children in hearing and recording sounds in words at entry and exit levels of the intervention

I have included two examples from two of the children (low and top achievement bands) to show the progress made from the entry task to the exit task after twenty weeks of teaching within the principles of the RR framework. These examples are significant in the changes that can be observed: direction of print, matching of sounds to symbols and increased attention to print. This qualitative data shows how these samples of writing can be categorized according to Clay's developmental stages of grapho-phonemic development (in Kuball and Peck, 1975, p. 108). Presented in this way, they show the developmental process through the phonemic stages.

Some examples of hearing and recording sounds in words

1.   Example 1: Kamve* (top-achieving band).

- Initial Task. Dictated sentences: I have a big dog at home. Today I am going to take him to school.

- Final Task. Dictated sentences: The boy is riding his bike. He can go very fast on it.
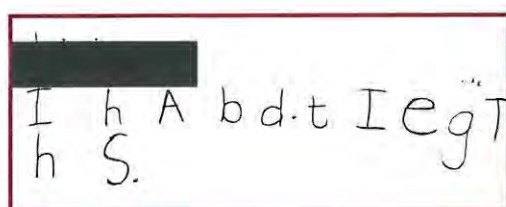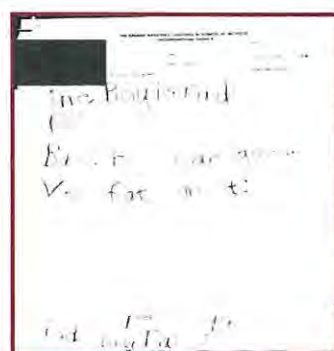
Entry level task   Exit level task

Figure 14: Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words: Kamve* Initial and Final Tasks

2.   Example 2: Yonda* (lower-achieving band)

- Initial Task (Entry level). Dictated sentences: The bus is coming. It will stop here to let me get on.

- Final Task (Exit level). Dictated sentences: Mum is going up to the shop. She will get milk and bread.

Entry level
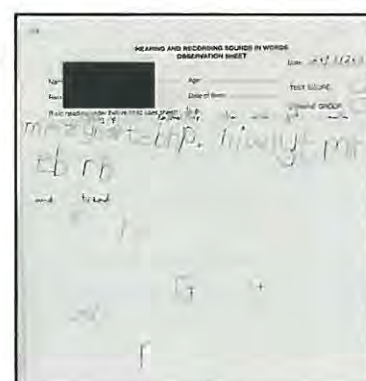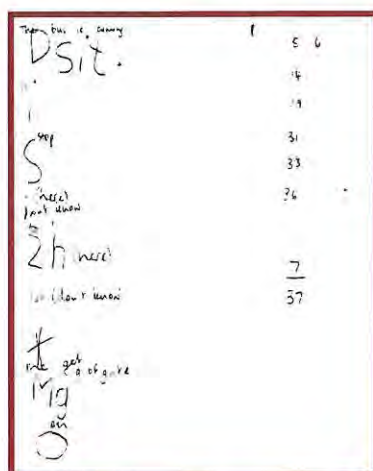
Exit level task

Figure 15: Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words: Yonda* Initial and Final Tasks

Examples of children's writing showing developmental sequence of grapho-phonemic sequence

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Example 1:

At entry level, Zusakhe* (in the lower-achieving group) writes the dictated sentence 'I have a big dog at home. Today I am going to take him to school' as:

a

t

a

y

g

This first response corresponds with a pre-phonemic stage of writing in which the child has not made sound-symbol links but is aware that letters constitute writing. He has not mastered the directional principle. Twenty weeks later, this same child writes the dictated sentence 'I can see the red boat that we are going to have a ride in.' as:

akcnreyoytoioGouteataiu

He has now mastered the directional principle and is beginning to correlate some of the sounds he hears with their symbols. He is writing down the sounds he hears but has some confusion with symbol matching. He writes, for example 'red' as 'rey'.

Example 2:

At entry level, Kamve* (in the top achieving band) writes 'I have a big dog at home. Today I am going to take him to school.' as:

I h A b da h. t I e g T h S

This corresponds with phonemic stage 1 in which the child knows that each letter has a sound. The child writes down the sounds s/he hears to represent a word. This is usually the first letter as that is the sound first heard. Kamve* makes accurate associations between the first sound and letter of each word in the sentence. She has omitted the word 'to' twice.

Twenty weeks later she writes 'Mom has gone up to the shop. She will get milk and bread.' as:

Mom hes gong gon up to the shop. she will get melc and brad.

She has moved through three stages to phonemic stage 4 in which she hears the beginning, middle and end sounds in words including vowels. She provides an example of self-correction and self-monitoring in

her writing of 'gone' in which she writes 'gong' realises her mistake in writing the 'g' so crosses off the 'ng' but still unsatisfied, writes the word again as 'gon'.

8.4. Change over time in written vocabulary scores
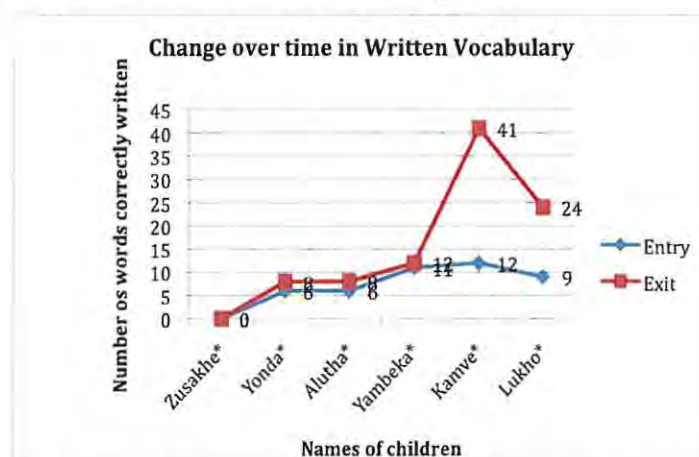
Figure 16: Change over time in written vocabulary scores

9. Increased complexity of text as evidence of problem-solving behaviour (appendix 9).

The texts for reading are derived from the children's spoken language. The following table shows how the written stories for the children in the top and middle achievement bands increase from between 5 and 19 words to between 57 and 155 words. The texts for the lower achievers also increase but not at the same rate. They progress from reading between 2/5 words to between 12/38 words in continuous text.

Table 7: Increases in text level complexity for each child over the 20 weeks

Name of child	Number of words in entry level stories	Accuracy	Number of words in exit level stories	Accuracy
Zusakhe*	2 words	100%	12 words	92%
Yonda*	5 words	80%	38 words	100%
Yambeka*	5 words	80%	57 words	93%
Alutha*	4 words	75%	54 words	100%
Lukho*	19 words	89%	155 words	92%
Kamve*	7 words.	100%	93 words	98%

10.   Analysis of strategic activity on text

For the purposes of greater consistency with Clay's theory, I have used Clay's Analysis of the Child's Strategic Activity: A Summary Statement (2005, p. 127) to provide a general themes and patterns in describing the children's strategic behaviours. This is drawn together from an analysis of each child's strategic activity and supplemented with comments from the interviews. The categorisations and questions are set out as in Clay (ibid, p. 127). They follow below using Clay's terminology.

Clay's Analysis of the Child's Strategic Activity: A Summary Statement (2005, p. 127)

10.1.   Location and movement

All of the children developed left to right directional movement in their reading and writing during the course of the study. They all read word by word and this was interpreted as an advance as it indicated attention to print, to the visual features of print and to the direction of the text. Confusions were fairly frequent between similar letters and words (e.g. let sounded out as l-e-f and then said as 'fat'; big was sounded out as b-i-g and then said as 'dog').

10.2.   Language

Control of the L2 developed visibly during the study. The predominant motivation for reading was for meaning. As each child's reading and writing developed, they began to search for more precise meaning of words and stories.   In the interview with the English class teacher, she refers to some errors that are made by the children:

10.3.   Do they seek help?

Generally, they did not seek help from me (teacher-researcher).

10.4.   Do they try again?

All of the children, apart from Zusakhe* who made the least progress, tried again in some way and showed active participation in their learning. By way of example, Lukho* sees a word he cannot immediately read. He says "I cannot do that" and then after a momentary pause says "Maybe I'm trying."

10.5.   Do they search for more information?

As their problem solving became more effective, the children searched for information by re-reading and taking another look, by taking words apart and by articulating letters or chunks of letters. None of the children attempted problem solving by analogy, although the class teacher said it was one of the strategies used by some of the children in whole-class literacy activities. This absence of use of analogy was possibly the result of having to strategise and read in the additional language and being limited to

the less proficient language. Thinking aloud in their home language isiXhosa may have helped to build analogies as this requires some flexibility of thought and vocabulary knowledge.

10.6. Substitutions

10.6.1. Do the substitutions make sense with the previous text?

The children make the following substitutions :

1. Lukho* reads The tortoise is going very slowly, as "The tortoise is going very slow." This error does not change the meaning of the sentence.

2. In reading 'Snow White is crying because she fell down.' Lukho* reads 'Snow White is cry because she fell down.'

3. Yambeka* reads 'She is playing with her skipping rope' as "She is play with her skipping rope."

4. Yambeka* reads 'They like to skip' as "They like to skipping."

5. Alutha* reads 'The gate is closed' as "The gate is close."

6. Kamve* draws a picture of herself and three friends to illustrate her sentence 'Kamve* and her friend.' When she reads her sentence and notices her error she corrects the sentence to read "Kamve* and her friends" by adding an 's'.

10.6.2. Do they continue an acceptable structure in English? (i.e. are their responses consistent with correct English syntax)

As indicated above many of the children's errors are corrected so as to make sense to them and to fit in with their knowledge of the story, rather than to be syntactically correct.

10.7. Useful strategic activity with words

The children were presented with isolated words for reading in the Observation Task. They made attempts to read these isolated words by looking at familiar features within the word or by looking at the first letter and predicting a word that starts with that letter. For example, in reading 'going' one of the children made the following attempts to read it by saying "it start with /g/" pause "got" pause "gone" pause "no".

Their class teacher describes the children's approach to reading, and in particular to reading of unfamiliar words in class literacy activities:

> *They want to read and so will attempt to do so although if they are looking at a picture book on their after school for example, they may abandon the words and just make up a story based on the pictures. They love spelling tests, to my surprise. They approach familiar words with confidence. They remember look and say words and simple 3 - 5 letter words that can be sounded out. With unfamiliar words, the stronger readers approach them confidently and at times I am amazed by the words they will read fluently. Stronger readers also sound the words out more confidently and because they have a bigger vocabulary can draw on words that they already know. Average and below average readers will sometimes just guess unfamiliar words or attempt to sound them out. Some of the children approach English text very hesitantly,*

looking at me for approval after each word. Some of the children have been struggling a bit with
blends but most of them are getting it and there has been a surge of growth in terms of fluency
and comprehension in a lot of the children. They struggle with words that can't be sounded out
or have sounds or blends that they aren't familiar with yet.

During the research time-frame, the children began to make frequent word-letter associations in their reading and writing of words. For example, in trying to read the word 'get' one child recognized the initial letter 'g' and said the letter is 'g of gate.' She did not go on to correctly recognize the word 'get' however.

10.9. Useful strategic activity with letters

In recalling the sound of a letter in the Observation Task, Yonda* said the whole alphabet until she got to the one she wanted, which was 'w' and then also gave a word association 'windy.'

When trying to access a letter the children made word associations: "c like cat or like kite?"

The children tried to recall letters by making word associations with the English letter associations. There were many examples which illustrated their ability to correctly say the sound of the letter, but their difficulty lay in matching it to its symbol and forming the corresponding letter. An example was given by Yonda* who wanted to write the word 'town.' She correctly identified its starting letter saying "t is for town." In looking for the corresponding letter she then incorrectly pointed to 'w.' Another example was given by Kamve* who, in trying to identify 'w', sang the whole alphabet until she got to 'w' whereupon she said the name of the letter and the word 'wind.'

11. What strategies do the better readers and writers use?

The English class teacher made a distinction between the better readers and writers and those not making the same rate of progress:

> *There is some instant recognition [of words], particularly with the better readers. They also use*
> *contextual clues and analogy clues. They break the words up into their sounds when it's a new*
> *word, although with high frequency words they are expected to know them by memory if there*
> *are pictures they will take clues from them based on the initial sound, some children just guess*
> *based on the initial sound (which obviously has a limited success rate).*
>
> *... Generally the better their ability to grasp phonics and apply it, the better their reading and*
> *writing (grammar and spelling) be.*

She elaborates further:

> *...it is the weaker children who need help in doing this [decoding] as the extent of my weaker*
> *children's strategies are to make wild guesses based on the initial sound (for those who know*
> *what it is) or to stare blankly at me or the book, no doubt willing the word to reveal itself. Jokes*
> *aside, I think many of the children I have grouped in the weak category are not, and given*
> *attention and patience would be able to grasp the concepts of literacy and keep up with their*
> *peers.*

The isiXhosa teacher also makes a distinction between these Grade One learners in terms of proficiency:

Researcher: Do you expect the children to read in isiXhosa at Grade One level?

isiXhosa Teacher: No but yes. Some bright ones can, of course with a lot of exercises from the teacher.

Researcher: Do you expect the children to write in isiXhosa at Grade One level?

isiXhosa Teacher: No, they can write one short sentence with the help of a story or by doing news with them. Some bright ones can be able to write with the help from the teacher.

12. Common errors relevant to L2 Literacy acquisition

The following letter confusions were identified in the letter recognition observation task:

- C pronounced as a click

- Q as a click

- X as click

- 'Going' said as 'gogo' (an IsiXhosa word for 'Grandmother.)

- Other common errors were difficulty in identifying vowel sounds and in representing them in their written form. In isiXhosa (the children's L1) there are fewer vowels to identify. The irregular sound-spelling relationships in English also contribute to these difficulties.

The English class teacher identifies the following common errors that she has observed in the children's classwork:

Reversal of letters such as b and d, f and t. Incorrect use of tense e.g. buy instead of bought, i.e. 'My mom she buy me K.F.C. on Saturday." They will often write sentences with incorrect sentence structure such as: "Me I like to skipping."

The isiXhosa teacher identifies the following as common errors observed by herself during isiXhosa lessons :

Code switching, reading and writing in general.

13. How can the oral language resources of these beginning readers and writers in English be used to support their development of reading and writing as self-extending systems?

In this research, it was the children's own oral utterances developed through interactions in the lessons (instructional conversations) that led the way for the content and complexity of the reading and writing and building of vocabulary.

Examples of children's oral language in which they share home and school experiences and show increasing mastery of syntactical structures.

1. *Yonda* described how she came to school on the taxi: "At five I'm upping, half past six the transport is in my house."

2. *Kamve* tells how Alutha* played in the rain: "Alutha* he play in the rain. Me I not play in the rain. I play skipping rote."

3. *Lukho* relates a classroom incident in which children have been sharpening their pencils against their teacher's instructions. Lukho* tells what the teacher said and what his response is going to be: "Teacher says who's been sharpening the pencil. Me, I'm gonna tell the truth. I'm gonna say me."

4. *Lukho* explains how he knows the difference between 'to' and 'too.' He says "I say I love you Daddy. My Daddy he say I love you too baba."

At first, the oral exchanges were tied to the immediate situation. Initially, the children seemed shy in talking about their home contexts at school. As their narratives developed so did the sharing of their home experiences and knowledge of syntax. Words in inverted commas indicate the child's spoken words. The italicised words provide the narrative of events. Generally, however, the children's language was confined to sentence stems (eg 'I like...') and this was partly shaped by my questions to them to prompt oral language and

discussion "What do you like?" The children struggled, in general, to find English words to express themselves and made use of gestures. In showing that Yonda* knew what a boat was, she made the motion of a boat on the water and responded with the isiXhosa word for boat. The children's oral language seemed to operate as a separate system to their reading and writing initially and it required mediation to link it to the reading and writing ie deliberate meaningful links had to be made.

