

**READING TO LEARN FOR EFFECTIVE WRITING OF A NARRATIVE
ESSAY: AN EXPERIMENTAL COMPARATIVE ACTION RESEARCH
AT WINNERS HIGH SCHOOL IN MAFETENG DISTRICT**

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the effectiveness of the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach in teaching narrative writing to learners at a school in Mafeteng, as well as their perceptions and attitudes towards their writing development. A one-group pre-test and post-test design was employed, with a purposively sampled class of 35 learners receiving an intervention within an action research framework. Learners' results were evaluated before and after the RtL intervention. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative techniques for data generation. Data collection methods included classroom observations, field notes, document analysis, closed-ended questionnaires, focus group discussions, and a semi-structured interview. Descriptive and content analyses were used to evaluate data from the learners and one English teacher. Descriptive analysis involved statistical measures such as frequency percentages, means, and standard deviations, which were calculated using a paired t-test via SPSS 20 and then merged into common themes. The difference between learners' narrative writing results – before and after the intervention – was statistically significant. The findings revealed that learners' narrative writing performance had improved, and they held positive perceptions and attitudes towards the intervention. Consequently, it was concluded that the RtL approach can enhance learners' narrative writing skills.

Keywords: Narrative writing, Reading to Learn, perceptions and attitudes, action research, mixed methods, narrative writing performance

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DEDICATION

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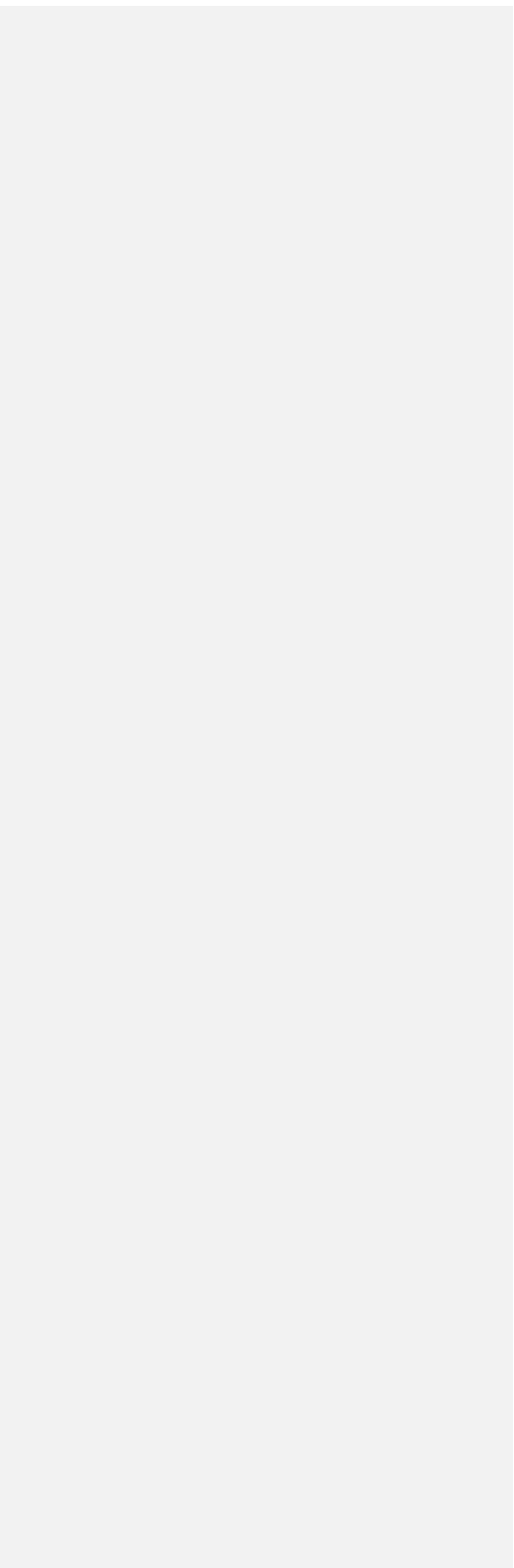
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ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS USED IN THIS DISSERTATION

LGCSE	Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education
ECOL	Examinations Council of Lesotho
SACMEQ	Southern African Consortium on Measuring Educational Quality
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
SCT	Sociocultural Theory
RtL	Reading to Learn
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
EFL	English as a First Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
MKO	More Knowledgeable Other
EAL	English Additional Language

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Although English is taught from lower primary school until learners' complete high school in Lesotho, communication in English remains a significant challenge. Language is an instrument of communication that encompasses many critical skills which learners must demonstrate competence in for academic success. Language proficiency plays a pivotal role in academic achievement (Al-Busaidi, 2021). It is evident that language is a crucial tool, particularly in writing, and one of the most important skills in teaching and learning. Writing skills need greater emphasis as they are used to assess a learner's ability to communicate effectively in written form (Tlali & Thamae, 2023). Similarly, Ghosh et al. (2021) argue that learners must master the art of writing, which is essential for excelling academically. Therefore, it is possible that academic achievement hinges on written communication, as it ultimately determines learners' performance.

Writing is fundamental to enhancing language development, and its genres are increasingly indispensable in addressing learners' literacy needs. According to Celick (2019), the close relationship between language and literacy genres suggests that these genres contribute to the development of learners' language skills by exposing them to various linguistic features and vocabulary. In line with this assertion, Zakaria and Aziz (2019) point out that writing can be divided into many genres, with narrative writing being one of them. The genre of narrative writing is one of the most commonly read, though least understood, of all genres (Purba, 2018).

Narrative writing is a diverse genre. It is defined as the writing of stories or reports of events, personal experiences, or similar incidents, whether real or fictitious (Adam, 2015). Supporting this view, Gutierrez et al. (2015) observe that "through narrative writing, learners organise ideas and experiences creatively and imaginatively by combining linguistic, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic competencies" (p.45). Narrative writing fosters self-expression and creativity, requiring learners to demonstrate competence in narrative text structure. Sudarwati and Grace (2017) found that narrative texts serve a social function, aiming to entertain readers with stories that present complications or problematic events leading to a crisis, which in turn finds a resolution.

Furthermore, these stories should convey valuable messages that influence readers' personal growth and interactions within society (Muliani et al., 2019). As such, narrative writing is intended to build learners' moral values by allowing them to reflect on their experiences, teaching them life lessons, and emulating characters. Beyond entertainment and moral development, narrative writing, according to Mostafa (2019), encompasses characters and settings drawn from real-life stories, incidents, and historical events. Consequently, it serves an informative function, offering insights into people's customs, traditions, and diverse life experiences, including biographies and news accounts.