The Class Teacher said she placed a strong focus on oral language in her classroom. In the interview she said:

> I highly value the teaching of oral language and I really want my children to learn to speak well. Knowing that a lot of them do not practice English at home means that their time at school is critical and they need as much practice and exposure as possible. I try to enforce that the children speak English at all times and it's very sweet listening to them ask each other polite questions in English. An added bonus is that due to their limited English proficiency, the noise level is reduced significantly! We have discussions about a variety of topics, I read to them and ask them to predict the next part of the story, we discuss stories we've read and I ask the children to tell me why they did or didn't like it or I ask them comprehension questions. We talk about pictures I show them, describing the scene and making up stories about them. Short orals are also done occasionally. Some mornings before we start work I let them talk to each other (at their desks) about anything they like as long as it's in English.

The isiXhosa teacher also placed an emphasis on communicative proficiency. She said the children showed particular strengths in speaking. She emphasized, however, the difficulties imposed by a large class on oral language activities in the classroom.

13.1. Oral transcripts

An example of interaction in English follows. It was taken from one of our first lessons when I was searching for an instructional starting point. I had some picture cards and my idea had been to develop a story around the cards. This type of exchange did not lead to very meaningful learning. As we got to know each other, other more meaningful conversations arose that were more appropriate in terms of the contexts of their lives and these were able to be used effectively for reading and writing instruction.

Three examples of the children's oral language in a structured literacy observation activity

Teacher-Researcher: "I'm going to show you some cards. You tell me what they are."

Example 1.

The first card is a picture of a boy / girl. The children respond as follows:

> Alutha*: Face.
> Zusakhe*: Teecha (whispered).
> Yonda*: No. I'm not clever with that one
> Kamve*: It's a baby, maybe.
> Lukho*: It's a boy.
> Kamve*. My name is Kamve*
> It's a boy.
> Yonda*: I tink it is a baby
> Maybe it's a baby.
> Yambeka*: I see the face
> This child is sad.

Example 2.

The second card is a picture of an umbrella. The children respond as follows:

> Kamve*: If it's raining you put it over your head
> Lukho*: Elephant: he do this … enacts elephant walking with arm used to show long trunk swinging.

Teacher: do you know what a trunk is? *No one knows.*

Teacher: A trunk is a long, long nose. *This is met with much laughter.*

Example 3.

The third card is a picture of an apple. The children respond as follows:

Kamve*: You eat apple

Teacher-Researcher: Yes, you eat an apple.

Teacher-Researcher: Now let's tell a story. *In the absence of any response, I model the idea of a story using the cards. I tell a story about the elephant that climbs over a gate and eats an apple. The children then respond:*

Yambeka*: The elephant was like apple.

Alutha*: The gate is closed.

Lukho*: This elephant is climbing and run.

This elephant is eat apple.

The above exchanges make it evident that the children have an idea of storytelling but lack both the confidence and the vocabulary to develop a story. Even though these stories were explicitly linked to the writing of stories, they were not as powerfully remembered as the sentences that began to derive from their own lives and were explicitly linked with reading and writing. These texts that came from their own daily experiences were used to make reading books. A 'story' in this context was a collection of the children's own sentences. The following two examples are of text that has been constructed from two children's own stories. The first is about having to stay at home because of heavy rain and the second about a birthday party.

Table 4.14. Yambeka*'s story

This is Yambeka*.

She is at home.

She did not come to school today.

Yambeka* likes school.

She likes to read.
She likes to play.
Yambeka* can not come to school in the rain.
She is wet.
She must stay at home.
She can read at home.
She can play with her friends at home.
She can eat spaghetti at home.

Table 4.15. Lukho's* story

Lukho* likes to go to his Mom's birthday.
Look at his Mom's cake.
The cake is big.
It has candles.
The cake is blue.
Lukho* is going to eat some cake.

14. *How meaningfully can the data derived from the Reading Recovery Systematic Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005) be used to increase instructional effectiveness and monitor changes in literacy acquisition?*

The scope of this unfolding research prevented me from exploring this question in any detailed or meaningful way. Ongoing conversations with the class teacher prompted her to try the cut up sentence approach as a class activity. She reported a positive response from the children and greater involvement and motivation in the reading of the class story she had written from their oral interactions with her. A further adaptation of the RR approach, for use with the whole class, was initiated by myself and received by the class teacher. Using one of the children's oral stories, I made a Big Book for the whole class for a shared reading activity (appendix 11). The class teacher reported positive engagement on the part of the children.

The Class Teacher thought that an effective transfer to the whole class situation could be made. She said: "I think through giving them reading and writing that is relevant and interesting to them and that uses their oral language knowledge - writing stories about themselves and then reading those stories or doing word and sentence building activities using what they've written for news." She said that, in her opinion, such an approach could definitely be beneficial. "It helped enormously," she said and elaborated as follows:

> I noticed a huge improvement in the reading ability and confidence of the children who were part of the research project. I loved the books the children made with their own stories and pictures in them. Their pride when reading them to me was lovely to see, as was their confidence and fluency in reading. Word and sentence building and the way you approached literacy was really great and something I would love to do more with my class as I saw how effective it was with the children you worked with. In terms of feasibility reading groups are tricky as I mentioned but things like sentence building and helping the children develop their own writing are definitely doable ...if I were staying another year I would like to attempt to transfer this approach to a whole class setting while at the same time keep trying to make group work a more successful endeavour.

The DBE (2010) has recently supplied literacy and numeracy workbooks to primary schools. These are consistent with some aspects of the RR approach, specifically the cut-up sentence but the overall approach is a skills-based one. Two examples of the activities are shown below:

Figure 17: Two examples of literacy activities developed by the DBE (2010) designed to develop school-wide literacy practices in English

Figure 18: An example of classwork done in the Grade One classroom

The above example is taken from the classwork book of a child in the sample group in the lower achievement band. The example is intended to show that, as valuable as literacy activities such as this one can be, they do not provide scope for active and individual construction of literacy systems and exploration of text.

15. *Personal investments and motivation in the literacy instruction process*

Two examples are given here of how personally invested the children were in their stories that had been made into reading books:

1. Kamve* in seeing the picture I have chosen of her house is visibly disappointed and says "My house is big. It has six rooms." In similar dissatisfaction about a clipart picture I have inserted on a page of her reading book, she says "My sister is big, my brother is little." (I have them the other way around).

2. One of Lukho's* stories ends with 'Lukho* likes school.' He turns to me with a delighted expression and says "How did you know?"

16.   *Summary and conclusion*

This chapter presented the findings of the research. These findings were organized around the research questions in a way that foregrounded the strategic behaviours that were developed by the children during the research period. The findings showed, firstly, how the children develop item-based knowledge and directed attention to some of the relationship that the children began to construct within this knowledge. Examples were given of self-correcting and self-monitoring behaviours as these gave evidence of early literacy processing systems. The data was further organized into line graphs to show how the children increased in competence as they constructed their individual literacy systems. Change over time represented the increased complexity in tasks. The quantitative data was presented in graph and table form and descriptive patterns were identified within this data. The qualitative data was presented descriptively in the form of a narrative report and was used to triangulate the quantitative data. Selected transcripts of the children's oral language show how this potentially constitutes a resource in second language literacy learning. Extracts from the interview transcripts with the class teacher and isiXhosa teacher provided corroboratory evidence.

CHAPTER 5: Discussion

1.   *Chapter overview*

This chapter restates the goals and questions of this research study and briefly gives an overview of how these were addressed. It describes the research setting and the participants and documents the ways in which they interacted with English as their second language in the early stages of acquiring literacy. Once the delimitations and limitations of the research study have been set out, the discussion follows. Everything thereafter is the discussion of the research findings. The focus of the discussion is on the ways the children show agency in their literacy learning in English, how they begin to actively make connections between their items of knowledge and how they begin to construct networks of strategic behaviour.

2.   *Introduction*

This research study explored the ways in which a small group of Grade One bilingual children engaged with and began to acquire literacy in English as their second language. Their first / home language is isiXhosa. The research explored the capacity of self-extending systems in early literacy learning in EAL for accelerating learning. The literature suggested that this was a way of securing a successful trajectory in literacy acquisition by establishing a broad foundation that would support the development of strategic behaviour. The research project was motivated by reports of downward trends in second language English literacy levels in South Africa where English is the L2 and LoLT for the majority of children.

The research provided a way of exploring the nature of early and formative literacy learning in a bilingual context in a primary school on the outskirts of a small town in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. The socio-constructivist orientation of the study enabled a view of children as active agents in the learning process and as able to mediate their own world with their language constructs. Within this theoretical framework, literacy learning was viewed as an historically, culturally and socially-situated process. The research was shaped by the theoretical principles of RR, a literacy system designed to extend its own competency (Clay, 2001, p. 33). The Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2005) was the primary methodological tool used to collect and analyse data.

3.   Delimitations of the study

The study is delimited by the theory of RR (Clay, 2001, 2005). The RR principles underpin the intervention and guide the administration of the Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005). The Observation Tasks are used as both an instrumental and analytical tool in data collection and interpretation.

4.   Limitations of the study

It may not be possible to generalise from this case study to other second language contexts because of the small size of the sample. This will provide scope for further study. A further limitation is that the observer brings what she knows about reading and writing to the observations and this may determine what she is likely to observe in the children's literacy development (Clay, 2005, p. 12). Gillham says that it is important for the researcher to "decentre" (2000, p. 28) him/herself from the research to counter the impact of this. My inability to speak isiXhosa and my lack of knowledge of the socio-cultural context to which the children belong was a further limitation. Further, my inability to speak isiXhosa

prevents and excludes me from understanding the factors that contribute to the interrelationships between English and isiXhosa such as emergent bilingualism and bi-literacy.

5.   *Discussion*

The crucial parts of this discussion are:

- whether the appearance and development of strategic behaviours foundational to self-extending systems in early literacy, is evidence of greater efficiency in learning,

- whether oral language is a resource in developing early literacy, and

- whether this can be transferred to the second language instructional context in South Africa.

The results of the research suggest that the children were actively engaging in literacy concepts in English and successfully building inner control of the processes of reading and writing. This was evidenced by self-corrective and self-monitoring strategies in their reading and writing, cross-transfer between items of knowledge and of increasing complexity in their oral language and reading. Writing did not show the same gains. As the study progressed, the significance of the bilingual identity of the children became increasingly apparent. I searched for instances of cross-linguistic transfer in the data and transfer of strategic knowledge of processing across the two languages English and isiXhosa. Very little transfer was evident. It is possible that this could contribute to further discussions on early reading and writing progress in EAL. Individual variation emerged as an important theme and is supported by literature on early literacy.

The main argument put forward by this research study was that EAL learners could be started on successful trajectories of literacy learning by responsive teaching that allowed active constructions of L2 text and encouraged the building of strategic behaviours in their L2. This claim was tentatively made as a result of systematic observation of strategic behaviours in early reading and writing in English as the additional language. This holds significance for the delivery of literacy programmes for EAL learners in South Africa. The implications for classroom instruction were considered within the broader context of the South African educational system and within a discussion of the dynamics of change.

I positioned the research by establishing the baseline level of the children's concepts in English. I used The LARR (Downing et al, 1993) to accomplish this. The first findings of The LARR (ibid) were of generally low literacy concepts in English with a significant increase in all scores over the twenty weeks. The data gave evidence on both administrations of a general, underlying language ability. This was probably the result of the children's exposure to two languages and their oral proficiency in their L1. Strict scoring criteria resulted in some answers being marked incorrect when I think the child did actually know the answers. This was the case with the questions that were very specific to reading and writing such as "Circle the first letter in each word" and "Circle each thing that is a sentence" (Downing et al, 1993, p. 11). Downing et al make comment on exactly this (1993, p. 19) saying the test statistics showed that each question was an effective part of the test, with generally high scoring children being more likely than others to answer it correctly. There were also occasions when the children knew the correct answer but answered incorrectly. Downing et al say teachers in the standardization sample reported the same perception (1993, p. 19). Downing et al (1993, p. 15) say interpretation of very low scores is complex. They say that, before concluding a low score is evidence of genuine weaknesses in literacy concepts, it must be considered that it may be a child's first

experience of a test situation and so factors such as not knowing what is expected, anxiety and, in this context, the use of English as the language of testing. The children, although having had some preschool experience in English had no experience with testing in English.

The data collected by the first Observation Tasks (2005) revealed children at different stages in their acquisition of literacy in English. This ranged from differences in sets of letter knowledge and ways of identifying letters, word reading and hearing sound sequences within words. They showed varying proficiencies to hear and record sounds in words and to generate their own written vocabulary. The children varied in their ability to express themselves in English and in their proficiency, motivation and confidence to do so.

As the intervention got underway, the research began to show the children's emerging capacities for effective processing of items of English literacy knowledge and the ability to actively engage with these items, albeit tentatively at first. The children continually strengthened their visual discrimination of letters and their sound-symbol links, increased their word reading and became increasingly accurate in hearing and recording sounds in words. Shifts became evident in their ways of identifying letters, identification by letter names and word associations giving way to identification by letter sounds.

Strategic behaviour became evident in the children's control of direction of print particularly in hearing sounds in words. Additional early reading and writing behaviours over which they gained mastery over the twenty-week intervention, were concepts about print, word by word matching and use of picture to support reading. Areas of difficulty for the children were reticence in oral interactions with me and in generating their own oral sentences. They needed prompting initially as they seemed shy about connecting their

home and school worlds. They also found it difficult to generate their own written vocabulary and very little progress was evident here.

5.1.   The Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2005).

These tasks in the Observation Survey (ibid) are selected indicators of literacy learning. They showed the ways in which young children constructed for themselves, English literacy concepts and how they began to build early literacy processing systems. This made it possible to short-circuit ineffective literacy habits from the start.

In this research, a difference was evident immediately between the more proficient readers and writers and those with less proficiency, in terms of efficiency in strategy use. The more proficient children begin to extend their capacities for learning at earlier stages and in more integrated ways. Kamve*, for example, generated and read her first sentence of seven words with 100% accuracy. Over the twenty weeks she built up her reading capacity from 7 words to 93 words with 98% accuracy. Similarly, Lukho* progressed from 19 words at 89% accuracy to 155 words at 92% accuracy. In reading and writing all the children's strategies at their own individual level of proficiency, were driven by their search for meaning. This became paired with use of visual and phonological cues as their competence increased. Increased complexity of text was initiated by the children's oral language. In reading this more complex text, the more proficient readers began to use strategies such as re-reading, making re-running starts, pausing and repeating words and/or phrases in their reading. By engaging in this way they developed an increasing repertoire of strategic behaviour.

The top achievers used word associations to aid in their letter identification when reading text. Use of pictures was a valuable strategic support for all the children with varying degrees of accuracy and efficiency. Generally, the use of syntax as a strategic behaviour was not a priority for the children and they tended to not notice syntactical errors in their reading. The top achievers began to notice errors in syntax towards the end of the twenty weeks and attempted to correct them. Kamve*, for example, noticed the word 'friend' in her written sentence when she needed the plural 'friends.' She added the letter 's' by herself, to form the plural. Kamve* also made self-initiated use of the negative 'not' in her response "I am not going to…"

Lukho* began to notice the word ending '–ing' in his reading and writing although his use of it was inconsistent. This growing awareness of syntax was self-initiated in response to text structured around the children's oral utterances. This suggested a natural order of progression in acquiring literacy concepts even in the children's additional language.

Reading and writing at the sentence level was important for establishing competence and confidence. One of the most significant findings of this research was, however, that at word and sentence level there was no demand for strategic behaviour. It was only at the instructional level (i.e. 90 – 94% accuracy) (Clay, 2005, p. 55) of reading and writing that strategic behaviours began to emerge. Errors at the instructional level were largely visual and syntactical. Visual errors were noticed and self-corrected more accurately than syntactical ones. At the instructional level, in the last ten weeks of the intervention, the top achievers were observed beginning to attempt unknown words by using visual or semantic

clues. For example Lukho* read 'touch' as "chocolate" having noticed the phonological

unit 'ch' and predicted a word that he knew started with this sound. He realised that

'chocolate' didn't make sense in the context of his story and through using meaning and

visual clues, he self corrected his error. In a more complex text he exhibited an even

stronger attempt at visual decoding. He read "story" as "swimming" having noticed the

initial letter 's', then re-attempted reading it as 'sort' having further noticed the 's' 't' and

'r' within the word. Realising that neither attempt was correct, he covered up the letters

within the word to get an idea of their sequence. This visual information, in combination

with semantic (his knowledge of the story) helped him to self-correct the word.