According to the Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education (LGCSE) 2020 English Language syllabi for Grades 10 and 11, learners are required to compose coherent narrative compositions with features such as plot, point of view, characters, setting, events, cohesion, and coherence. However, several factors have long hindered learners from excelling in narrative writing. These factors are both intrinsic – stemming from the learners themselves – and extrinsic, related to teachers and other stakeholders. Odienki and Orodho (2015) emphasise that teachers must recognise the impact their actions have on the intellectual, attitudinal, and psychomotor skills of their learners.

Moreover, reports from the Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL) (2019, 2020) highlight that although the narrative writing genre has attracted considerable interest from learners, many are unfamiliar with its generic structure and language features. This suggests a lack of appropriate pedagogical instruction. Given that narrative writing is included in all national examinations in Lesotho, this represents a significant challenge, as narrative writing has historically been viewed as a genre that learners naturally gravitate towards (Purba, 2018). It may be inferred from these observations that learners are particularly passionate about writing stories of personal interest, as this allows them to express their emotions and everyday experiences.

Teaching narrative writing to learners is essential for developing their overall writing skills and enabling them to master other genres (Jubhari et al., 2022). This implies that narrative writing plays a crucial role in helping learners acquire proficiency in other writing forms once they can effectively narrate their experiences. Despite the learning experiences suggested in the LGCSE

Grade 10 and 11 English Language syllabi, such as whole-class discussions, paired writing, individual writing, and editing, proficiency in narrative writing remains unsatisfactory. ECOL (2023) reports that only 26% of learners passed English, undermining the attainment of national strategic goals, such as improved access to quality, equitable education and achieving a 38% completion rate at senior secondary level by 2026 (Lesotho Education Sector Plan 2016-2026). The following section discusses literacy performance globally to compare with the situation in Lesotho.

1.2 Background of the Site

The study was conducted at Winners High School, located in the Mafeteng district, and operated under the proprietorship of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The school predominantly enrolls learners from neighbouring villages, with a smaller proportion coming from more distant areas. It has a teaching staff of 52 and a learner population of 1,135. The teachers are recognised for their strong work ethic and professionalism, which positively influences the learners' academic performance. However, the lack of professional development opportunities has hindered the school's overall progress, as teachers struggle to implement innovative teaching practices, relying instead on traditional methods.

The school has also experienced a decline in academic performance, often attributed to a chronic shortage of textbooks, which are shared among two or more learners. Makori and Onderi (2014) argue that insufficient textbook provision places additional pressure on teachers and limits the volume of homework that can be assigned. The Lesotho Education Policy of 2009 recommends a teacher-learner ratio of 1:25 in secondary schools. However, this guideline is not being adhered to, as the school continues to enroll more learners beyond the policy's recommendations. Consequently, teachers face challenges in delivering quality instruction, planning effectively, and adequately assessing learners due to large class sizes. Additionally, inadequate, and dilapidated furniture exacerbates the situation, with learners often crowded onto too few desks, which diminishes their attention during lessons.

The school also lacks essential instructional technology tools, including smart boards, projectors, and software applications such as developer tools, databases, and prototyping software. Monserate (2018) asserts that integrating technology into instruction fosters learning by enabling learners to engage in creation, problem-solving, collaboration, and global interaction. Moreover, the school's library is poorly equipped, containing outdated and disorganised books, with no librarian to manage the facility. This severely hampers the promotion of a reading culture, creativity, and research skills among learners.

Finally, high levels of absenteeism further disrupt the school's educational process. This absenteeism is largely driven by academic failure, inadequate parental supervision, indiscipline, and the inability to pay school fees. These factors negatively impact the flow of instruction, resulting in disorganised lessons and reducing the overall effectiveness of teaching.

1.3 Context and background to the study

Learning to write in English as a Second Language (ESL) remains a considerable challenge, as many learners fail to attain proficiency at the expected standards. Writing, as Peter and Singaravelu (2020) assert, serves as a medium for establishing and maintaining communication, transmitting information, and expressing thoughts, emotions, and reactions; it may also entertain and persuade. Despite these multifaceted purposes, learners frequently fall short of mastering the required competencies, with growing global concern about declining standards of writing achievement among high school learners. Graham (2019) underscores this concern, contending that many learners fail to develop the essential writing skills necessary to succeed in the modern world. As the final skill in the hierarchy of language acquisition (Peter & Singaravelu, 2020), writing has emerged as a universal pedagogical concern.

A growing body of literature recognises writing as an inherently complex skill to both teach and learn, given its multifarious linguistic, cultural, and cognitive demands. Hussain (2017) argues that the teaching and learning of second language writing constitute a particularly arduous task due to the interplay of socio-cultural, linguistic, and cognitive processes. Rahmat et al. (2024) similarly posit that ESL instruction presents distinctive challenges, particularly in the cultivation of writing

proficiency. Echoing this view, Adeleke and Onyebuchi (2023) observe that teaching ESL writing requires navigating a complex intersection of cultural, linguistic, and pedagogical dimensions. It may thus be inferred that writing is cognitively demanding, requiring learners to generate ideas creatively, organise them coherently, evaluate textual effectiveness, and recognise distinctions between spoken and written discourse.

Research further indicates that learners' difficulties in writing are exacerbated by its close relationship with other language skills, particularly reading. As Mbau and Sugeng (2019) note, the development of learners' writing skills is inextricably linked to their reading competence; nurturing critical reading abilities simultaneously enhances writing proficiency. Peter and Singaravelu (2020) similarly maintain that effective writers must first be effective readers. Consequently, limited exposure to reading hinders learners' ability to construct well-formed sentences and cohesive paragraphs (Moses & Mohamad, 2019). Moreover, unclear ideas and complex vocabulary encountered in reading texts may lead to lexical misuse and vague written expression (Nguyen, 2023). Writing instruction is therefore further complicated by the need for appropriate cognitive scaffolding and tailored pedagogical strategies. Moses and Mohamad (2019) stress that variations in learners' writing ability necessitate differentiated teaching approaches. The global prominence of writing as a measure of academic achievement consequently places considerable pressure on teachers to employ diverse instructional methods.

Despite these challenges, research suggests that writing difficulties can be mitigated through the integration of reading and writing pedagogy. Ahmed (2023) advocates for reading-to-write approaches that employ reading as a catalyst for developing writing skills. Supporting this position, Amir et al. (2023) found that learners exposed to reading strategies demonstrated superior writing performance compared to those who were not. Similarly, Al-Jiboury (2024) notes that the breadth and quality of a writer's reading significantly influence the distinctiveness and sophistication of their writing in both structure and meaning. It follows that without adequate reading development, learners are unlikely to become proficient writers. Although numerous instructional models have been proposed, writing difficulties persist across various contexts.