This cross-checking of visual and semantic information began to be used as a strategy in

the latter stages of the research by the more proficient children. This was not a result of

direct teaching but provision of the opportunity to develop strategic behaviours. The less-

proficient readers produced less language and less text. They therefore, received fewer

opportunities for reading and writing and for developing strategy choices. Even though

they made significant proportional gains in item knowledge, they had less opportunity to

make links between their items of knowledge. The less proficient readers and writers were

slower to link letters with their sounds and they paid less attention to the visual

information in the text. Yonda*, for example, when writing 'house' said 'h' but wrote 'p.'

Clay (2005, p. 89) says "Feature distinctions [of letters] are challenging when a child

knows only a few features and a few letters." These children making slower progress,

relied predominantly on being able to remember their orally-generated sentences / stories

and the context of these. Progress occurred in different dimensions of the literacy system.

Yonda*, for example, showed increasing attention to print and awareness of literacy

concepts. This awareness was shown in her reading of the sentence "I play skipping rope"

as "I play skipping rope full stop." Her reading increased from 5 words with 80% accuracy

at the start of the research to 38 words with 100% accuracy at the end of the twenty weeks. Her accuracy was aided by the use of the sentence stem "She is going to…"

There was minimal evidence of cross-linguistic transfer at all levels of proficiency. A single instance of cross-lingustic transfer was made by Lukho* when he wanted to say he was going to draw himself sleeping. He could not retrieve the word in English for 'sleeping' so said he was going to draw himself "lala" (isiXhosa for sleeping). Yonda* referred to words in isiXhosa when she was unable to access the English word. On one occasion, she heard, for example, a whistle outside the classroom. She said it was a "impempe" (the isiXhosa word for 'whistle') and then asked what the English was. She then repeated the English word. From the start of the research, the children were aware of English and isiXhosa as two separate language systems.

5.1.1. Letter knowledge

Score increases gave ample evidence that letter learning was taking place. The children's responses all showed change over time. Scores increased rapidly on letter identification over the twenty weeks for the middle and top achievers. At first the children were observed struggling to identify letter names and sounds but becoming more confident as they increased their familiarity with them. Certain specific difficulties were evident here such as confusion of b, d, p and q. This perceptual confusion seems to be common at this early stage of letter learning. Analysis of the data showed persistent confusions with c and q pronouncing them as isiXhosa clicks. This is also evidence of cross-linguistic transfer between isiXhosa and English.

Clay (2005, p. 89) describes a large-scale study in New Zealand of Reading Recovery in which two sets of sounds for letters were distinguished. These are:

a large easy-to-learn group

B b C D d F f G g H h J j K k L M m N n O o P p R r S s T t V v W w Z z

a smaller hard-to-learn group

A a a c E e i l I l Q q U u X x Y y

Nathanson's research (2008, p. 119) with a group of Afrikaans L1 and English L2 speakers, was consistent with Clay's (ibid) in these hard-to-learn letters. This research differed from that of both Clay and Nathanson in finding that the following set of sounds for letters were hard to learn for this group of isiXhosa speaking children:

U u J j D d b a g h C c v

This holds implications for instructional practice in that these letters need to be taught in ways that aid their retention and recall.

5.1.2. Word knowledge

Clay (2001, p. 190) says each word in print carries several kinds of information (semantic, syntactic, visual, phonological, orthographic and even layout and positioning in texts). As such, words are crucial components of the reading and writing process. In this research, word knowledge increased steadily on the Word Reading Task for the middle to top achievers. The two words that none of the children could master throughout the research

project were 'Mr' and 'where.' These two words held no meaning for them. In their word reading, the children showed visual confusions with words that contained b, d, p. This improved as the children came to know the perceptual features of each letter. It became apparent that the words used in the word test were starting to be used / integrated naturally by the children into their oral responses and stories.

At first the children showed no strategy for decoding words. If they didn't recognize a word by sight, they were unable to read it. They responded saying "I don't know teacher" or by shaking their head. They began to apply sounding out strategies as their competence on the other observation tasks improved and their exposure to text increased and phonic decoding became their primary strategy. This was also probably a response to classroom instruction. I observed the following example of word reading strategies by one of middle-achieving group of children:

> I observed Yambeka* trying to write 'has.' She could say the word and decode it into its individual sounds h – a – z but couldn't remember how to write the 'h'. She could think of another word that started with 'h' (hug me) but still couldn't write the 'h'. She eventually wrote 'w' writing 'waz' for 'has' but saying 'has' but very hesitantly knowing it wasn't right.

5.1.3. Hearing and recording sounds in words.

Hearing and recording sounds in words proved to be a very significant task in terms of L2 literacy learning as it showed the children's increasing proficiency with the sound system of the English language. It was a strong indicator of progress in English literacy. Clay says this is an authentic task and thus something children would be required to do in real life as they acquire literacy. Considerable change over time was evident for all the children. Their direction of print developed over the twenty weeks and a continually increasing ability to match sounds to their symbols was evident. Some of the common difficulties were in

remembering how to form the letter even though the sound could be heard accurately. Initially, just the first sound of each word was written. This was followed by the first and last sounds within the words but over the twenty weeks the children began to hear and write more middle sounds within words. Kamve*, a top achiever, achieved a perfect score at exit level of the research. This task was very valuable in directing attention to the increasingly accurate ways in which the children heard and represented the sounds of their L2. Clay (2001, p. 21) says "Children learn to hear the sounds that make up the words they speak." There were frequent instances where the children could hear and say the sounds in sequence but were unable to match the sound to its written symbol. This is where frequency of exposure to their additional language would benefit their learning.

5.1.4. Written vocabulary

Very little progress was made on this task over the twenty weeks. The children wrote many of the same words over the twenty weeks of intervention. These were phonetically regular words often taught in phonics schemes (cat, fat, mat, pig). Lack of progress in writing is a product of instructional programmes that do not emphasise writing. The large class context restricts the development of writing particularly as the children are at different levels of proficiency. They had only had limited exposure to English in preschool which would further inhibit the development of writing. Clay, however, speaks of emergent writing and the importance of children writing. With the shift from teacher control to student control it may be possible to develop writing in meaningful ways. Writing is, however, an important part of early literacy because it directs a child's attention to each letter of a word whilst writing that word. This provides training in phonemic awareness, which is invaluable to the reading and writing process.

5.1.5. Running records of reading

The lesson structure over the twenty weeks of research followed the RR structure of a lesson but with some necessary modifications to suit the L2 context. As the school did not have reading books available, I used the children's own immediate environment as content for their reading. I made reading books for each child based on their oral exchanges during the lessons. I typed each child's book on my computer and inserted photos and clip art photos where appropriate. I left places where the children would illustrate the sentence with their own drawings. The books started with one sentence and as the children's reading developed, the books increased in complexity (see appendix 9 for example). This increase in complexity reflected their growing vocabulary and ability to access and articulate their own stories. In running records taken in each lesson I observed that each child's use of vocabulary reflected their increasing accuracy in reading of words on the Word Reading Observation Task. They began, for example, to use plurals and the word ending –ing spontaneously in their storytelling. With increased complexity of text, they began to operate on print using the strategies available to them.

6. Common themes in early literacy acquisition at this stage: how literacy acquisition is affected by the L2

RR views the construction of literacy processes from an L1 perspective. As it is situated within socio-psycholinguistic theory, however, it is possible to extend this to literacy acquisition in English as a second language. Krashen (in Freeman and Freeman, 2000, p. 22) argues that the key to acquisition of a second language, and hence literacy, is comprehensible input. Krashen's theoretical position is consistent with the theoretical orientation of this research (ibid, p. 22). It may be, therefore, that some of the predictions made for children acquiring and learning literacy in their first language also hold true for the child acquiring literacy in his/her second language such as the importance of

vocabulary and phonological awareness to reading and writing success. Also consistent with the socio-constructivist stance of this research, is that meaning is constructed involving cues from a written text in a process called a 'transaction' (Freeman and Freeman, 2000, p. 23). Children acquiring literacy in a second language bring two worlds to the learning situation and it must be remembered that they already have competencies in their L1. They bring a worldview mediated by their L1 and prior knowledge and concepts developed in their L1, to the classroom context. Of significance to this research was the separation of these two worlds as a result of instructional methods and the lack of opportunity for cross-linguistic transfer. Only Yonda* would refer back to isiXhosa words and Lukho* used isiXhosa once when he was trying to explain that he wanted to draw himself sleeping. He couldn't retrieve the English word so used the isiXhosa one "lala." This showed the development of the two languages alongside each other as separate systems and, thus, potentially limiting to the children's literacy construction in both languages.

A prime consideration was that the children were learning how to speak in English at the same time as learning the written code of English. This reduced the potential benefits of oral language as a resource in their learning to read and write in their new language. Mispronunciations of English words and subsequent incorrect recording of phonemes occurred and seemed to be typical of the whole group of children. A typical mispronunciation was of the word 'the' as 'dah.' This caused confusion for the children in the way the word sounded for them and in what they were trying to recall visually. The digraph 'th' is used frequently in English but it is a difficult sound for isiXhosa speakers and doesn't exist in the isiXhosa language, Two persistent mispronunciations were of the words "skipping rope" pronounced as "skipping rose" and rugby pronounced as "rubby."

The children's primary motivation in reading was to decipher the message. Use of the children's own experiences contributed to their motivation to read as the message contained in the text became personally meaningful to them. As they became more familiar with English text, they began to anticipate and predict the text. They began to use re-running starts, pauses and self-corrections to keep control of the text. This was consistent with L1 development of strategies in literacy.

The children in this research sample did not make use of syntactical information in their reading and writing and becoming familiar with the syntactical structure of English was probably the greatest point of difference between L1 and L2 literacy acquisition. Their sentence structure was often a direct transfer from their speech to their writing and reading. This meant that they had to override the visual cues held in print on the page. As their proficiency increased they began to cross-check their reading and writing using semantic and visual information but they paid little attention to syntactical information.

7.   *Emergent literacy*

The evidence gathered from the research is consistent with thinking on emergent literacy. This position claims that literate behaviour is evident long before the child can read or write. Emergent literacy holds that reading and writing are continuously developing behaviours. The research undertaken by Hodgkiss (2007) in the Eastern Cape is valuable in this regard. As the children in this research study acquired literacy there seemed to be a magic moment when they were able to read (as opposed to when they couldn't). From an emergent literacy perspective, however, their ability to read is explained as part of a developmental process of constructing literacy concepts. Clay (2001, p. 1) says literate behaviours emerge naturally from everyday experiences with print. The children's

increased literacy concepts in English, as shown by The LARR (Downing et al, 1993),

support this view. Clay (2001, p. 1) continues saying that research shows that linguistic

awareness and its related concepts are more closely related to progress in learning to read

and write than such factors as visual and auditory perception or letter-name knowledge.

This is significant in understanding the development of literacy in English as a second

language as it will prioritise the provision of opportunities that encourage the emergence of

literate behaviours and not a point in time at which a child is ready to learn to read and

write.

8.   *Self-extending systems*

The identification of self-extending systems is the central feature of this research and the

most crucial part of this discussion. Clay (2005) sums this up as follows:

> For beginning readers, self-monitoring their reading responses and problem-solving
> unknown words leads to and is a sign of a developing self-extending system. As
> these readers use strategies to monitor and problem-solve their reading, the
> strategic activity in their brains becomes more accessible and complex, allowing
> them to read even more challenging texts. (p. 86)

The active searching for meaning shown by the children in this research is evidence of

these beginnings in developing self-extending capacities in their reading and writing. As

such, this research confirms Clay's theoretical position on self-extending systems in

building literacy processing systems. The significant part of the discussion is that self-

extending systems are considered preventative of subsequent difficulties whereas 'items

banks' approaches are not (Clay, 2001, p. 219). The narrow focus of items-based

approaches to reading and writing "virtually predict subsequent difficulties" (ibid, p. 216).

This research confirms Clay's position in that the children only began to develop problem solving approaches and strategic behaviours when they engaged with continuous text at an instructional level i.e. between 90 and 94% accuracy level (Clay, 2005, p. 55; Hempenstall, 2003, p. 739). Clay (2001, p. 197) explains that reading at this level gives enough support from familiar features in texts to allow attention to shift to novel features of text, without losing the support of language. The children's scores on items of English literacy knowledge increased noticeably over the twenty weeks. According to Clay (2001, p. 215), however, it is the links between them that build the capacity for a self-extending system and differentiates Clay's theory from items-based approaches. What is critical is learning to use item knowledge to read and write new messages and knowing how to expand the literacy processing system while doing this (ibid, p. 219). Short, Harste and Burke (1996, p. 7) reinforce this position saying that such an approach would deny children the opportunity to use other ways to problem solve and to cross check information in their constructions of literacy processes.

In this research, each child was observed making use of their own preferred strategies. Within wide individual variation, general strategies can be identified. These strategic behaviours fall within Clay's definition and description of "self-extending systems" (Clay, 2001, 2001). This can be tentatively put forward as evidence that young bilingual learners are capable of developing self-extending systems in literacy in English as their second language. This further suggests that a different approach is necessary in this literacy-instruction context in its early and formative stages. Clay (2001) explains it this way:

> Merely accumulating good test scores showing a knowledge of letters, or letter-sound relationships, or an extensive vocabulary of words read, or a fine repertoire of phonological analysis strategies, or reasonable performance on reading a narrow range of texts, would not provide the required insurance for subsequent progress.

Learners would need to be able to read and write texts relatively independently in ways that could lead the learner to taking on new competencies through his or her own efforts in the classroom. Item knowledge may be acquired by gradual differentiation of new from known items held in memory, but what is critical is:

a) knowing how to use this knowledge to read and write new messages, and

b) knowing how to expand the literacy processing system while doing this. (p. 219)

9. *Self correction strategies*

Self-correcting behaviours are important to RR theory. Clay (2001, p. 184) says that self-corrections suggest that children know what they are doing at an intuitive level and are able to self-instruct: "if they meet with sufficient success, they are reinforced for the effort." Initially, none of the six children seemed to know what to do when encountering words they could not read or write. In the absence of contextualised knowledge they relied on memory as their primary recourse for problem solving. What was significant during the research was their active searching of text for information and increased ways of interacting with text. As they did so, self-corrections in reading, speaking and writing became evident.

10. *Change over time as evidence of efficient processing of text*

Clay (2001, p. 183) comments that the changes that occur with successful literacy progress are indicators of processing that works or of the emergence of self-extending systems. This effective processing is particularly evident in the reading and writing of increasingly challenging texts. Change over time is evidenced by the increasing use of strategic behaviours in problem-solving on text and in the engagement with increasingly complex texts. Self-correcting behaviour "seems to become shaped by successful reading experience into an implicit executive control mechanism operating in silent reading"

(Clay, 2001, p. 189). This research provided a window into what was happening for learners in their early stages of processing text. Significant evidence was collected of change over time on every aspect of literacy construction explored by the Observation Tasks (Clay, 2005).

11. *Use of semantic, visual and syntactic information in problem-solving*

Most of the self-corrections observed in the research study were initiated by the children in their reading of text because the story did not fit with their knowledge of what was supposed to be there (i.e. matching with what they had said). Because the story was derived from their own personal experience, they knew what message it should hold. This use of meaning as a cue system is a way of supporting independent processing in reading and writing. Where a reader experiences dissonance in his/her reading or writing, meaning is one source of error detection that will tell the learner that all is not well and will call for "active, constructive, independent problem solving" on the learner's part (Clay, 2001, p. 220). In this research, the use of the children's world knowledge (everyday concepts) enabled them to make links with written text and begin to connect the links – build up the knowledge sources. Illustrations provided powerful links for them as they searched for meaning in the text.