1.3.1 Writing performance in America, Europe and Asia

Empirical evidence suggests that writing proficiency remains a global concern. Graham et al. (2019) emphasise that reforming writing pedagogy in the United States has required integrating “learning to write” with “writing to learn”, with learners expected to demonstrate versatility in writing for multiple purposes. However, Steiss et al. (2022) found that American secondary learners, particularly English language learners, performed poorly in text-based analytical writing, struggling to substantiate arguments, organise ideas, and employ language effectively. Similarly, in Sweden, Sehlstrom (2022) reported that upper secondary learners with reading difficulties produced ESL compositions characterised by weak coherence and cohesion, simplistic language, and frequent spelling errors.

Comparable challenges are evident in Asian contexts. Bulqiyah et al. (2021), examining essay writing difficulties among tertiary students in Indonesia, found that learners were often demotivated due to low self-confidence and limited intrinsic interest in writing. Dash et al. (2021), investigating writing challenges among Indian secondary learners, observed that many lacked the fluency and competence required to meet academic and social communicative demands. Pangestu and Juniarta (2022) conclude that writing is a multifaceted process requiring systematic instruction and sustained practice. Having outlined the global landscape of writing challenges, the subsequent section examines writing performance within African contexts.

1.3.2 Writing performance in Africa

A number of studies across Africa reveal persistent challenges in the teaching and learning of writing. Amadi (2022), examining the influence of Nigerian English on ESL writing performance, found that learners frequently produced erroneous written structures, leading to poor outcomes despite the centrality of writing in language learning. Similarly, Phiri et al. (2023) reported that Zambian Grade 12 learners completed secondary education with inadequate composition skills despite sustained classroom instruction. In South Africa, Nondabula and Nomlomo (2023) observed that Grade 9 learners failed to exhibit the creative and critical thinking skills associated with narrative writing, despite exposure to constructivist pedagogy.

Conversely, Gheith and Mehany (2022) demonstrated in Egypt that differentiated instruction significantly improved secondary learners' writing fluency by accommodating variations in cognitive ability, readiness, interests, and learning styles. This suggests that needs analysis is essential in identifying appropriate pedagogical strategies for writing instruction. Ngubane et al. (2020) further argue that the success of writing pedagogy is contingent upon the effectiveness of instructional methods.

1.3.3 Writing performance in Lesotho

In Lesotho, writing proficiency in English remains a persistent challenge. Moea (2024), in a study of high school teachers' knowledge of teaching narrative composition, found that few teachers expressed confidence in teaching key writing conventions such as structure, punctuation, dialogue, quotation marks, attribution verbs, and paragraphing. Similarly, Tlali and Thamae (2023) reported that learners' essays were marred by numerous grammatical errors, reflecting difficulties in language use. According to the American Institute of Research (AIR) (2019), an assessment under the Lesotho Education Quality for Education Project (2017) revealed that only 51.6% of Grade 9 learners achieved competency in English. The World Bank (2021) similarly noted that Lesotho ranks 119th out of 165 countries, with a literacy rate of 79.4%. These figures indicate that the intertwined skills of reading and writing remain underdeveloped.

The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) (2005) reported that SACMEQ assessments in 2001 and 2003 revealed that most primary learners failed to meet expected literacy benchmarks in Grades 3 and 6. Although writing was not explicitly measured, all literacy skills collectively influence writing ability. Graham et al. (2018) assert that reading instruction directly impacts writing performance, while Hadah et al. (2020) maintain that oral activities integrated with writing enhance communicative accuracy and fluency.

Since independence in 1966, Lesotho has implemented several curriculum and assessment reforms (Raselimo & Mahao, 2015). The *Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAP)* framework of 2009 aimed to transform teaching, learning, and assessment (MOET, 2009). English Language, offered under the LGCSE syllabus, was restructured to better align with learners' contemporary needs, emphasising effective communication as a core competency. The CAP framework recognises

communication as fundamental to expressing ideas and emotions, thereby implying that learners must demonstrate competence in writing to fulfil curriculum objectives.

The framework promotes constructivist approaches to writing instruction, positioning teachers as facilitators and learners as co-constructors of knowledge. Ada and Offorma (2018) demonstrated that a constructivist instructional model significantly improved essay writing among Nigerian secondary learners. However, in Lesotho, constructivist approaches appear to have had limited impact on writing performance, possibly due to teachers' limited awareness of the underlying pedagogical ideologies in the English syllabus (Moea, 2023). Wang et al. (2023) argue that secondary English teachers should integrate curricular objectives with ideological and moral dimensions to develop learners' character alongside their linguistic skills. Dandon et al. (2023) similarly contend that embedding writing within ideological frameworks enables learners to contextualise English language use within broader social and political realities. Ngubane et al. (2020) further emphasise that the effectiveness of writing instruction depends heavily on teachers' pedagogical knowledge and their understanding of writing processes.

Lesotho's performance in English reading remains a concern, with the country ranked third lowest among fourteen Southern African nations at primary level (MOET, 2016). This is particularly troubling given that English assessment at LGCSE level relies solely on written performance. Ahmed et al. (2023) highlight the well-established link between reading and writing difficulties, while Tlali and Thamae (2023) stress the need for consistent instruction in writing across all educational levels.

The *Linguistic and Literacy Learning Area* of the CAP framework aims to develop learners' linguistic competence for effective communication in varied contexts, while fostering creativity and literacy for socio-economic development (MOET, 2009). Pangestu (2022) supports this view, arguing that the process of learning to write enhances learners' creativity, organisation, and conceptual understanding. Nevertheless, a persistent gap remains between the writing competencies envisioned by policy and learners' actual performance, as many continue to struggle with producing coherent, contextually appropriate written texts.

1.3.4 Barriers to narrative writing

Factors contributing to the unsatisfactory narrative writing performance in schools can largely be attributed to low literacy rates. Research suggests that insufficient training provided to pre-service teachers is a significant factor. Writing, as a productive skill, is not adequately taught. Chere-Masopha et al. (2021) note that graduates from higher education institutions in Lesotho who enter the teaching profession are inadequately resourced with the knowledge and skills required to implement reforms in Lesotho's schools. Furthermore, George et al. (2018) argue that the lack of strict selection criteria for learners applying to teacher training programmes in Lesotho's tertiary institutions contributes to weak subject mastery. Additionally, low entry requirements for teachers have resulted in poor language proficiency. For instance, the minimum requirement for majoring in English Language at the Lesotho College of Education is a pass of seven, equivalent to a range of 50-59%. Given these postulations, it can be surmised that learners' writing difficulties are perpetuated by weak entrance criteria in some tertiary institutions.

Another significant barrier concerns teaching methodologies. According to the *Lesotho Curriculum and Assessment Policy* (2009), teachers are expected to use participatory, activity-centred, and interactive approaches. Additionally, the same policy advocates a shift from didactic teaching towards creating opportunities for learners to be creative and take responsibility for their own learning, emphasising a learner-centred approach. However, this has not been widely implemented. Selepe (2016) found that teachers were inadequately trained to implement the curriculum, as the training was brief and education inspectors seldom visited schools to monitor progress. As a result, teachers may have adhered to conventional, teacher-centred pedagogies, which are insufficient for teaching narrative writing. This could be due to inadequate professional development, leaving teachers without the necessary skills to adopt new practices.

High teacher-learner ratios further impede narrative writing. Raselimo and Mahao (2015) highlight that formative assessment, particularly continuous assessment as outlined in the *Lesotho Curriculum and Assessment Policy* (2009), is difficult to achieve due to the high teacher-learner ratios, which increase the workload for teachers and make it nearly impossible to monitor individual learners' progress effectively. Similarly, Selepe (2016) found that teachers struggled with the curriculum's requirement to give more individualised attention to learners, which is

challenging in overcrowded classrooms. Moea (2022) reinforces this, observing that when the current curriculum was introduced, teachers were overwhelmed by the task of delivering content without adequate resources. Fitriana and Ariyanti (2017) also found that time constraints and overcrowded classrooms prevented teachers from addressing learners' difficulties in writing, thus inhibiting their ability to scaffold learning and assist learners in reaching their potential.

The problem is compounded by a lack of teaching resources. According to MoET (2009), the revised curriculum aimed to develop linguistic and literacy skills to help learners deal with life's challenges. However, this has not been realised. Nkhi (2022) found that tertiary students in Lesotho were not taught sufficient grammar at secondary school, as their teachers focused more on spoken skills. Despite government efforts to improve the education sector, learners from low socio-economic backgrounds continue to suffer from a lack of learning resources (Kingdom of Lesotho, 2014). Moea (2022) further reports that teachers in piloting schools struggled due to a lack of books, which hindered the implementation of the new curriculum. Additionally, the current Grade 10-11 textbooks do not include composition exercises, depriving both teachers and learners of model texts from which to learn. This lack of resources has undoubtedly contributed to low achievement in narrative writing.

Another issue is the separation of reading and writing instruction. Habibi et al. (2015) note that in many instances, reading and writing are taught separately, with little integration, thus hindering overall literacy development. In Lesotho, this appears to be the case, as learners struggle to narrate stories effectively, even though reading and writing are closely connected skills. Many English teachers, though qualified, lack the expertise to teach narrative writing effectively. Shahzad et al. (2022) argue that learners' writing difficulties are often the result of teachers' ineffective teaching methods and lack of experience. Moea (2022) similarly found that teachers face challenges in teaching the new curriculum due to the overwhelming amount of content that needs to be covered in a shorter period of time.

Limited school facilities also exacerbate the problem. The World Bank (2019) reports that due to budgetary constraints, school facilities in Lesotho are often in poor condition. Lekhetho (2021) highlights significant disparities in facilities such as libraries and technological infrastructure,

which lead to unequal educational opportunities and outcomes. The lack of semiotic materials, such as literacy texts, artefacts, visual aids, and videos, further hampers learners' ability to develop the thinking skills required for narrative writing. Maja and Du Plessis (2023) similarly point out that in South Africa, teachers face challenges in establishing libraries due to a shortage of relevant reading materials.

In addition to these structural barriers, there are issues related to learners' motivation and understanding of the language of instruction. Moea (2022) found that English Language teachers in Lesotho were concerned that learners struggled to understand English as a medium of instruction. Alisha et al. (2019) found similar challenges in Indonesia, where learners faced difficulties in constructing grammatically correct sentences. Fitriana and Ariyanti (2017) reported that learners also struggled with sentence structure, grammar, and idea development, which impacted their essay writing abilities.

Furthermore, Ceylan (2019) found that learners in Turkey lacked basic writing strategies, such as pre-writing, drafting, and editing. This lack of strategy is also evident in Lesotho, where learners face challenges in narrating stories. Muntaha et al. (2022) suggest that learners' skills in writing narratives could be improved by employing more effective teaching methods and providing learners with engaging media and strategies.

Learner motivation is another issue. Bulqiyah et al. (2021) indicate that many learners are not intrinsically motivated to engage in writing, lacking interest and confidence. This suggests that learners need exposure to the language features of narrative writing to increase their confidence and competence.

Finally, the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and teachers' strikes further exacerbated the issue. According to the United Nations (2021), the closure of schools during the pandemic significantly reduced teaching and learning time, worsening learners' writing difficulties. ADEA (2022) also highlights that the pandemic exposed the limited capacity of teachers and learners to manage distance learning and adopt technology in education. Consequently, the strike and pandemic have likely worsened the narrative writing challenges faced

by learners in Lesotho. Having outlined the barriers to narrative writing, the next section will examine learners' performance in examinations.

1.3.5 Examination performance in narrative writing

English Language examination performance in Lesotho has been consistently poor, even during the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC) curriculum era, which was ultimately discontinued due to its ineffectiveness in addressing learners' needs. Resultantly, English Language was removed as a compulsory passing subject in the current Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education (LGCSE) curriculum. However, this change has not yielded significant improvements. Lekhetho (2021) argues that the LGCSE curriculum has similarly failed to enhance content relevance, educational quality, or learning outcomes. Earlier research by Khati and Khati (1985) in Lesotho revealed that a large number of learners, across primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, struggled with basic spelling in English compositions. This suggests that the issues with learners' writing skills predate the current curriculum and persist under the new one.

Learners' performance in LGCSE English Language, particularly in narrative writing, continues to deteriorate. The Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL) examiners' reports from 2017 indicate that many learners failed to demonstrate linguistic competence in narrative essays, with issues such as a lack of variation in sentence structures and failure to follow basic grammar rules. The 2018 ECOL report highlights that candidates who performed poorly in narrative essays struggled to present a clear storyline and often confused the emotional tone of the title with other moods. By 2019, only 19.4% of candidates achieved a C grade or higher, with many failing to produce relevant scenarios and use appropriate register (ECOL, 2019). Performance declined further in 2020, dropping to 16.3%, and for the first time, the ECOL (2020) report noted that a significant number of learners produced essays that were almost unrecognisable as English writing. The 2021 ECOL report found that candidates who underperformed lacked the ability to narrate stories and demonstrated poor linguistic competence. As a result, the report recommended that teachers focus more on teaching different forms of creative writing. Although the 2022 report observed average performance, many learners still failed to incorporate narrative features into their writing. By 2023, common mistakes included incorrect tense usage, misspellings, poor sentence construction, and misunderstanding of the essay questions (ECOL, 2023).

These consistent issues, as outlined in ECOL reports, strongly suggest that learners lack a clear understanding of the narrative writing genre. Khati (2009) provides additional evidence of this, showing that prospective teachers at the National University of Lesotho and Lesotho College of Education struggle to write in English, indicating potential challenges in teaching through the medium of English. As the ECOL reports show, poor performance in narrative writing has persisted for several years, suggesting that teachers may be inadequately equipped to implement the new curriculum effectively. Moea (2022) further emphasises that English Language teachers noted that learners struggled to understand English as the language of instruction, as it is not used consistently at the primary level.