12. *Self-monitoring strategies*

Clay (2001, p. 188) speaks of the importance of self-regulation in building self-extending systems as this allows independence. Zusakhe* who made very little measurable progress in the research project, began to show behaviours that I suggest can be described as self monitoring behaviours such as tapping his foot repeatedly saying "trying to remember, trying to remember." Yonda*, who also made progress at a slower rate, began to show an

awareness of her interactions with text. On one occasion, whilst reading, she tapped her head saying "I'm tinking" (thinking), "I'm tinking (thinking)." I suggest that these are early indications of self-monitoring. These two children know that they do not yet have the correct response and that they need to do something to produce it. These responses sit in contrast to Zusakhe*'s early responses on letter and words where he just gave the same response (Dee) when he did not know the correct response and Yonda* would just simply say "I don't know teacher."

13.   *Phonology and orthography in literacy acquisition in EAL*

An investigation into RR methods (cited by Limbrick, 2000, p. 10) "suggested that Reading Recovery did not best meet the needs of learners with poorly developed phonemic awareness." The report continued by suggesting that maximum benefit from RR is gained when oral language skills are better developed thus providing a better basis for phonological processing to develop. For children who are acquiring literacy in English as a second language, this is an important consideration as the speech-to-sound links upon which phonemic awareness depends, still need to be developed. This is made more complex by having to learn the language at the same time as developing literacy in it. This research confirms the necessity of building strong phonemic awareness in English as a second language and that many opportunities arise for teaching of phonemic awareness. This research confirms the use of other cues, however, in conjunction with phonological ones. Elley and Mangubhai (1983, p. 54) say that in L2 classrooms the focus is often on the form of language rather than its meaningful use for real purposes. Linguists have shown that gestures, facial expressions, intonations, and events of the moment correspond with and support the language children see and hear (ibid). This is strongly confirmed by this research study. The children made extensive usage of gestures, particularly to add

meaning to their interactions in English. Goldberg and Casenhiser (in Ellis and Robinson, p. 198) maintain that knowledge of language does not consist of a set of unrelated item-based facts but is instead "a rich, interconnected network, containing both specific and general knowledge."

14. *The reciprocity of reading and writing*

Clay (2001, p. 17/18) cites research which reports that writing vocabulary was the main predictor of early reading progress across the range of achievement between the ages 5.6 and 6:0 and again between the ages of 6:0 and 6:5 in New Zealand. It is unclear whether this can be applied to the South African bilingual context. In this research study, the children's writing showed little progress and this may be a feature of acquiring literacy in a second language. RR research found, however, that early writing is a critical part of a successful intervention in early reading and that teachers have to actively teach for a transfer of reading knowledge to writing or vice versa. In this research study, the children's reading and writing and oral language seemed to operate as separate systems. Explicit attention had to be given to integrating them in to a system whereby reciprocal benefits could be achieved. Fleisch (2008, p. 136) says that Taylor and Moyane's study of Grade Three classrooms found that very little writing took place and then only a word or sentence. Almost no extended writing took place. This accounted, in part he says, for the unequal distribution of achievement in South African schools. This finding reinforces the importance of writing (and reading) in a reciprocal relationship through continuous text in developing successful early literacy experiences.

15. *Using the oral language resources of beginning readers and writers in EAL to support their development of reading and writing as self-extending systems*

The research does not provide sufficient evidence as to whether the oral language resources of the children in the research sample can be effectively used in supporting their development of reading and writing in English. The children's own stories were written down so that they reflected their actual speech and vocabulary acquisition was embedded in the process. It was evident, however, and confirmed Clay's position (2001, p. 93) that as literacy is learned it is a great advantage to be able to monitor what you think you see in print through a set of oral language competencies. The research suggested a natural emergence of language patterns such as the use of –ed and –ing which seemed to enter the conversations quite naturally. This is consistent with research on the order of acquisition of morphemes. Saville-Troike (2003, p. 43) refers to the question of whether there is a natural order in the grammatical development of L2 learners. The results of a study by Brown (ibid, p. 43) indicate that the progressive –ing and plural –s are the first set of morphemes to be acquired by both L1 and L2 learners. The top achievers in this study acquired the plural –s and the morpheme –ing at about 16 weeks into the study. The relationship between oral language and reading and writing was not made automatically and required the establishing of explicit links. The children's smaller vocabulary in English constrained their use of this strategy in reading and writing. Bialystok (2001, p. 178) says that vocabulary appears to develop slowly in children acquiring two languages at the same time particularly in the foundational years. This is due to its distribution between two languages.

Interestingly, in their early story telling, the children adopted a rather formal pose in line with their expectations around storytelling probably consistent with their experience of

mainstream academic literacy. As Brice-Heath (1982, p. 50) explains, they "knew a story was a fictionalised event, that it suspended reality and framed an old event in a new context. It called on audience participation to recognise the setting and participants." (Brice Heath, 1982, p. 73). Despite lack of evidence in this research on the powerful links that can be made between oral language, reading and writing, it was evident that oral language was a vital resource. It showed, firstly, what was happening with the second language and thus opened up the interactive space. Fusaro (2010, p. 1) says that vocabulary and narrative are oral skills that have been identified as foundational in children's literacy development.

16.   *Transfer to the classroom*

Clay's RR is intended for individual intervention. This research study explored the transfer of RR to the whole class context as an effective means of creating opportunities for literacy acquisition in English as a second language. RR is dependent upon teachers as decision makers. Clay (2001, p. 19) says teachers should not simplify or avoid the hard parts of learning but should make those hard things easy to learn. She says if we meet individual needs at early stages it is possible to move to group instruction based on similar needs.

Clay (2001, p. 77) says the questions that need to be asked around a schools' s literacy instructional policies are

- what types of knowledge do the literacy practices of schools permit children to learn?
- how does the novice reader use the tools they have acquired?
- do these tools allow for the development of a self-extending system?

In this research context, these questions make a call upon teachers to pay attention to the capabilities that bilingual children bring to the learning process and of the kinds of behaviours that signal progress. The research suggested an entirely different instructional approach for young bilingual learners was possible but this claim is made tentatively and humbly in the knowledge that large mainstream classes in South Africa militate against much of what is proposed. This calls the suitability of RR into question and Clay (2001, p. 279) says that some educators question the ability of ESOL children to continue to gain after RR is no longer available to them. This, she says, is not a literacy learning question but a question of whether the school is providing its learners with the opportunities to advance in their control of English. Clay (2001, p. 112) continues saying "If the long-term aim of an early intervention programme is to prevent subsequent difficulties, then teachers in such programmes will have to help children develop a literacy power system." This focus on the child's active construction of a literacy processing system has a teacher phase-out and student phase-in effect as learners "become ready to develop and mobilise their own resources..." (ibid, p. 111).

Of transfer to the instructional context, however, Garcia (1999, p. 3) says the type of instructional research "that has been conducted with young bilingual children does not help us to understand the issues raised in the acquisition research, nor does it help us understand the types of instructional approaches that could be most beneficial." Clay, on the other hand, says that "when we pair teachers with active child learners whose brains are working constructively on making some sense of their worlds, this can result in successful learning much of the time." Although in the case of children learning a second language there is an interaction of other variables, there is sufficient evidence to show that this instructional approach can be successfully transferred to the classroom.

In this research study, the teacher initially set up literacy practices in the classrom that were based on traditional school practices such as drill of phonics in decontextualised examples and searching for meanings that the teacher had in mind. In some ways the result was of knowledge as "insulated, impermeable, and disconnected from the children's emergent meaning-making, language and literacy resources" (Prinsloo and Stein, 2004, p. 78). She was highly responsive to alternative approaches however and sincere in her attempts to meet the children at their point of need. She began to shift from this "teacher-fronted pedagogy which focused on rote learning, phonics and drills" and "introduced more participatory models in which children's histories, languages and background knowledge were incorporated into literacy activities" (ibid). Kuball and Peck (1997, p. 104) say an emphasis on drill and practice leads to an attitude of "learned helplessness." This may be one of the explainations why, in the early stages of the intervention, the children generally responded to unknown words by shaking their heads or saying "I don't know." They had, not yet, begun to understand their power for strategic problem solving.

17.   Challenges for teachers of young children in the early formative stages of literacy learning

This research confirms that teachers of young children in the formative stages of L2 literacy acquisition face serious challenges to the effectiveness of their teaching. This is a serious concern in view of the crucial role that they play. "Teachers play a central role in the challenge of literacy development in schools, and information about their literacy practices and proficiencies could bring useful strategic insights in how to address the literacy crisis in education" (PRAESA, 1992). The Grade One teacher explains her challenges in the instructional context as follows:

My two biggest challenges are that I have so many children in my class (including a lot of weak learners) and no teaching assistant. I think even having one of those obstacles removed would make a huge difference. As a result of having so many children, the brighter and more confident children answer questions quicker, engage in discussions and generally speak a lot whereas the other children don't. While I try to provide equal opportunities, they are not enough to help them improve. Unfortunately it's sometimes just quicker and easier to ask a child who I know will give me a coherent, quick answer. I think also that small group or individual attention is what the children really need. However, not having a teacher's assistant to help the other children and maintain quiet makes it very difficult to do so as the class quickly descends into cacophonic chaos if I am not constantly monitoring them.

18. *The centrality of a bilingual identity to this discussion*

The research shows that both isiXhosa and English are developed separately to avoid confusion. The Grade One teacher tells the children it is "English only" in the classroom. The isiXhosa teacher speaks of codeswitching as a problem. This is a commonly held view of bilingual learning but one that is contested in current literature. Escamilla et al (2009) point out that banning the L1 is counterproductive and does not accelerate English acquisition. If, however, we view children as already competent "emerging bilinguals" it becomes possible to conceptualise alternative and effective ways of closing the literacy gap. This research confirms theories of emergent literacy and extends the concept to emergent bilingualism. The state of becoming literate, or bi-literate, is an all-important one. It removes ideas of needing to be ready to acquire literacy, and of limitations by imposing categories and placing ceilings on achievement.

19. *Cross-linguistic transfer*

In terms of cross-linguistic transfer on the part of bilingual learners, Garcia (1999, p. 5) says that specific strategies are unique to bilinguals. These are the use of cognates, code

switching and translating. These can be used to enhance the reading comprehension of bilingual readers. Garcia continues saying that not all bilingual readers have an intuitive sense of transfer nor do they make use of cross-linguistic strategies. It is the successful English bilingual readers that have a unitary view of reading across their two languages because they know that knowledge and strategies acquired in one language could be used while reading in the other language. However, in this research, the more proficient learners seemed to operate in their two languages as separate systems. The less proficient learners seemed to be confused by the co-existence of two languages. This would be a common situation, however, for many children beginning to acquire literacy in English at this stage.

In describing the children's bilingualism, the Grade One teacher said:

> They often revert to isiXhosa when talking to each other. Generally speaking, their English is influenced by the TV programs they watch and they can talk for quite some time about things that interest them e.g. the boys eagerly describe and re-enact wrestling moves or action movies while the girls prefer to talk about their dolls or skipping. They code switch a lot but also correct each other's mistakes. Most of the children are very eager to talk English and take great pride in being able to. They struggle with he and she, him and her and tenses and sentence structure e.g. "My mom he take me to the shop on Saturday."

She views their bilingualism:

> definitely as a benefit. I think that if they were taught IsiXhosa until they grasped the phonics and grammar rules, it could be better used to help them learn English. The current situation of learning English and IsiXhosa concurrently is not easy for them.

Of this instructional separation, Garcia (1999, p. 2) says that research has shown that bilingual children younger than six, "tend to outperform monolingual children on isolated

tasks of meta-linguistic awareness related to reading." The research suggests that this "meta-linguistic advantage disappears and that this may be due to the predominant tendency to provide schooling to bilingual children in only one language at a time, effectively limiting their continued bilingual development."

20. *Individual variation*

As would be expected within a socio-constructivist paradigm, this research found plentiful evidence of individual variation in literacy processing systems. The Grade One teacher said, "The vastly different bilingual abilities of the 43 children … make it difficult to address the needs of all the learners." This individual variation increased amongst the children in the research sample group as they were afforded opportunities to construct their own literacy processing systems. The research is consistent with Clay's view that every child is ready to learn something and with a view of the natural variability of learners rather than learner deficit. The six children showed wide variation in their responses to English. Clay (2001, p. 114) says this is characteristic of children in the early stages of literacy learning. Holmes in Clay (ibid, p. 114) says "The hypothetical construct of working systems broadens our explanation of individual differences." It provides us with an explanation for different working systems rather than deficient ones.

In the research data individual variation was evident in different ways. Lukho* for example enjoyed oral interaction and retold events in colourful detail. Yonda* struggled with the visual recall of letters and words but could remember the overall context and meaning of words and letters. Kamve* enjoyed the challenge of working out the sequential order of sounds within words. These were amongst the many differences shown by the children in their acquisition of literacy.

21. Need for additional intervention beyond that given in the mainstream classroom

Clay says there are children, a small percentage usually, who need specialist support in order to make progress. The findings of Kidd's (2011, p. 21) research lead her to say that she "agrees with Clay (1993, p. 8) that the lowest achieving children need finely-tuned, one-on-one instruction that can help them progress at faster rates in order to reach the grade-level performance." This research is also consistent with this finding. In the sample group of children, Zusakhe* was a very vulnerable learner and his progress was such that he would have needed additional support to close the literacy gap that had developed between him and the other children in the group. Although it was not possible to address his needs in this research study, I employed a number of "remedial techniques" with the intention of building his literacy experience. A contributory factor to his effortful and slow progress was his absences from school often and for long periods at a time.

22. Change and challenging of deficit thinking: alterability of perceptions

RR is based on a transformational model of progress and Clay's conception of literacy processing is of a "tentative and flexible processing system under construction" (2001, p. 294). It gives an alternative description of literacy, one that accommodates individual difference and variability. As such it offers a platform from which the downward trends in literacy acquisition in South Africa can be viewed from a different perspective. In addition, the case study research design lends itself to contestation of this kind. Case studies can challenge widely-held assumptions (Gillham 2000, p. 101) says "They can have a revelatory quality, alter understandings, challenge existing order, build better understanding or an improved response or attitude. The real power of case study research is in part a function of the uses to which it is put." The function of this case study is to present alternatives in thinking about literacy in a second language and children's

competencies to construct a literacy system in their second language. This is consistent with the transformational goals of RR.

Bloch (2006, p. 5) comments on the difficulty of changing literacy practices in South Africa. She says her research experiences, informed by her role as a parent, a teacher and a teacher educator, suggest that "this is a slow, cyclical process involving opportunities to observe reading and writing practice, reflect and discuss, read related contesting views and theories, reflect on these, try out adjusted practice based on fresh insights, with guidance from and interaction with a more experienced 'other'." The RR theoretical framework seems to fit most of these criteria. Vygotsky (1978, p. 132) placed great emphasis on the role of tools in human development. He said that this use of tools meant that men and women were capable of affecting nature, changing it, creating for themselves new natural conditions of existence.

Unexpected dimensions emerged as the study progressed. Existing perceptions about the individual children and their capabilities began to change and, whereas I had not expected the research to impact on classroom practice, this turned out to be the case. Unexpected progress made by the children, challenged perceptions about their competence and pace of learning. This, in turn, led to rethinking around typical and traditional literacy instruction for additional language learners. The changes in the children's competency as shown in this report, prompted changes in the way they were viewed. This led to changes in the way the teacher interacted with them and with the opportunities they were given for learning. This initiated a positive cycle of learning for them. This brought about unexpected changes in the teacher's receptiveness to the intervention and her willingness to try a different approach. It fed positively into the children's identity as readers and writers and contributed to a positive Matthew effect (Stanovich, 1986).

Having established the timeousness of thinking about literacy in a different way, this research also acknowledges Moraes' point (1996, p. 125) that teachers need to learn that one kind of methodology is not good for all students. This is taken further by Trudell and Schroeder (2007, p. 166) who say that, taking into account the socio-psycholinguistic theory of language acquisition, should mean that we question the cultural and linguistic assumptions that underlie Western concepts of early literacy in an African context. They say it is time to think about an African model of literacy acquisition "that allows the learner to access new knowledge through print and use the knowledge he or she already has" (ibid, p. 177).