The ongoing poor performance in English Language examinations significantly undermines learners' academic achievement and highlights the urgent need for intervention. In light of this, the present study explores the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy as an effective intervention to accelerate learners' narrative writing skills, thereby addressing inequalities and marginalisation in education, particularly in resource-constrained contexts like Lesotho. The next section will discuss the RtL pedagogy.

1.3.6 Reading to Learn pedagogy intervention

Reading to Learn (RtL) is a pedagogy developed to integrate reading and writing skills. According to Rose and Martin (2012), RtL was originally developed for learners in an indigenous community in central Australia who lacked support in English literacy. Additionally, Listyani (2018) illustrates that RtL strategies have been independently evaluated and shown to accelerate learning at rates two to four times faster than expected, across schools and among learners from all backgrounds and ability levels. Similarly, Huang et al. (2019) observe that RtL activities offer flexibility and a wide range of scaffolding opportunities to equip learners of varying abilities with the necessary skills for particular learning tasks. Based on these perspectives, it can be argued that the successful attainment of reading and writing proficiency is closely linked to the RtL pedagogy.

In recent years, numerous studies have proved the effectiveness of RtL in different contexts. In South Africa, Millins (2016) reported significant improvements in learners' academic literacy skills following the implementation of RtL interventions. Another study by Mataka et al. (2020),

also conducted in South Africa, found that after applying RtL, learners' writing showed marked improvement, with better sentence structure, adherence to the topic, and enhanced vocabulary. Similarly, RtL interventions have led to significant improvements in learners' narrative writing in China and Spain (Shum & Shi, 2017; Whittaker & Pajero, 2018). These findings suggest that RtL is an effective intervention strategy for narrative writing, as it reduces educational inequality and fosters success among all learners.

In the context of Lesotho, there appears to be a paucity of research on the use of RtL to enhance narrative writing. Given this gap, the present action research seeks to investigate the impact of RtL pedagogy in advancing learners' ability to compose narrative texts and its role in helping learners creatively express their ideas and experiences in narrative writing, with a focus on grade ten learners. The section that follows presents the problem statement for this study.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

The statement of the problem outlines a specific issue that requires attention in a mixed-methods study, as well as the reasons why the problem is significant (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Narrative writing is intended to enhance learners' self-expression, creativity, and instil moral values. However, learners appear to be deprived of opportunities to develop their narrative skills, as they continue to struggle with writing difficulties. Although narrative easy is the easiest type for learners to choose to express their views on life and attitudes towards events (Qatrinada & Apoko, 2024), learners do not perform it well (ECOL, 2023). This calls for further investigation.

One of the core principles of Vygotsky's (1978) theory is that teachers, with their knowledge and expertise, should assist learners in developing language skills that they would otherwise struggle to acquire independently. However, despite expectations that fourth-year students, particularly English majors, should produce error-free texts, this is not the case for students at the National University of Lesotho (Letsoela et al., 2022). Consequently, it seems that after graduation, English teachers embark on their teaching careers with some level of incompetence. Both new and experienced teachers may find themselves assessing and evaluating skills they have not adequately taught, as learners rarely include all the elements of a story in their compositions, despite repeated

recommendations from ECOL (2017-2023) that learners be taught various forms of creative writing, with attention given to differences in structure and language. This suggests a lack of awareness of the narrative writing genre, providing further grounds for investigation.

Chere-Masopha et al. (2021) highlight that teacher instructors in higher education establishments in Lesotho have minimal participation in the formulation of educational reforms. It appears that insufficient effort is being made to develop teachers professionally to teach writing effectively, as learners continue to encounter various issues in narrative writing, such as poor narrative sequencing, weak sentence construction, and difficulty integrating new information, resulting in substandard essays, as revealed by ECOL (2017-2023) English Language examiners' reports. According to Putri and Fitrawati (2020), teachers should employ strategies that enable learners to write stories with greater ease. Furthermore, Murana and Oladayo (2019) argue that English teachers still compartmentalise language skills despite the era of integration, making it challenging for them to help learners achieve the desired level of communicative competence. Ekanjume-Ilongo (2015) also reports that in Lesotho, high school teachers employ methods that promote rote learning and memorisation, which do not encourage learners to think independently. The situation has deteriorated over the years, necessitating an intervention to help learners conform to grammatical rules and develop creative storylines.

In light of the above, this study seeks to investigate the role of Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy in accelerating narrative writing. An investigation carried out by Mgqwashu and Makhathini (2017) on transforming primary school teachers' perceptions of the place of teaching reading: the role of RtL methodology revealed that learners who are ordinarily incompetent, or whose self-esteem is deflated, instantly regain their confidence when they become aware that they are supported to respond to the teacher's question. Furthermore, Menco-Haeckermann (2021) insists that since RtL is a text centred approach it allows for teachers to explicitly teach a genre by not only initiating learners into canonical writing texts but also deconstructing them to foster supported and independent functional literacy.

The study conducted by Mawela (2018) on using RtL pedagogy to enhance English First Additional Language (EFAL) teachers' classroom practice in black, materially and economically

disadvantaged rural schools in South Africa revealed that scores obtained by learners certainly indicated that RtL pedagogy has the ability to enhance the reading and writing skills of learners. Given that performances of learners from resource deprived backgrounds improved, it is probable that RtL can deal effectively with similar underlying causes of the poor performance in narrative essays. Reflecting on her self-study, Ntombela (2023) reveals that RtL encouraged her to continuously instill a reading culture in her classroom and she learned how to nurture a supportive learning atmosphere and that adequate planning leads to a successful lesson presentation as she was more acquainted with RtL. In light of this, it is possible to conclude that RtL can mitigate the insufficient teacher preparation and performance. Considering the foregoing findings, RtL might be a useful strategy for both teachers and learners in improving narrative writing performance. The research is guided by the following research questions.

1.5 Key Research Questions

This study is set out to investigate the effectiveness of RtL towards accelerating narrative writing. In light of what has been discussed, below are the key research questions this study seeks to respond to. The primary question for study is formulated as follows:

To what extent does RtL pedagogy contribute to the development of learners' narrative writing ability?

The following are the sub-questions:

- a). What effect does RtL pedagogy have in advancing learners' ability to compose narrative texts?
- b). How does RtL help learners present their ideas and experiences creatively in narrative writing?
- c). Why does the implementation of RtL affect learners' approach to narrative writing the way it does?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Currently, there is a paucity of studies on the use of Reading to Learn (RtL) intervention to accelerate writing in the context of Lesotho. Therefore, this research anticipates that the study will enhance learners' narrative essay writing skills by exposing them to various approaches to learning from model texts. In a study conducted by Millin and Millin (2014), the findings revealed that the weakest learners showed significant progress during the implementation of RtL. It is expected that after the intervention in this study, learners will be able to construct texts similar to model examples, thereby providing equitable learning opportunities. Furthermore, it is hoped that RtL will increase learners' engagement in essay writing through a range of stimulating activities, motivating them to take responsibility for their own learning.