23. *Questions for further research*

- A study investigating the cross-linguistic transfer between English and IsiXhosa.

- Adaptation of RR to the classroom in an isiXhosa language community, considering the work already been done by the Molteno Project using an adapted version of Breakthrough to Literacy, and based on principles of authentic language experience.

- Use of control groups to measure the effectiveness of RR in the isiXhosa-English bilingual context

- Research into the instructional implications of an emerging bilingual identity as opposed to additive bilingualism

24. *Summary and conclusion*

This chapter discussed the research findings in the context of the relevant literature. It explored the extent to which the children were active participants in the literacy process

and whether strategic behaviours gave evidence of self-extending systems. The instructional implications for these findings were considered. The findings validated Clay's views of constructive children able to take up ownership of their bilingual literacy learning. They further suggested that Clay's model of literacy development could be meaningfully used to describe literacy processes in the L2. The concept of children as emerging bilinguals needs to become an increasingly important one in the South African context and may powerfully guide instructional planning. The findings showed that change is possible but that it needs to be sustained by a wide range of factors. The necessity of considering an African reality is crucial if this sustainability of teaching and learning practices is to be effected.

In Conclusion: Implications of the Research

This research study addressed the concerning downward trends of literacy in EAL in South Africa and, more specifically, in the Eastern Cape where the research is situated. It did so by proposing an instructional approach based on the principles of RR (Clay, 2001, 2005) with the claim that it was more responsive to the linguistic needs of bilingual children learning EAL and where English is their LoLT. The claims of this research must necessarily be tentative because of the many variables involved, the small sample size and the single research site.

In exploring the ways in which a sample group of six Grade One children began to engage with EAL, a recognition of their emerging bilingual identity became paramount in the study. It was evident that the children's home language, isiXhosa, could provide a valuable resource in the learning of their second language, English, and that to separate the two languages instructionally was to deny the children a significant resource. In acknowledging the children's world of their L1, it became possible to use existing competencies to advance their learning in EAL. As their competencies developed in English, it became increasingly possible to draw on their existing knowledge to problem solve new aspects of the literacy process. The children were observed to be establishing their own cognitive processing networks in an approach that fostered their own constuctiveness in acquiring literacy.

A view of the literacy acquisition process as necessarily developing from simple competencies to complex ones translated into an instructional approach that allowed the children to engage with text and use cognitive processing strategies that are not called for in the traditional phonics and word-based approaches commonly found in South African

classrooms. Importantly, the children's predominant strategies at this formative stage of literacy acquisition drew on attempts to make meaning of what they were reading and writing. It was evident that their active construction of meaning drew significantly on their L1 and that this contributed to sustainable and meaningful learning.

A strong feature of the instructional approach explored in this research was that it drew on the existing resources of the teacher/s, the children and their environment. A wealth of resources were to be found in the children's own experiences and in the daily happenings around them. All the children and I needed in the tutorial sessions were paper and a pencil and, on the part of the teacher, the ability to access these resources in a meaningful way.

The research gives evidence of the reciprocity of reading and writing particularly in the early stages of literacy acquisition and where learning is made vulnerable for any reason. The children made markedly slower progress in their writing of words and sentences but the benefit of their writing accrued to their reading. My sense is that over time, with an instructional emphasis on reading and writing as linked processes in literacy learning in EAL, the benefits would accrue to both processes.

The RR Observational Instrument (Clay, 2005) enabled exciting insights into the existence of strategic behaviours in the children's literacy acquisition. As a result of the children's own engagements with written texts of increasing difficulty (and these initiated by their own oral use of English) they began to develop strategic behaviours. These in turn revealed the potential for self-extending systems and hence, accelerated literacy learning in EAL. The RR approach opened up the possibility for accommodation of individual differences in learning and therefore, opportunities to meet children at their level of need.

RR (Clay, 2005) is not intended for group or class teaching but some of the principles underlying the approach were transferred successfully to the whole-class situation by the Grade One English class teacher. For example, the making of a Big Book about 'Things in the Grade One Classroom' and subsequent Guided Reading engaged the whole class in a meaningful literacy activity. It was evident throughout the research period that the large classes in many of our South African classrooms militate against sustainable successful literacy acquisition for children in EAL. The quite remarkable progress of the children who participated in the research was due, in part, to the individual tutoring they received. Re-examining the size of our classes in South Africa, particularly in the formative stages of additional language literacy learning is, in my opinion, a necessity. In this way a greater instructional responsiveness could develop that meets the linguistic needs of the many bilingual children in South Africa in ways that pay forward into cumulatively successful literacy experiences. There seem to be no shortcuts in this regard.

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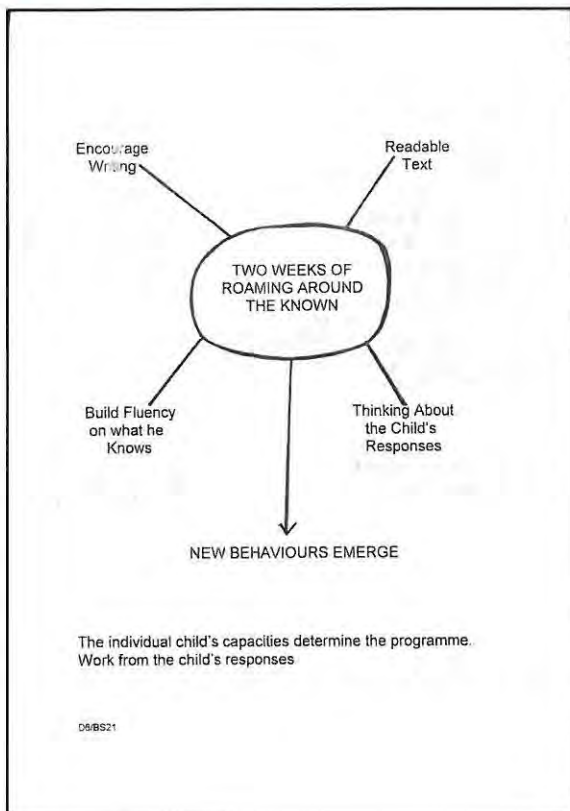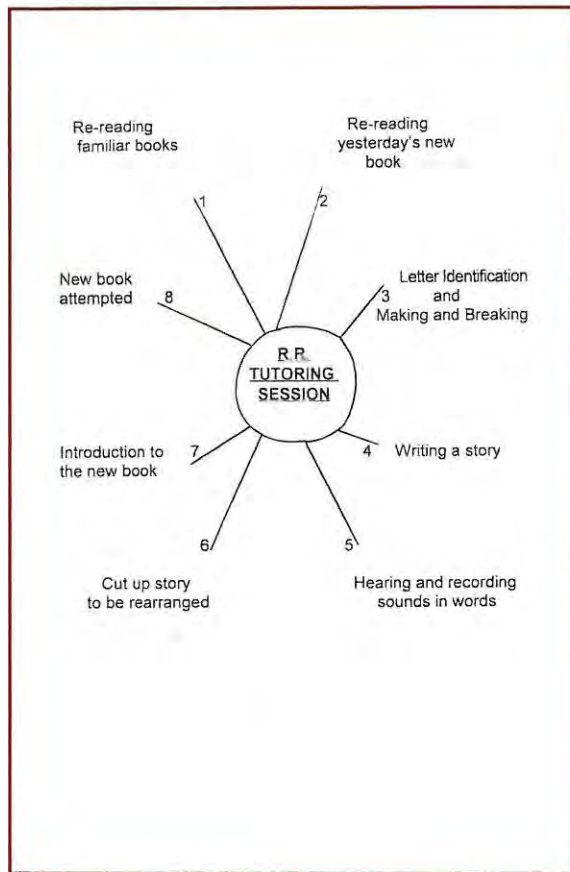
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APPENDIX 1. FORMAT OF RR TUTORING SESSIONS

Re-reading familiar books — 1

Re-reading yesterday's new book — 2

New book attempted — 8

Letter Identification and Making and Breaking — 3

R R TUTORING SESSION

Introduction to the new book — 7

Writing a story — 4

Cut up story to be rearranged — 6

Hearing and recording sounds in words — 5

Encourage Writing

Readable Text

TWO WEEKS OF ROAMING AROUND THE KNOWN

Build Fluency on what he Knows

Thinking About the Child's Responses

NEW BEHAVIOURS EMERGE

The individual child's capacities determine the programme. Work from the child's responses

D6/BS21

APPENDIX 2. GANT CHART SHOWING THE TIME FRAME OF THE RESEARCH

	Oct'10	Nov'10	Jan '11	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pilot Study	completed											Report Writing	√	√
Proposal	completed													
Policy & doc analysis							complete		Data analysis					
Interviews			completed						completed					
Headmaster									√					
Class Teacher									√					
isiXhosa Teacher									√					
Field Notes			completed											
Systematic Obs:														
1. LARR			√					√						
2. Letter identification			completed	√	√	√	√	√						
3. Running Record			completed				√	√						
4. Word Reading			completed	√	√	√	√	√						
5. Writing Vocabulary			completed	√	√	√	√	√						
6. Hearing sounds in words			completed	√	√	√	√	√						
Oral language recordings			completed	√	√	√	√	√						
Field obs - notes	completed	√	√	√	√	√	√	√						
letters of permission			√											

APPENDIX 3. LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

January 13 2011

Dear Parent / Guardian

I am currently doing research in literacy learning at Grade One level for my Masters degree in education. I have the permission of Mr S and Miss S to work with the Grade One class and with a small group of children within the class, as identified by Miss S-. The purpose of the research is to explore ways of teaching and learning English as an additional language.

I require your permission, however, to work with your child. All interactions will be confidential and respectful and no names or photographs will be made public. Please give your signed consent below if you will allow me to work with your child.

Yours faithfully

Liz O'Donoghue

I, _____(parent/guardian)

of _____ **Grade One**

give my signed consent as below, for Liz O'Donoghue to work with my child in English literacy during school hours.

I understand that my name and my child's name, will not be made public and that the results of his / her work and name of the school will be confidential.

Signature
Date

APPENDIX 4. EXAMPLES OF EMERGENT LITERACY TASK 'CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT' (CAP) (CLAY, 1996) AND OF THE LARR TEST OF EMERGENT LITERACY (DOWNING ET AL, 1993)

APPENDIX 4a. EXAMPLES OF THE CAP THAT MADE IT UNSUITABLE FOR THE INITIAL STAGES OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY.

The child is asked to follow along as the teacher reads the story aloud and to identify what is wrong with the text.

I pushed it and
pushed it over and over.

APPENDIX 4. EXAMPLES OF EMERGENT LITERACY TASK 'CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT' (CAP) (CLAY, 1996) AND OF THE LARR TEST OF EMERGENT LITERACY (DOWNING ET AL, 1993)

APPENDIX 4a.
EXAMPLES OF THE CAP THAT MADE IT UNSUITABLE FOR THE INITIAL STAGES OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY.

The child is asked to follow along as the teacher reads the story aloud and to identify what is wrong with the text.

Would taht stone roll on
to the huose with the siwng ?
Or dwon to the flowers
that are yelolw ?

14

APPENDIX 4. EXAMPLES OF EMERGENT LITERACY TASK 'CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT' (CAP) (CLAY, 1996) AND OF THE LARR TEST OF EMERGENT LITERACY (DOWNING ET AL, 1993)
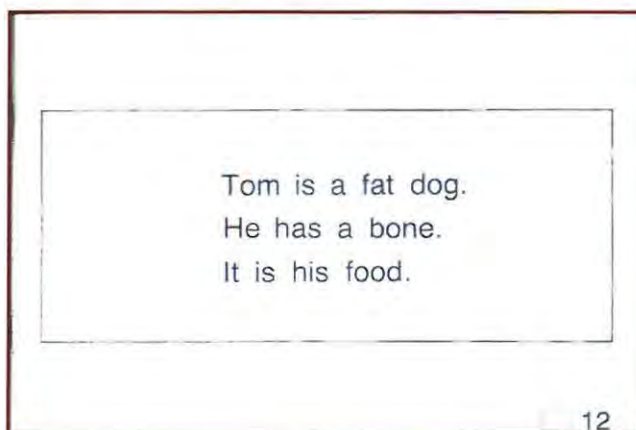
APPENDIX 4b.

EXAMPLES OF THE LARR TEST OF EMERGENT LITERACY (1993) TAKEN FROM THE THREE SECTIONS OF THE TEST. I DEEMED THIS TEST MORE SUITABLE FOR BASELINE ASSESSMENT THAN THE CAP (CLAY) FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY.

Example 1. Question 4. The child is asked to *'Circle each part of the picture that someone can read.'*

Scoring:

      2 points are given if 'Meats' *and* 'Oranges' *and* 'Bread' etc *and* 'Washing powder' *and* 'Potatoes' all circled separately

      1 point if any of the above are circled separately

      0 points for any other response

APPENDIX 4. EXAMPLES OF EMERGENT LITERACY TASK 'CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT' (CAP) (CLAY, 1996) AND OF THE LARR TEST OF EMERGENT LITERACY (DOWNING ET AL, 1993)

Example 2. Question 6. The child is asked to *'Circle each person who is reading.'*

Scoring: 2 points if top two and bottom left pictures all circled separately
1 point if any two of the above are circled separately
0 points for any other response

People must be circled for marks to be awarded, but do not penalize additional circling of reading matter. Allow circling of whole drawings. Score 0 if any clear marks in wrong drawing.

Example 3. Question 12. The child is asked to *'Circle the top line of the story.*

Tom is a fat dog.
He has a bone.
It is his food.

Scoring: 1 point if 'Tom is a fat dog' is circled
0 points for any other response.

APPENDIX 4. EXAMPLES OF CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT (CAP) (CLAY, 1996) AND OF THE LARR TEST OF EMERGENT LITERACY (DOWNING ET AL, 1993)

Example 4.

Question 18. The child is asked to *'Circle the sentence'*

Scoring: 1 point if 'The plant grows' is circled
0 points if anything is circled

22.	The plant grows.
blow snow flow	grows

18

APPENDIX 5. INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

APPENDIX 5a
Transcript of Interview with Grade One Class Teacher. July 17 – July 19 2011

Preamble: Thank you for allowing me to work with six children from your Grade One class this year. As you know, this work has formed the basis of my research at Masters level, into the strategies used by Grade One children in their learning of literacy skills in English as an additional language. Your role as their class teacher is central to their progress and the questions that follow are intended to deepen my understanding of how this research can contribute to instructional effectiveness in additional language teaching. I really appreciate your feedback and participation.

> **My first questions are of a general nature. Their purpose is to give an idea of your school and classroom as this relates to literacy instruction.**

1. How many children do you have in your Grade One class?
43
1.1. How many boys?
17
1.2. How many girls?
26
2. What is the age range of the children in your Grade One class?
6 – 7 years old
3. What is the general social context of the children in your class? How would you describe their social context in general?
They come from a variety of backgrounds and socio-economic situations.
Some of them live with both or one of their parents but most live with extended family - sometimes instead of their parents and sometimes along with their parents. Fatherlessness, divorce, poverty, alcohol abuse, exposure to violence and the loss of family members are problems faced by some of the children. They all live in the township.
4. How many children are repeating Grade One this year?
2 children, a boy and a girl.
5. What is the home language for the majority of the children?
isi-Xhosa
6. What home literacy experiences do they generally bring to Grade One?
They primarily bring isiXhosa literacy experiences. Some have been exposed to English through T.V., books and conversation but some live with grandparents who don't speak English. Even these children have a bit of exposure through T.V.
7. What literacy learning takes place as a result of their preschool experiences?
This is where they gain most of their literacy skills before Gr. 1. They arrive in gr. 1 knowing basic instructions, concepts such as colours, shapes, days and months, and counting. Most also know the alphabet.
8. What language do you use as your medium of instruction at this Grade One level?
English
9. How many of hours of instruction in English take place over the course of a week?
About 9 hours a week.
10. How would you describe the children's language proficiency and status:
10.1. in English? (how much English do they know on entry to Grade One and what kinds of progress do they make and at what rate?)
They arrive in gr. 1 knowing basic instructions, concepts such as colours, shapes, days and months, and counting. Most also know the alphabet. They progress at different rates - I do notice progress in all of them but some still struggle to converse in English by the end of

Grade 1 while others have become reasonably proficient in English. The struggle is that they are learning 2 languages at once and so mix up the phonics

10.2.   in Xhosa?