In addition, the study is expected to reveal strategies that teachers can employ to better scaffold learners' narrative writing skills, thereby addressing the challenges that hinder their writing abilities and empowering them to write independently. The findings could also encourage teachers to design creative teaching activities that make learning enjoyable, meaningful, and tailored to learners' needs, thus increasing their interest. Moreover, the study demonstrates how reading and writing are integrated, offering a solution to the challenges teachers face when integrating texts into narrative writing instruction.

The Ministry of Education and Training may recognise the need to incorporate RtL as one of the teaching methodologies in the curriculum, given its potential to be applied across various subjects. Additionally, it is hoped that RtL will inspire further research into its impact on other writing genres at different educational levels. Considering the significance of this study, the next chapter presents a review of the relevant literature.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the background to the study site, including an introduction to the research and its contextual foundations. It examined literacy performance in various global contexts as well as within Lesotho. The chapter highlighted barriers to narrative writing and discussed why Reading to Learn (RtL) may serve as an appropriate intervention. Additionally, it

explored the statement of the problem and the significance of the study. To guide the research, the research questions were clearly articulated. The following chapter will present the literature review and the theoretical framework that underpins the study in the context of narrative writing.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

To provide the backdrop for this study, this chapter reviews the relevant literature. It begins by discussing the concept of writing, its components, importance, and various approaches to writing. The chapter also examines narrative writing, including its generic structure and linguistic features. Additionally, it discusses the stages of the Reading to Learn (RtL) instructional intervention and existing research on RtL, along with the theories proposed to enhance writing skills. While the literature is abundant with various theories, this review will concentrate on those that underpin this study and their application in accelerating narrative writing. These theories include Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Systemic Functional Linguistics, pedagogic discourse, and the critical paradigm. The relevance of these theories in the teaching and learning of narrative writing will also be discussed.

2.2 Writing as a concept

The present study focuses on writing; therefore, it is essential to describe writing as a concept. According to Nasir et al. (2021), writing is one of the four language skills taught in senior secondary school, and it is crucial for learners to master it alongside reading, speaking, and listening. Moreover, writing is an act of problem-solving that involves processes such as generating ideas, discovering a personal voice, planning, setting goals, monitoring and evaluating both the writing process and the completed text, and selecting appropriate language to convey various meanings (Samsudin, 2016). However, communicating ideas in written form is often more demanding than in spoken form, as writing must be self-explanatory and enable readers to grasp the writer's intended meaning (Kurniasih et al., 2020). From these perspectives, it is evident that, although writing is an essential skill for learners in many respects, it is also challenging to acquire.

Furthermore, as noted by Bulqiyah et al. (2021), writing is often regarded as the most difficult skill, particularly within the context of English education, as it involves complex actions that engage multiple competencies. This assertion is supported by Gautam (2019), who states that writing, as a complex valuable skill, needs several psycho-physical exercises and their internally

coherent coordination. In agreement, Ahiskali and Maltepe (2023) and Ghosh and Sen (2023) suggest that to produce a quality piece of writing, a learner must first possess affective readiness, given that writing is a multidimensional language skill encompassing cognitive, affective, and procedural aspects. In light of such assertions, it can be inferred that learners must demonstrate the ability to think critically in order to express their thoughts effectively in writing. As a result, the components of writing are discussed next.

2.2.1 Components of writing

To achieve success in writing, learners must demonstrate competence in its various components. Writing is often considered very challenging – among the four language skills – for most learners of English as a Second Language or English as a First Language, primarily due to its complexities in spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammatical structure (Rao, 2019). This perspective is reinforced by Ghosh and Sen (2023) who argue that the elements of writing regulate the flow of work and serve as a basis for judging writing quality within the contexts of teaching, learning, or assessment. To fulfil the requirements for effective writing, Jacobs et al. (1981) proposed five critical components: content, organisation, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

According to Jacobs et al. (1981), content pertains to the topic and its associated details, implying that learners should generate ideas that are relevant to the subject matter. Organisation refers to a writer's ability to structure sentences into coherent and cohesive ideas. In terms of vocabulary, writers should select useful idioms, choice of words, and appropriate registers. Language use encompasses the effective application of tenses and registers within the writing. Lastly, mechanics include spelling, punctuation, and capitalisation.

From the preceding description, it is evident that learners must integrate these writing components and establish interactions between them to achieve communicative purposes in their texts. These components are also reflected in the criteria outlined by Acevedo and Rose (2007), which provide teachers with systematic insights into the areas of language in which learners excel and where they require further development. Given the significance of these writing components, the subsequent section will highlight the importance of writing.

2.2.2 The importance of writing

Writing is one of the four essential skills that learners must acquire to achieve literacy. It is arguably the most critical measure of success in literacy education and predominates as an assessment tool across educational systems (Ryan et al., 2021). Through writing, the writer can connect with the reader. As Jubhari et al. (2022) emphasise, writing plays a significant role in enabling individuals to convey messages effectively. Furthermore, Astria et al. (2019) highlight that writers utilise writing to express, share, and communicate their ideas, information, or feelings with readers. According to Zurdianto (2016), writing facilitates the discovery and establishment of personal networks of information and ideas, contributing to the creation of new meanings. Bryce et al. (2021) regard writing as a critical everyday activity, describing it as a powerful tool for conveying thoughts, a comprehensible medium for communication, and an authoritative form when used in official contexts. In the context of this study, proficient writing is essential for learners to communicate with clarity, particularly when composing narrative texts.

Expounding on the critical role of writing in education, Shahzad et al. (2022) assert that English writing significantly impacts the entire educational system, serving as a principal source of knowledge. Moreover, Ngubane et al. (2020) indicate that the ability to organise one's thoughts and information through writing is vital for learning and post-school success. Thus, effective writing pedagogy is central to cultivating efficient writing skills among learners. Furthermore, writing fosters critical thinking, aids in recalling and reconstructing past ideas, allows for the analysis of information from different perspectives, and enables learners to write across various genres (Rao, 2019). Given these assertions, it can be inferred that writing empowers learners to express their thoughts constructively and productively.

Additionally, Selvaraj and Aziz (2019) contend that mastering writing skills is crucial due to its pervasive influence across all professions that require documentation, particularly in the 21st century. Similarly, Shahzad et al. (2022) agree that the importance of writing is magnified in the context of the English language, which is broadly used for international communication and the comprehension of essential knowledge. These assertions suggest that writing should equip learners to address their needs in diverse contexts, both within and outside of school.