The children's first language is Xhosa so they are a lot more proficient than in English and seem to grasp reading, pronunciation and spelling a bit quicker than English

10.3.   in their classroom interactions?

I encourage them to speak English and some try to but they do revert to isiXhosa unless I remind them to speak in English frequently. This is an area of great progress throughout the year as their vocabulary and confidence increases

10.4.   in their playground interactions?

Their playground interactions are conducted primarily in isiXhosa.

11.   How would you describe their bilingualism?

As Xhosa is their home language and they only start learning English in Grade 0, they are not strongly bilingual in Grade 1. However, the language proficiency of the individual children varies greatly and, while some children are barely bilingual at all, others take great pride in their English ability and manage to improve quite quickly. Children whose parents speak English to them at home are naturally more bilingual than those whose parents don't.

12.   How does their bilingualism impact on their classroom learning?

They often confuse English and Xhosa sounds, especially vowels, thus resulting in incorrect pronunciation e.g. Ten would be pronounced and consequently spelt tan, or vice versa. Concepts need to be reinforced frequently and a lot of different strategies need to be used to promote understanding. Work goes slowly as a result.

13.   In which ways does their bilingualism enable / constrain your teaching approach and the interactions inherent within it?

Enables: it has taught me to use different strategies and to explain things in simple language as well as helped me understand the needs and communication strategies of second language speakers. Constrains: certain concepts are difficult to teach using an extremely limited vocabulary, teaching must happen at quite a slow pace and it can be difficult to keep the attention of children who do not understand much English. The vastly different bilingual abilities of the 43 children also make it difficult to address the needs of all the learners.

14.   What support do you receive from parents / grandparents / guardians of the children in your class as regards their learning of literacy in English?

Support varies. Some parents respond to letters, help with homework, encourage their children to speak English at home and read to their children, and some don't. There are many reasons for this; socio-economic difficulties, long working hours, and in some cases the grandparents or guardians do not speak any English themselves.

> **These next questions are intended to give an understanding of your general approach to literacy learning in Grade One (as informed by language policy, your theoretical position and your own teaching experience).**

1.   What language policy guides your instruction in early English literacy in Grade One?

The departmental language policy for grade 1. (I'm not sure if this is what you are looking for?) I use the RNCS workbooks that the Department of Education sent us to guide my instruction, while also supplementing them with other readers etc. when I deem it necessary.

2.   What approach do you use to teach literacy in English in Grade One?

The children are learning to read and write 2 languages at once, their home language IsiXhosa and English. Consequently I approach literacy with the awareness that learning English may be a slow process and that they will need a lot of practice with English sounds. Initial phonics take a while to grasp but as the year progresses the rate of literacy learning seems to increase exponentially, in reading, writing and speaking.

3.   How would describe the goal of your literacy instruction in English in Grade One?

The goal is to provide the children I teach with a good foundation on which to continue their literacy learning. Along with meeting the necessary Assessment Standards I hope to give them a love for reading and learning and to build their confidence in English.

4.   How do you plan your literacy teaching sequence over the year?

This year I have followed the RNCS workbooks I mentioned in Answer 2.1. When planning lessons I use them as a guideline, while also referring to the RNCS teachers guide/work schedule, as well as

relying on experience to inform me in deciding to focus on an area longer than is allocated or staying on something for a bit longer if I know that it is an area my learners will struggle to grasp, for example rhyming words.

5.   What progress do you hope the children in your class will make by the end of the year in their English literacy learning?

Besides meeting the required Assessment Standards, I hope that they will be able to use decoding skills to read new material, that they will be willingly speaking English and feeling confident in speaking. I hope that they will have learnt how to express themselves better, that their comprehension and critical thinking skills will have been awakened and developed. I hope that they will have a hunger to read books and will be able to ask for help when they need it. Ultimately I hope that each child will have shown significant improvement and development in literacy learning. This looks different for each child and so when evaluating children I look at how far they've come throughout the year, bearing in mind their socio economic background as well as other extenuating factors such as a death in the family or the fact that they may live with a grandparent who speaks no English and cannot read or write (thus making any English development outside of school time impossible).

6.   What is the focus of your English literacy instruction? (ie what do you think is the most important aspect of English literacy instruction at this level? what aspects of early literacy does your classroom instruction emphasise?)

Phonics, decoding skills, listening skills (most of my children have very poor listening skills) comprehension, correct grammar in speaking and writing and handwriting.

7.   What resources do you use to develop literacy learning in English in Grade One?

Books, pictures, discussions, games, songs

8.   In which ways has your teaching proved to be successful in terms of early literacy learning? (ie. what are you happy with?)

I am happy that every child has made progress in their English comprehension. Most of the children are now reading with some fluency and comprehension which I find very encouraging. Some of the children have really grasped decoding skills well and are reading exceptionally well, including new blends and some difficult words that cannot be read phonetically. The children love listening to stories and are able to think creatively about where a story is going and use prediction skills very well.

9.   If you were to implement any changes to your classroom instruction, what would they be? (ie. what are you unhappy with?)

I would love a classroom assistant. Having one would enable me to do more group teaching which I would love to do as I know that would help all of the children and I could then give more attention to the struggling learners.

11.   How do you teach early reading in English as an additional language?

Ntaba Maria is an English medium school and so lessons are conducted in English and theoretically we teach as if English is the home language of the children. However, in reality this is not the case. Consequently I use a lot of repetition of initial and words especially. I teach phonetic reading as well as 'look and say' words. Due to the children confusing some English and isiXhosa sounds, it is imperative to make sure that they learn the correct pronunciation as this helps their reading. I also do shared reading quite often. Another strategy I employed this year (after seeing you use it to such great effect) was constructing sentences as a class based on the children's own experiences and context and then giving sentence building exercises using those words so that the children could read things that had more meaning to them personally.

12.   What competencies would you expect of the Grade One children in their development of reading skills in English at this Grade One level?

I would expect the ability to phonetically decode new words as well as the ability to read high frequency words by memory where they were not phonetically spelt. I would expect the children to read all the blends we have covered fluently e.g. to know the effect that h after s, c, t has e.g. to read ship, chop, that.

13.   Have you noticed any word recognition strategies that the children use? Are there any particular strategies you teach to help them develop word recognition skills?

There is some instant recognition, particularly with the better readers. They also use contextual clues and analogy clues. They break the words up into their sounds when it's a new word, although with high frequency words they are expected to know them by memory if there are pictures they will take clues from them based on the initial sound, some children just guess based on the initial sound (which obviously has a limited success rate ☺).

14.   What types of English text do the children read in Grade One?

They read readers and from Reading is Fun, which consists of very simple and straightforward sentences and storylines. They also read from their workbooks which includes songs, lists and simple stories.

15.   Do they have books in English to read as part of their reading instruction programme?

Yes they do have some books, although not nearly enough.

16.   In your large class are opportunities available for individual reading in English?

We do sometimes have drop and read times and I try to listen to the children read individually although due to the nature of teaching a large, noisy class, this does not happen as much as I would like.

17.   What common difficulties do you encounter in the children's reading in English at this level? (what common errors / mistakes do they make?)

The most common error they make is confusing English and Xhosa sounds egg they often pronounce 'a' as 'u' or 'u' as 'oo'. Weaker readers tend to guess the word based on the initial sound instead of sounding it out.

18.   How do you teach early writing in English?

I teach it in conjunction with teaching phonics, first talking about the sound, words that it starts with and then practicing the shape in the air, on the desk, on their friend's back, before writing it in rows in their book. Word and sentence building as well as writing frames and a personal dictionary.

19.   Are the words the children use in their English oral interactions, also used in their writing?

Some words are. I try to do writing of words that they can relate to, based on discussions we've had or that are culturally and contextually relevant.

20.   What writing competencies would you expect of them at Grade One level in writing in English?

With regards to handwriting, that they can form legible, neat letters, use correct spacing, write on the lines and use basic grammar such as capital letters, commas and full stops. I would expect them to be able to write 3- 5 sentences of news etc that were coherent, sequential and had mostly correct grammar and spelling

21.   What common difficulties do you encounter in their writing in English at this level? (what common errors / mistakes do they make?)

Reversal of letters such as b and d, f and t. Incorrect use of tense e.g. buy instead of bought, i.e. 'My mom she buy me K.F.C. on Saturday." They will often write sentences with incorrect sentence structure such as: "Me I like to skipping."

22.   How do you evaluate their writing progress?

I assess their handwriting and creative writing separately by use of a rubric which measures their competencies as mentioned above.

23.   What relationship / correlation do you see (if any) between reading and writing in English at Grade One level?

Generally the better their ability to grasp phonics and apply it, the better their reading and writing (grammar and spelling) be.

24.   How do you assess the children's progress in literacy in English?

through orals, informal discussions, skits, individual and group reading, worksheets with rubrics.

25.   What kinds of stories do you tell / read to the children in your class?

A variety. I occasionally make up stories set in their context that they can relate to. Also stories such as The Lion King, The Hungry Caterpillar to stories set in South Africa and traditional African tales.

26.   What is your purpose in telling the stories you do?

To extend their vocabulary, make them excited about learning, open them up to new worlds and extend their imagination.

27.   In what ways is it possible for you to support children in your class who are not making the necessary progress in their literacy learning?

I was involved in setting up an extra reading project where volunteers came twice a week to give extra lessons in reading, writing and speaking. Unfortunately only 5 of my children could go to this group. I try to help the others in class but it is difficult as I don't have any assistance so we get interrupted frequently.

APPENDICES

The following questions are aligned to the specific goals and questions the research project set out to explore. Their purpose is to understand the impact of the research project on your classroom context.

The six sample children were selected by you at the start of the school year.
1.   What criteria did you use to make your selection?
I chose children from 3 broad ability groups, high, medium and low achievers.

2.   Did you observe that the research-project interactions had any impact on their progress in literacy in English (negative and / or positive) in the classroom context?
It helped enormously!! I noticed a huge improvement in the reading ability and confidence of the children who were part of the research project.

3.   **Oral Language, Reading and Writing.**
One of the goals of the research project was to identify the extent to which oral language, reading and writing in English can support each other in literacy acquisition.

3.1   Are there any ways in which you link these three aspects of literacy in your class instruction?
I predominantly use speaking when giving instructions but when going over class rules we read them as a class or I'll ask individual children to read. I also use non verbal signals such as a robot and putting my finger to my lips to indicate they do the same. When giving instructions for work I sometimes write the pages of the workbook on the board to help them remember what work needs to be done.

3.2.   How can the oral language resources of these beginning readers and writers in English be used to support their development of reading and writing?
I think through giving them reading and writing that is relevant and interesting to them and that uses their oral language knowledge e.g. writing stories about themselves and then reading those stories or doing word and sentence building activities using what they've written for news etc.

3.3.   What do you notice about the oral language behaviours of the children in your class?
It varies greatly but as I mentioned before, they often revert to IsiXhosa when talking to each other. Generally speaking, their English is influenced by the TV programs they watch and they can talk for quite some time about things that interest them e.g. the boys eagerly describe and re enact wrestling moves or action movies while the girls prefer to talk about their dolls or skipping ☺ They code switch a lot but also correct each other's mistakes. Most of the children are very eager to talk English and take great pride in being able to. They struggle with he and she, him and her and tenses and sentence structure e.g. "My mom he take me to the shop on Saturday."

3.5.   What opportunities do you afford the children for oral language in early literacy? How can it be effectively used?
We have discussions about a variety of topics, I read to them and ask them to predict the next part of the story, we discuss stories we've read and I ask the children to tell me why they did or didn't like it or I ask them comprehension questions. We talk about pictures I show them, describing the scene and making up stories about them. Short orals are also done occasionally. Some mornings before we start work I let them talk to each

3.6.   Do you make links in your teaching between oral language, reading and writing? If so, in which ways?
I try to link these areas in my teaching. Ways in which I do this vary, e.g. in a shared reading lesson, we would first discuss the pictures in the big book, then read the story together and the children would write 2 or 3 sentences in their workbook about the story. They would then raw a picture of what they'd written about. Currently we are doing a mini theme of sorts called "My Toys" – we have read stories, written our own sentences and drawn our toys and we are now doing an oral entitled, "My Favourite Toy."

4. Strategies.
A second goal of the research project was to explore ways in which second / additional English literacy instruction could enable the learners to develop strategic problem solving and self-monitoring behaviours in their early reading and writing.

4.1.   In the context of your knowledge of the children would you find this teaching of strategies a valuable / feasible approach?
I think so, and if I were staying another year I would like to attempt to transfer this approach to a whole class setting while at the same time keep trying to make group work a more successful endeavour. Some children have started developing these skills but again, it is the weaker children who need help in doing this as the extent of my weaker children's strategies are to make wild guesses

based on the initial sound (for those who know what it is) or to stare blankly at me or the book, no doubt willing the word to reveal itself☺ Jokes aside, I think many of the children I have grouped in the weak category are not, and given attention and patience would be able to grasp the concepts of literacy and keep up with their peers.

4.2.   What strategic problem solving and self-monitoring behaviours are evident (if any) in the ways bilingual readers and writers engage with English text as their additional language in the early stages of literacy learning?

When it comes to writing their own news, some of the children will attempt to write it all themselves before asking me to check it and when it comes to words they don't know they will write it phonetically, e.g. byutiful, frends, iys crem, luvly etc. In reading they rely on phonics as well. Some of the children self monitor by using context, so if they read a sentence and then realise that one of the words doesn't make sense they will go back and attempt it again. They might also use the picture to help themselves or sound it out phonetically.

4.3.   What do you notice about the ways in which the learners in your class engage with English text? (how do they approach unfamiliar / familiar words? What kinds of words do they remember / have trouble with?)

They approach familiar words with confidence. They remember look and say words and simple 3 - 5 letter words that can be sounded out. With unfamiliar words, the stronger readers approach them confidently and at times I am amazed by the words they will read fluently. Stronger readers also sound the words out more confidently and because they have a bigger vocabulary can draw on words that they already know. Average and below average readers will sometimes just guess unfamiliar words or attempt to sound them out. Some of the children approach English text very hesitantly, looking at me for approval after each word. Some of the children have been struggling a bit with blends but most of them are getting it and there has been a surge of growth in terms of fluency and comprehension in a lot of the children.

They struggle with words that can't be sounded out or have sounds or blends that they aren't familiar with yet.

4.4.   What do they notice when they start to learn to read and write? What aspects of print do they notice? What meaning do they make of text?

They notice that writing goes from left to right, that the writing tells them about the picture and that they can write their own news and tell their own stories, which they love.

4.5.   What kinds of mistakes do they make in their literacy learning in English in Grade One?

In speaking, they confuse 'he' and 'she', 'him' and 'her' and past, present and future tenses. In writing, sentence structure also gets a bit mixed up and they often forget full stops. In spelling they confuse 'a' and 'e' and 'a' and 'u'. In general their reading is better than their spelling.

4.6.   What are their strengths in learning literacy in English?

Enthusiasm to learn English, a desire to speak it and the fact that they absorb so much. Once they start grasping basic phonics and then again blends, their reading takes off and their decoding skills improve drastically. They also remember many words by memory such as look and say words. They love stories and listening exercises.

4.7.   Do you see their L1 (isiXhosa) as a benefit or a resource?

Definitely as a benefit. I think that if they were taught isiXhosa until they grasped the phonics and grammar rules, it could be better used to help them learn English. The current situation of learning English and IsiXhosa concurrently is not easy for them

4.8.   What do you notice about the ways in which the children in your class engage with text in English in reading and writing as their additional language in the early stages of their literacy learning? Do they give evidence of problem solving strategies? If so, can you describe them.

They want to read and so will attempt to do so although if they are looking at a picture book on their after school for example, they may abandon the words and just make up a story based on the pictures. They love spelling tests, to my surprise!

5.   In your observations of the specific approach used in this research project what aspects have you found interesting? Or significant? Or that could be adapted to your classroom practice? How feasible are they in your current teaching situation?

I loved the books the children made with their own stories and pictures in them. Their pride when reading them to me was lovely to see, as was their confidence and fluency in reading. Word and sentence building and the way you approached literacy was really great and something I would love to do more with my class as I saw how effective it was with the children you worked with. In terms

of feasibility reading groups are tricky as I mentioned but things like sentence building and helping the children develop their own writing are definitely doable.

APPENDIX 5b.

Transcript of Interview with isiXhosa Teacher. July12 2011

Mrs M

Thank you for letting me work with six children from your Grade One class this year. As you know I have been doing research for my Masters degree in the ways children learn literacy in English. Your role as their Xhosa teacher is important to my understanding of how their literacy in English and Xhosa develops. I really appreciate your feedback and participation.

1.What are the goals of your instruction in IsiXhosa at this Grade One level?

APPENDICES

IsiXhosa is an indigenous language that instill pride and adds value to our culture as Xhosa people. And I would like to preserve our culture by teaching IsiXhosa to our children so that they can communicate.

2.What are the major difficulties faced by children in developing their literacy skills in Xhosa at Grade One level?

Reading and writing

3.In what areas do they show particular strengths?

Speaking.

4.What role can their language competency in IsiXhosa help them in their learning of literacy of English at this level?

Being able to read and write. IsiXhosa they develop confidence to learn other languages.

5.What general approach do you take in teaching IsiXhosa at Grade One level?

Communications

Be able to compare .....code switching.....the basic words in IsiXhosa as well as in English

6.Do you expect the children to read in IsiXhosa at Grade One level?

No but yes. Some bright ones can, of course with a lot of exercises from the teacher.

7.Do you expect the children to write in IsiXhosa at Grade One level?

No, they can write one short sentence with the help of a story or by doing news with them. Some bright ones can be able to write with the help from the teacher.

8.Do you follow a particular progression in developing IsiXhosa in Grade One?

I start with vowels and alphabet.

I start building words from letters of the alphabet.
From words I go to sentences.

9.Do you think learning both the English and IsiXhosa alphabets at the same time helps or confuses the children in their learning of IsiXhosa?

It confuses them. They like to codeswitching.

10.What are some of the common difficulties faced by the Grade One chidren in their learning of literacy in Xhosa?

Code switching
Reading
Writing

Thank you for your time

APPENDIX 5c.

Transcript of Interview with Headmaster. 18 July 2011

Mr S
Thank you for allowing me to undertake research towards my Masters degree at your school. My research has explored the use of strategies used by Grade One children in their learning of literacy skills in English as an additional language. The following questions will help me to understand your position and the position of your school as regards language policy and formulation of key literacy goals. I am very grateful for your participation and feedback.

1. **What is your understanding of current policy in language in the curriculum as regards English as an additional language?**

No real direction here. English is Medium of Instruction so as far as we are concerned it is not an additional language but rather a vital one as all tertiary studies are mostly in English.(the few exceptions being the Afrikaans ones)

2. **What is the key instructional goal at Ntaba Maria in using English as the Language of Learning and Teaching?**

The reason why the school was built was that we as far as possible get black learners proficient in English. They were being turned away from ex model C schools because they could not converse very well in English. Ntaba aimed to change that and I think we have achieved this goal as many of our learners are now in model C schools.

3. **What particular difficulties do the children face in learning in an additional language?**

The biggest problem here is the additional language is not reinforced at home. TV does help to a certain extent but mostly the additional language is only heard during school hours. We find that this not really enough because the more you hear and use it, the better you become.

4. **What place/status is accorded their mother tongue in the instructional context?**

Some teachers who can speak the mother tongue sometimes use it to reinforce a particular point. Most of our teachers however are not proficient in the mother tongue so must make do in English. I don't know whether this is a good or bad thing.

5. **As a bilingual speaker of English and Xhosa yourself, what advantage does this give you as Principal of your school?**

My biggest advantage is that the parents feel more comfortable speaking to me in their own language. Many of our children are brought up by grandparents and many of the older black people have very little English. They thus converse with me in Xhosa and are more comfortable expressing themselves. I seldom use Xhosa with the children as most are fairly good in English.

6. **What are some of the key difficulties faced by the children at your school from a language perspective?**

I think the learners who start with us in grade 0 and then grade R are generally without difficulties unless they have a barrier of some kind. The ones with barriers will struggle in any MOI but probably less so if instructed in the mothertongue.

7. **Would you describe the children at your school as bilingual? Is bilingualism in English and Xhosa one of your instructional goals?**

I think they are generally very bilingual. The children with barriers are less bilingual. We are very careful not to marginalize the home language as we regard it as vitally important. Strangely many of the parents don't seem to care about the home language. They seem to think that proficiency in English is more important.

8. **What are some of the advantages gained by their (the learners) being bilingual in your opinion?**

Whether we like it or not, we live in an English society. If you have no English you are doomed. Learners from this school are a step ahead of their peers in other township schools. I believe this is because we start instruction in English at an early age. All tertiary education is in English and being proficient in the English language can only be to your advantage.

APPENDIX 6. EXTRACT FROM FIELD NOTES OF RR TUTORING SESSIONS IN THE INTERVENTION PHASE (PHASE 1) OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

Monday May 9 2011

Today I completed the Observation Tasks 4:

- Letter Recognition,
- Word Naming,
- Hearing Sounds in Words and
- Written Vocabulary.

Each child came individually. Qualitative improvements were evident in the task completion such as counting the number of words in their written vocabulary on their own initiative. A far greater accuracy in naming individual sounds was evident for all the children and Lukho*, Alutha*, Yambeka* and Kamve* named them with more speed (suggesting increasing automaticity). Fewer word-associations were given. Capital letters were named as letter names whilst lower case letters were named as sounds. General confusions were with 'u', 'q' Significant progress seems to have been made by Yambeka* and Alutha*.

Zusakhe*

1. **Letter Identification**

   Some reversals and rotations (W as M; B as D; N as Z; p as d). He was more relaxed and confident today – more playful. He recognized 'viva' written by Lukho* and said "You wrote VIVA ANC."

2. **Hearing Sounds in Words**

   He could hear the sound but couldn't associate it with the correct letter. For example he said 'riding' 'r' and then wrote 't.' He seems to be developing a greater awareness of what constitutes conventional English orthography because he is becoming self conscioud when he doesn't know rather than just saying anything.

3. **Word Reading Score Sheet**

   2 words read correctly today after 0 words read correctly in March and April.

4. **Written Vocabulary**

   1 recognisable word: 'at.' The rest of his 'words'are letters, correctly formed and written with correct directional flow, a mixture of capitals and lower case, the last two lines identical.
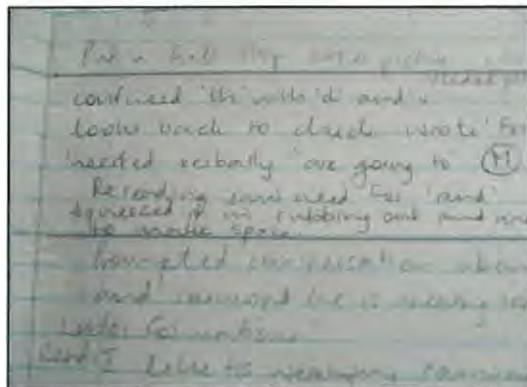
Journal extracts of field notes

APPENDICES 7a - d. EXAMPLES OF OBSERVATION TASKS (Clay, 2005)

APPENDIX 7a. LETTER IDENTIFICATION TASK

A	F	K	P	W	Z
B	H	O	J	U	
C	Y	L	Q	M	
D	N	S	X	I	
E	G	R	V	T	
a	f	k	p	w	z
b	h	o	j	u	a
c	y	l	q	m	
d	n	s	x	i	
e	g	r	v	t	g

APPENDIX 7a. LETTER IDENTIFICATION TASK (Score Sheet)

LETTER IDENTIFICATION SCORE SHEET
(ENGLISH)

Date: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____ TEST SCORE: [/54]

Recorder: _____ Date of Birth: _____ STANINE GROUP: [ ]

	A	S	Word	I.R.		A	S	Word	I.R.
A					a				
F					f				
K					k				
P					p				
W					w				
Z					z				
B					b				
H					h				
O					o				
J					j				
U					u				
					a				
C					c				
Y					y				
L					l				
Q					q				
M					m				
D					d				
N					n				
S					s				
X					x				
I					i				
E					e				
G					g				
R					r				
V					v				
T					t				
					g				
			TOTALS						

Confusions:

Letters Unknown:

Comment:

Recording:

A   Alphabet response: tick (check)

S   Letter-sound response: tick (check)

Word   Record the word the child gives

I.R.   Incorrect response: Record what the child says

TOTAL SCORE [ ]

APPENDIX 7b. WORD READING TASK

WORD READING SCORE SHEET

Use any **one** list of words

Date: _____

TEST SCORE: | /15

Name: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ STANINE GROUP: | |

Recorder: _____

Record incorrect responses beside word

LIST A	LIST B	LIST C
I	and	Father
Mother	to	come
are	will	for
here	look	a
me	he	you
shouted	up	at
am	like	school
with	in	went
car	where	get
children	Mr	we
help	going	they
not	big	ready
too	go	this
meet	let	boys
away	on	please

APPENDIX 7c. HEARING AND RECORDING SOUNDS IN WORDS TASK

Alternative Sentences for Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words with Scoring Standards

Select one of the following alternative forms: A, B, C, D, or E.

Form A

I   h a v e   a   b i g   d o g   a t   h o m e .
1   2 3 4   5   6 7 8   9 10 11   12 13   14 15 16

T o d a y I   a m   g o i n g   to   t a k e   h i m
17 18 19 20   21 22   23 24 25 26 27   28 29 30   31 32 33

t o   s c h oo l .
     34 35   36 37

Form B

M u m/Mom   h a s   g o n e   u p   t o.   th e   sh o p.
1 2 3   4 5 6   7 8 9   10 11   12 13   14 15   16 17 18

Sh e   w i l l   g e t   m i l k   a n d
19 20   21 22 23   24 25 26   27 28 29 30   31 32 33

b r e a d .
34 35 36   37

Form C

I   c a n   s e e   th e   r e d *
1   2 3 4   5 6   7 8   9 10 11

b o a t   th a t   w e   a r e   g o i n g
12 13 14   15 16 17   18 19   20 21   22 23 24 25 26

t o   h a v e   a   r i d e   i n .
27 28   29 30 31   32   33 34 35   36 37

Form D

Th e   b u s   i s   c o m i n g.   I t
1 2   3 4 5   6 7   8 9 10 11 12 13   14 15

w i l l   s t o p   h e r e   t o   l e t   m e
16 17 18   19 20 21 22   23 24 25   26 27   28 29 30   31 32

g e t   o n .
33 34 35   36 37

Form E

Th e   b oy   i s   r i d i n g   h i s   b i k e .
1 2   3 4   5 6   7 8 9 10 11 12   13 14 15   16 17 18

H e   c a n   g o   v e r y   f a s t   o n   i t .
19 20   21 22 23   24 25   26 27 28 29   30 31 32 33   34 35   36 37

WRITING VOCABULARY WEEKLY RECORD SHEET

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Initial Testing: Date:	Week: Date:	Week: Date:	Week: Date:	Week: Date:	Week: Date:	Week: Date:
Week: Date:	Week: Date:	Week: Date:	Week: Date:	Week: Date:	Week: Date:	Week: Date:

APPENDIX 8.
QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTED FROM RR OBSERVATION SURVEY TASKS (Clay, 2005)

KEY:	Estimated Achievement Level of children in the sample as representative of achievement levels in Grade One class.
	Low
	Middle
	High

Table 1: Key to colour coding representing perceived achievement levels of children for inclusion in the study.

	Entry level	Score Band	Exit level	Score Band
Zusakhe*	4	E	absent	N/a
Yonda*	6	D	17	A
Alutha*	4	E	19	A
Yambeka*	16	A	21	A
Kamve*	15	A	21	A
Lukho*	17	A	20	A
Total possible	24	A	24	A

Table 2: Total raw score comparisons at entry and exit levels of the intervention for each child on the LARR (1980)

Task Administrations	Entry level T1	2 T2	3 T3	4 T4	Exit level T5
Zusakhe*	3	8	9	14	absent
Yonda*	absent	16	16	22	19
Alutha*	20	23	26	26	26
Yambeka*	19	22	23	25	24
Kamve*	23	22	26	26	26
Lukho*	21	18	24	24	24
Total possible	26	26	26	26	26

Table 3: Capital letter identification on Letter Identification task (Clay, 2005): number correct out of total 26

Task Administrations over 20 weeks	Entry T1	2 T2	3 T3	4 T4	Exit T5
Zusakhe*	3	12	10	18	absent
Yonda*	absent	12	17	14	23
Alutha*	22	27	28	28	28
Yambeka*	19	23	21	25	27
Kamve*	23	24	23	28	28
Lukho*	21	22	25	23	26
Total possible	28	28	28	28	28

Table 4: Lower case letter identification on Letter Identification task (Clay,2005): number of letters correctly identified out of 28

Task Administrations over 20 weeks	Entry T1	2 T2	3 T3	4 T4	Exit T5
Zusakhe*	0	0	2	3	absent
Yonda*	0	2	4	6	9
Alutha*	0	1	7	10	13
Yambeka*	3	6	6	10	13
Kamve*	3	5	8	11	13
Lukho*	2	7	11	10	6
Total possible	15	15	15	15	15

Table 5: Raw scores of individual children in the sample on Word Reading Task (Clay, 2005) over 20 weeks at 4-weekly intervals

Task Administrations over 20 weeks	Entry T1	2 T2	3 T3	4 T4	Exit T5
Zusakhe*	0	11	13	11	absent
Yonda*	absent	8	10	17	14
Alutha*	7	17	22	26	30
Yambeka*	15	31	22	27	32
Kamve*	13	23	28	31	37
Lukho*	21	25	23	33	34

Table 6: Individual raw scores collected at 4-weekly intervals out of a total raw score of 37 over a 20-week period on Observation Task Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (Clay, 2005) .

Task administrations over 20 weeks	Entry T1	2 T2	3 T3	4 T4	Exit T5
Zusakhe*	0	0	2	1	absent
Yonda*	6	5	10	7	8
Alutha*	6	6	9	7	8
Yambeka*	11	6	14	17	12
Kamve*	12	15	32	47	41
Lukho*	9	1	15	13	24

Table 7: Numbers of self-generated words at entry and exit levels written at 4-weekly intervals over a period of 20 weeks

Data showing change over time.

	Entry Level		Exit Level	
	Capitals	Lower Case	Capitals	Lower Case
Zusakhe*	3	3	3	0
Yonda*	0	0	0	23
Alutha*	22	22	26	28
Yambeka*	19	19	19	27
Lukho*	23	23	23	28
Kamve*	21	21	21	26
Total possible	26	28	26	28

Table 8: Overall progress / change over time in letter identification scores of six sample children at entry and exit levels of the intervention.

	Entry Level	Exit Level
	Letters Total	Letters Total
Zusakhe*	6	20
Yonda*	0	43
Alutha*	44	54
Yambeka*	38	51
Lukho*	46	50
Kamve*	42	54
Total possible	54	54

Table 9: Progress / change over time in children's scores on Letter Identification Task (Clay, 2005) on both lower case and capital letters at entry and exit levels of the intervention

	Entry	Exit
Zusakhe*	0	Absent
Yonda*	0	9
Alutha*	0	13
Yambeka*	3	13
Kamve*	3	13
Lukho*	2	6

Table 10: Change over time in raw word reading scores at entry and exit levels of the intervention

	Entry	Exit
Zusakhe*	0	absent
Yonda*	absent	14
Alutha*	7	30
Yambeka*	15	32
Kamve*	13	37
Lukho*	21	34

Table 11: Change over time in raw scores of individual children on hearing and recording sounds in words at entry and exit levels of the intervention.