In terms of expression, Ahiskali and Maltepe (2023) argue that individuals who possess advanced writing skills should be able to convey information coherently, express their feelings and thoughts in a unique style within a logical framework, and accurately embody the features pertinent to the text type they are composing. In line with this, writing helps learners develop a robust command of vocabulary and grammatical structures, stimulates their imagination when crafting fiction, enhances their confidence in writing, ensures coherence in essays, and engages readers through storytelling (Rao, 2019). From these perspectives, writing fosters creativity, imagination, and a deeper understanding of narrative texts. Given the importance of writing, the subsequent sections will discuss various approaches to writing.

2.3 Approaches to teaching writing

Approaches to teaching writing play an indispensable role in the educational process. An approach is defined as a form of correlative assumptions regarding the nature of language teaching and learning, encompassing the subject matter that needs to be addressed (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). In a similar vein, Norhidayah, Amelia, and Hidayat (2021) propose that to effectively teach writing, educators require approaches that support them throughout the teaching and learning process. Indeed, the choice of approach is fundamental, particularly in writing instruction. Highlighting the importance of selecting appropriate writing approaches, Selvaraj and Aziz (2019) argue that reviewing the methods employed by teachers in writing instruction can provide opportunities for educators to develop interventions and identify the most suitable approaches to cater to learners' needs. In light of the above, it is crucial to employ appropriate approaches in teaching writing. Three of the most common approaches are the product approach, process approach, and genre-based approach (Ariyanfar & Mitchell, 2020), which are discussed in the subsequent sections.

2.3.1 Product approach

The product-based approach dominated the teaching of writing in English Language Teaching (ELT) until the late 1980s (Al Boushi & Al Shuraiaan, 2024). According to one of its founders, Pincas (1982), the product-based approach conceptualises writing as a skill largely centred on linguistic knowledge, with emphasis on using appropriate vocabulary, syntax, and cohesive

devices. Sari (2019) demonstrates that this approach is considered teacher-centred, as teachers serve as the arbiters of the models utilised. Ngubane et al. (2020) further postulate that in a product approach, teachers typically present learners with an exemplar text to emulate when creating their own writings. Moreover, Samsudin (2016) asserts that the product approach emphasises the accuracy of language structures and writing development, which arises from the imitation of input and texts provided by teachers. Therefore, the primary objective of the product approach is to focus on the written product (Sari, 2019), rather than on meaning.

In the context of this study, providing learners with templates to study in order to produce similar texts may enhance their writing abilities, as they are required to adhere to grammatical rules and text structures, thus resulting in coherent and error-free compositions. However, it can be argued that this approach limits learners' potential by adopting a behaviourist stance that is teacher-centred, leaving learners in a passive role and disregarding context. As noted by Adero et al. (2021, p.50), "learners encounter challenges whenever they are given topics they have not practised." According to Badger and White (2000), the writing stages in the product-based approach include familiarisation, controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing. This implies that with adequate guidance, learners can track their progress and build confidence. Nevertheless, it can also be contended that this approach limits learners' self-expression, as the teacher maintains substantial authority. Al Boushi and Al Shuraiaan (2024) support this view by arguing that the product approach hinders learners' creativity, as they do not express their views but merely imitate the model paragraph provided. These limitations eventually fostered the emergence of the process approach, which is discussed below.

2.3.2 Process approach

The process-based approach overtook the product approach as the predominant writing instruction model in the 1980s (Al Boushi & Al Shuraiaan, 2024). This approach emerged as a cognitive writing model in response to the shortcomings associated with product writing, as described by Flower and Hayes (1981). It emphasises the writing process rather than the final product. According to Flower and Hayes (1981), the main processes involved are planning, translating, and reviewing. The process approach prioritises techniques such as brainstorming, exploring ideas, peer editing, and rewriting, while a genre-based approach focuses on the specific types of texts

that learners are required to write (Sari, 2019). Flower and Hayes (1981) further indicate that writing entails interaction among three critical elements: the task environment, the writer's long-term memory, and the writing processes. Supporting this notion, Hyland (2003) observes that the writing process allows learners to engage in various writing activities independently, ultimately leading to the production of a coherent written text.

Based on these assertions, it can be posited that the process-based approach fosters learners' creativity when producing a text, as it relies on the progressive stages involved in creating a set task. Additionally, Kadmiry (2021) states that within all stages of process writing instructional activities, the teacher's task is to lead learners in the areas where they require assistance, give feedback, concentrate on what learners are doing while writing, and correct their weak points at the end of the writing exercise. This approach encourages learners' creativity in writing by allowing sufficient time for exploration and receiving constructive feedback (Ganapathy et al., 2022). The implication here is that learners' participation is valued, as they have the opportunity to explore ideas, collaborate, rewrite multiple drafts, and revise their work—elements that are integral to the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach. However, the process approach is not without its weaknesses.

Critics argue that writing is perceived as involving the same processes irrespective of the target audience or the content of the text (Rusinovci, 2015). Ganapathy et al. (2022) lament that the process approach fails to adequately address the writing needs of diverse learners due to variations in communicative purpose, audience, and context stemming from different language backgrounds. The subsequent discussion will focus on the genre-based approach.

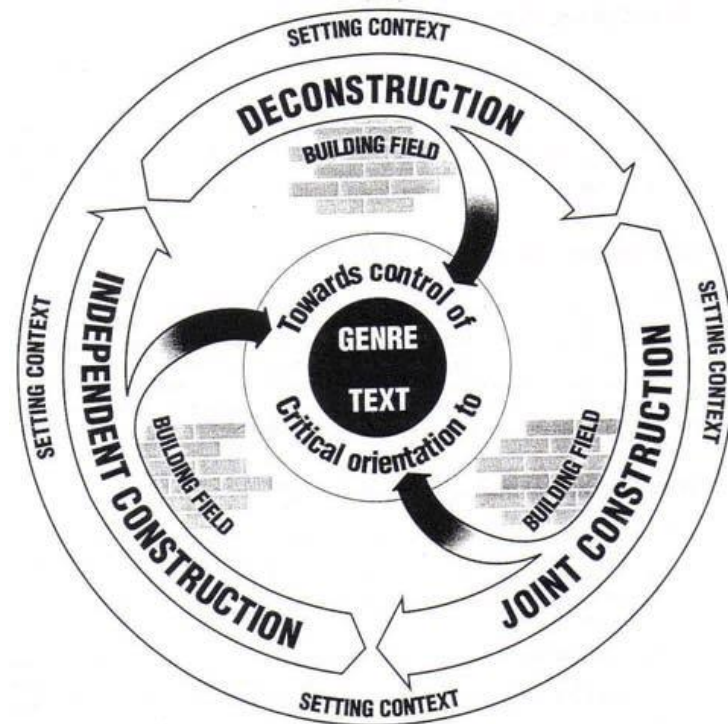
2.3.3 Genre-based approach

The genre-based approach is defined by Hyland (2006) as “a set of texts that share the same socially recognised purpose” (p.313). Supporting this definition, Wardani et al. (2021) emphasise that learners must be able to produce texts appropriately across various contexts. This suggests that, unlike in the product and process approaches, learning is socially constructed, enabling learners to create texts that meet their specific needs. Consequently, Pham and Bui (2021) assert that this approach is informed by Systemic Functional Linguistics. Al Boushi and Al Shuraiaan