	Entry	Exit
Zusakhe*	0	0
Yonda*	6	8
Alutha*	6	8
Yambeka*	11	12
Kamve*	12	41
Lukho*	9	24

Table 12: Change over time in raw scores of individual children on self generated written vocabulary at entry and exit levels of the intervention.

APPENDIX 9.
EXAMPLES OF INCREASED COMPLEXITY
OF TEXT IN CHILDREN''S READING

Example 1 of increased complexity of text:

(The printed text is in bold. The words in italics are the child's response to the printed text. The date is given on which the running record was taken.)

1.   Lukho* March 2011

Printed text	Child's response
This is a story about a little girl. She is crying because she fell down. Now she is happy.	*This is a story about a little girl. She is cry because she fell down. No she is happy.*

Number of words:	19	
Errors:	2	
Accuracy:	89%	

2.   Lukho* Monday June 13 2011
New Book: Lukho* and the tortoise.   *Lukho* and the tortoise*

This is a tortoise.	*This is a tortoise*
A tortoise has a shell.	*A tortoise his a sheel (s/c) shell. I corrected his pronunciation to make sure of meaning. He noticed 'she' in 'shell.'*
A tortoise can hide.	*A tortoise can hid.*
A tortoise can hide in its shell.	*A tortoise can hid in its shell.*
A tortoise can make a noise "hiss."	*A tortoise can make a noise (TOLD). Hiss. Hiss (TOLD)*
Look Lukho* is a tortoise.	*Look Lukho* is a tortoise.*
Lukho* is hiding.	*Lukho* is hid.*
Lukho* says "do not hit a tortoise."	*Lukho* says (TOLD) do not hit a tortoise.*
Lukho* does not hit a tortoise.	*Lukho* do not hit a tortoise.*
A tortoise goes very slowly.	*A tortoise goes very slow.*
A tortoise can not run.	*A tortoise can not run.*
Lukho* can run.	*Lukho* can run.*
Lukho* can do lots of things.	*Lukho* can do lots of stories.*
Lukho* can jump.	*Lukho* can jump.*
Look at Lukho* jump.	*Look at Lukho* jumping.*
Lukho* can sharpen his pencil.	*Lukho* can sharp his pencil.*
Here is Lukho* sharpening his pencil.	*Hare is Lukho* sharp his pencil.*
Lukho* likes to look out of the window.	*Lukho* likes to look at*
	Lukho likes to look*
	Lukho likes to look*
	Lukho likes to look out of the window.*
Look at the rain Lukho*.	*Look at the rain Lukho*.*
Lukho* is under the table.	*Lukho* is under the table.*
He likes to hide under the table.	*He likes to hide under the table.*
I can see you Lukho*!	*I can see you Lukho*.*
Lukho* is sitting on the chair.	*Look (s/c) Lukho* is sitting on the chair.*
The chair is big.	*The chair is big.*
Lukho* is opening the door.	*Lukho* is closing the door. (s/c) Lukho* is open the door.*
Lukho* likes to read.	*Lukho* likes to read.*

Here is Lukho* reading.	Hare is Lukho* read.
Now he is sleeping. Shhhh.	Now he is sleeping. Shhhh (TOLD)
Lukho* can do lots of things at school.	Lukho* can do this is homework at school.
Lukho* likes school.	Lukho* likes school.

Number of words: 155
Number of errors: 2
Accuracy: 92%

In response to the text, Lukho* asks how I knew he liked school.
He tells me a story of his little 3 year old brother who gives spinach to a tortoise and "call it like a dog."

Example 2 of increased complexity of text:

1. **Kamve*. Running Record of Reading. 19 April 2011**

This is Kamve*. She is doing her party.

This is Kamve*. Id/ (attempt to decode 'she')she (self-corrected) is doing her party.

Number of words:	7
Errors:	0
Accuracy:	100%

2. **Kamve*. Running Record of Reading. (New Book) June 9 2011.**

Look at Kamve*.	*Look at Kamve*.*
Kamve* is a girl.	*Kamve* is a girl.*
Kamve* has a brother and a sister.	*Kamve* his … has (self correction by looking ahead and predicting text) a brother and a sister. "Ah" (she says this in disappointment at the computer image of a boy and girl playing) "My sister is very big. My brother is very small."*
She likes to play with her sister and her brother.	*She likes to play with her sister and her brother.*
They play netball.	*They play netball.*
Look at the ball.	*Look at the ball.*
Look at Kamve* play netball.	*Look at Kamve* play netball.*
Look at Kamve* catch the ball.	*Look at Kamve* ca … (I gave her an action clue) catch the ball.*
Look at Kamve* run with the ball.	*Look at Kamve* run went … with (self correction using meaning) the ball.*
Go Kamve*!	*Gone … go (self correction) Kamve*!*

Number of words:	51
Errors:	0
Accuracy:	100%

3. **Kamve*. Running Record of Reading. (New Book) June 15 2011.**

Kamve* is a girl	*Kamve* is a girl*
She has a brother and a sister	*She his has (self corrects) a brother and a sister)*
Her sister is big and her brother is little.	*Her sister is big and her brother is small*
They live in a house.	*She live in a house*
They watch TV inside the house.	*She They watch TV inside the house*
They play netball.	*They play netball*
They play outside.	*They play outside*
Kamve* likes to play with her brother and sister.	*Kamve* likes to play with her brother and sister*

They do not play in the rain.	*They do not play in the rain.*
"I am not going to play I the rain" says Kamve*.	*I am not going to play in the rain says Kamve**
"I am not going to play in the mud" says Kamve*.	*I am not going to play in the mud says Kamve**
Kamve*'s brother is little.	*Kamve´s* brother is little.*
He likes to play in the mud.	*He likes to play in the mud.*
He likes to jump in the mud.	*He likes to jump in the mud.*

Number of words:	93
Errors:	2
Accuracy:	98%

Example 3 of increased complexity of text:

1.   Yonda*. Running Record of Reading. March 2011

I play a skipping rope.	*I play a skipping rote*

Number of words:	5
Errors:	1
Accuracy:	80%

2.   Yonda*. Running Record of Reading. June 2011

This is Yonda*.	*This is Yonda**
She is going to town.	*He (no, he is a boy) Restarts and self-corrects: She is go (I get it) going to town.*
She is going to buy pizza.	*She is go – ing to buy pizza.*
She is going to buy pie.	*She is going to buy pie.*
She is going to buy apples.	*She is going to buy apples.*
She is going to buy pears.	*She is going to buy pearas (pronunciation error)*
She is going to buy sweets.	*She is going to buy sweets.*

Number of words:	38
Errors:	0
Accuracy:	100%

APPENDIX 10. EXAMPLES OF CHILDREN'S RESPONSES ON RR OBSERVATION SURVEY TASKS (Clay, 2005)

Written Vocabulary

Word Reading Task

Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words

APPENDIX 10. EXAMPLES OF CHILDREN'S RESPONSES ON RR OBSERVATION SURVEY TASKS (Clay, 2005)

Letter Identification Task

Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words

and
Hop
I by
on
in
and
Sput
to
Sat.
and
bay
in
day

Written Vocabulary Task

and
to
will
look
he
up
like   (Tke (Lciy).
in
whe. where
Kiss Mr
going
dug big
d g
go
let
on

Word Reading Task

Letter Identification Task

Written Vocabulary Task

APPENDICES

Word Reading Task

Letter Identification Task

Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words

Letter Identification Task

Word Reading Task

Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words

Recorder: _____   Date of Birth: _____   TEST SCORE: _____

(Fold heading under before child uses sheet)   STANINE GROUP: _____

bol
Cane
heave
I
to
and
See
fom
Seh
Pay
Baby
love
the
Sun
you
bus
to
one

Written Vocabulary Task

APPENDIX 11. THE BIG BOOK 'Things in the Classroom' MADE FOR WHOLE CLASS GUIDED READING ACTIVITY

This is Grade One

This is a girl.
She is working

This is Teacher.

This is a pencil case

This is the bookcase

This is a book

This is a school bag.

This is a boy.

This is the toilet paper.

Here are the scissors

This is the CD player.

Here are the rulers.

This is a smile.

APPENDIX 12. SELECTED EXTRACTS FROM TRANSCRIPTS OF THE CHILDREN'S ORAL LANGUAGE

Classroom interaction between class teacher and children:

Teacher:	What else do you know about bees?
Children:	No response
Teacher:	Who's seen a bee?

Some hands raised.

Teacher:	What did it look like?
Child:	It looked like brown...white
Teacher:	Are they big?
Child:	Come with those things (*shows pincers with his fingers*) then eat you....beat you.
Teacher:	They have something on their tail.
	They sting you then their tail falls off.
Child:	My sister told me when I was touching a yellow flower, it's for the bees.
Teacher:	Yes, she means the nectar in the flowers.
Child:	When I was touching it something was rubbing on me.
Teacher:	Was it sore?
Child:	Yes
Teacher:	It stung you.

The teacher directs a discussion to a chart in the classroom on willd animals. She asks the children what their favourite animals are:

Teacher:	What is your favourite animal?
Child:	Hippopotamus
Teacher:	Why?
Child:	I like to go down to the water.
Child:	A jackal and a seal
Teacher:	Why?
Child:	Seals swim in the water.
	I like climbing like a jackal.
Child:	Me I like a rabbit
Teacher:	Why?
Child:	I like carrots
Child:	Kangaroo
Teacher:	Why?
Child:	Put it in his pocket.
Child:	Kangaroo Jack.
Teacher:	a pouch
Child:	Zebra
Teacher:	Why?
Child:	Their colours, they are lovely
Child:	King Kong
Child:	Monkey
Child:	Gorilla. He has a big nose.

APPENDICES

Teacher-Researcher Interaction with the sample group of children. June 19 2011.

Stories told in response to story sequencing cards:

1. The girl said to the old man he must plug the plug. The old man he plugged then wireless. The music come and the girl she started to dance. That was my story.
2. The girl is cutting his finger. Opening the drawer. He is cutting the apple.
3. The girl was playing the ball in the road. The car come in front. Then they didn't play in the road.
4. The boy was walking and she saw the dog. She took her tail and the dog wanted to eat him. The dog eat him on the finger.

Middle Achievement Band.

The children name the cards:
Umbrella
Elephant
Gate
Apple
Boy with spots "It's a self"

1. It's when you making a scone and you gonna take it and make a body and you gonna put it in the oven and you're gonna put it there and you're gonna do it and you're gonna put it in something.
2. Interrupts: I know it, what is saying: One upon a time there was a old mother who want a child. Not have it. She take dat and do wit him (*actions show kneading dough*). And den is put eyes and ears yes den is put him on the stove and den and den is wait and is watch, what is that, a TV. A television. And den the TV when is saying the bell taling taling and is come and (*pause*) and is come (*pause*) a child and den the child is too hungry and den he run to the tree and take a apple, a tree apple and den (*pause*) the child is eating. And now is happy.

Low Achievement Band.

1. There was a a a elephant. A elephant was er er hungry in a and go and go and it start raining. He find er er four bananas. Now it stopped raining and he go to another and again he start to be hungry.
2. Once upon a time a elephant was hungry and he he he (*pause*) he was going and he see the apples
3. Once upon a time there was a little elephant (*pause*) was hungry and he climb out over the over the gate and the elephant run walk and walk (an elephant can not run). (*pause*) And he go and go and he see a little apple (*pause*) and he eat it. And now he go to another town and he eat it and eat it and eat it. Now he was very big big big big one.

This group of lower achievers made more of the reading behaviours associated with telling a story such as standing up, holding the cards and reading to an audience "This is a story about…"

Stories told in response to story sequence cards.

Middle Achievement Band

1.   Once upon a time there was a little girl was hungry. He take out a knife and he take an apple and he take it and he wash it and he cut it. Was finished. And he cut her hand. He dry it.

Another child in the group explains "When he's right I put tums[thumbs] up. I put tums[thumbs] down.
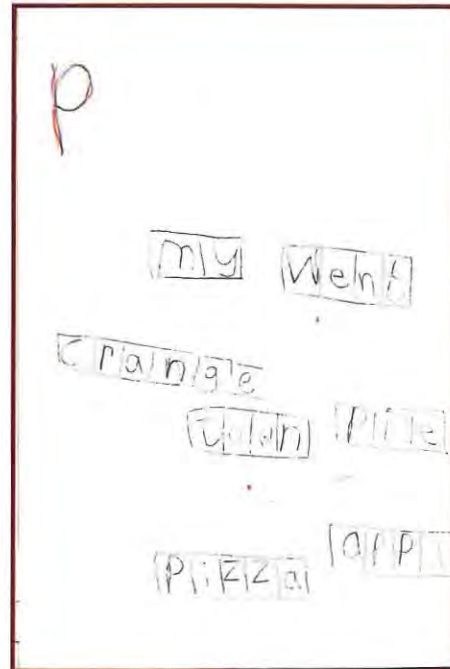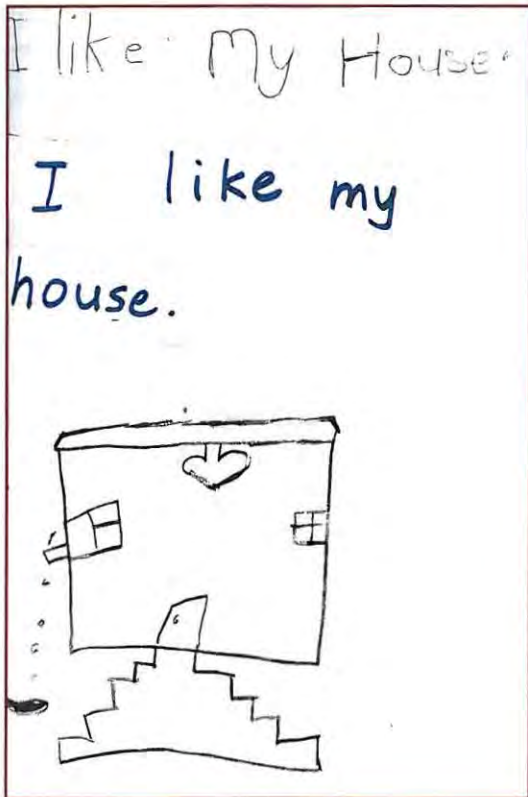
3.   Once upon a time there was a a a a and a little girl. And the dad. And he said and he said to him. This this this plug. It is not. It is not right. No it is not right. *Long pause.* He didn't like it. And a little girl said you must put on a plug and you must switch it on and he (*pause*) daddy Daddy the music is on and I can dance now. Now I (*pause*) yesterday I didn't dance.

4.   A little boy. There was a little boy going with a dog. He take the dog at the back and he push. Then he put the finger here, the mouth and he eat him then. The dog is eating him. Fall down. The finger he was go down (*indicating throat*)

5.   This is the story of the little boy.

The little boy and her father. They are playing a ball and den the ball (*pause*) and den the ball go out on the street and den (*pause*) look Daddy the ball is going out and her Daddy was reading the paper and den he said he must go on the street. A ball is coming on the street but there is cars. I think me will bump. A stranger. And den and den and den they are smiling. They are going to get a ball. And den again dey are playing ball.

6.   This is not a story about a boy and a girl.
            This is a story about a knife. This is a story about a plug. This is a story about a dog. This is a story about a ball.
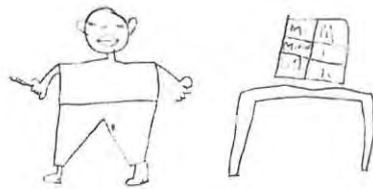
APPENDIX 13. EXAMPLES OF CHILDREN'S WORK DURING RR TUTORIAL SESSIONS IN THE INTERVENTION PHASE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY (Phase 2)

I like My House

I like my house.

p

my went

crange

ulh Pile

Pizza arp

Grandmother

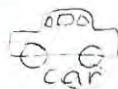cooks

spaGhetti

I like
drawing and writing

I like
drawing and
writing.

9/6

ea

Thursday
today

training

can
cook
eat
are

car

Sivenathi likes kFC

Sivenathi likes K F C.

k C
am like
ham drawin
jam and
sam writi
d
e