(2024) further elaborate that in pedagogies oriented towards Systemic Functional Linguistics, genres are established, and model texts are employed to demonstrate particular features. Viewed from this perspective, the genre-based approach provides learners with exposure to various genres, allowing them to study well-written models of writing and analyse textual structures. Derewianka (2003) proposed four stages in teaching writing using the genre-based approach, which are:

- The first stage is building knowledge of the field; this stage aims to develop learners' knowledge about the topic that will be written.
- The second stage is in modeling, which aims to guide the learners to gain knowledge about a particular genre.
- The third stage is joint construction where the teacher and learners collaborate to compose the text.
- The last stage in genre-based pedagogy is independent construction; a stage learners already have the knowledge and skill to write independently.

Figure 1: The teaching and learning cycle



Source: Rothery & Stenglin, (1994, p.8)

Similar to Derewianka (2003), Hyland (2007) proposed five stages of the genre-based approach to writing: setting the context, modelling, joint construction, independent construction, and comparison. The main distinction lies in the final stage, where Hyland (2007) contends that learners can compare the communicative purposes and linguistic characteristics of the genre they have written with those of other genres. According to Wardani et al. (2021), through the crucial stages of implementing genre-based pedagogy, learners can construct texts aligned with specific genres. These stages facilitate collaboration among peers and the teacher, thereby informing the learners' writing process. Additionally, Pham and Bui (2021) assert that the genre-based approach is very beneficial in the classroom, as it allows for both teachers and learners to work with entire

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texts and develop an understanding of how language is employed for real purposes. Based on these assertions, genre-based pedagogy may enable learners to consider context and culture when writing about their experiences.

Elucidating this point further, Uday (2022) argues that the distinctive feature of the genre-based approach, in contrast to other approaches, is its focus on texts as attempts to communicate with readers, rather than solely on subject content, composing processes, or linguistic forms. Likewise, Chen (2021) elaborates that genre-based pedagogy emphasises explicit instruction on controlling generic structural patterns and lexico-grammatical features of specific genre, as well as composing collaboratively a piece of writing. Indah and Rini (2024) further argue that by providing learners with frameworks and particular language patterns, this approach allows them to demonstrate effective understanding and production of texts. This implies that learners are required to adhere to linguistic conventions and language patterns in order to write successfully, with guidance from the teacher. In agreement, Nasir et al. (2021) suggest that writers must consider potential readers when writing to select relevant content, language, and levels of formality. Given these perspectives, one may reasonably conclude that the genre-based approach will benefit the learners in this study by integrating reading and writing activities, thus blurring their segmentation.

In light of the above discussions, it appears that the genre-based approach to teaching and learning writing is a hybrid of both process and product approaches (Uday, 2022). Moreover, genre-based pedagogy encourages learners to produce writing independently after completing the learning cycle under the teacher's guidance (Wardani et al., 2021). In other words, the teacher provides various forms of support as learners progress through the steps of text production. Selvaraj and Aziz (2019) argue that the genre-based approach is intertwined with social needs and facilitates the learning of different text types. Supporting this view, Wardani et al. (2021) assert that implementing the genre-based approach in teaching writing plays a vital role in enhancing learners' writing skills, enabling them to produce texts appropriately across various contexts. In this study, the genre-based approach may potentially benefit learners by exposing them to the linguistic features of narrative texts.

Additionally, it is likely to assist learners in organising their texts, as Indah and Rini (2024) concur that the genre-based approach helps learners arrange their viewpoints in a logical sequence, thus improving their coherence as a whole in writing. Furthermore, it appears that the genre-based approach complements the process-based approach by employing a variety of methods in the classroom, emphasising the significance of context in writing, and providing learners with the characteristics of the texts they can compose while connecting form and meaning. Presumably, the teacher is able to scaffold the learning process, unpacking the text as learners engage in writing activities, thereby improving their expression and creativity.

However, a limitation of this approach is that learners may become overly reliant on the models presented by teachers, which could hinder their creativity. Thongchalerm and Jarunthawatchai (2020) assert that this approach restricts learners' ideas. They further argue that it can be time-consuming during the early stages of teaching and learning, requiring considerable time for learners to write incrementally.

2.4 Teaching and learning of writing in Southern Africa

Writing in English constitutes an indispensable linguistic skill in which both teachers and learners are expected to demonstrate competence. It serves as a principal indicator of academic progress and a determinant of achievement among secondary school graduates. Numerous studies affirm that, across Southern African nations such as Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, the assessment of English proficiency is predominantly conducted through written examinations (Moremi et al., 2018; Dube & Gumbo, 2020; Adeleke & Onyebuchi, 2023). Despite the sustained emphasis on writing as a primary mode of assessment, the teaching and learning of writing continue to present multifaceted pedagogical and systemic challenges.

Research evidence suggests that deficiencies in teachers' pedagogical practices and limited opportunities for professional development significantly impede learners' writing performance. Phiri et al. (2023), in their Zambian study, found that inadequate instruction in composition writing leads to poor academic outcomes, as learners lack the skills to articulate ideas and emotions effectively in writing. Similarly, Janson and Ngema (2023) revealed that Namibian teachers

exhibited limited understanding of curriculum expectations in creative writing, noting that official curricular documents offered insufficient guidance on both instructional approaches and assessment criteria. Lele and Gholi (2023) corroborate these findings in the South African context, observing that teachers often perceive essay writing as time-consuming and challenging to assess, frequently failing to provide timely and constructive feedback while neglecting learners' individual differences.

Further evidence from Malawi by Mzinganjira et al. (2024) indicates that although the genre-based approach offers learners contextual exposure to grammar and vocabulary, the overall effectiveness of writing instruction remains compromised by teachers' limited pedagogical understanding. To address such instructional shortcomings, Ngubane et al. (2020) emphasise that effective writing pedagogy constitutes the cornerstone of learners' development as competent writers. It may thus be inferred that enhancing teachers' pedagogical knowledge through sustained professional development is essential for fostering proficient writing instruction.

A related concern across the region is the prevalence of diverse writing deficiencies among learners, including grammatical, syntactical, lexical, spelling, and punctuation errors. Rahmat et al. (2024) note that, unlike other language skills, writing demands not only mastery of syntax and vocabulary but also the ability to articulate ideas clearly, logically, and analytically. In Zimbabwe, Oyedele and Chikwature (2016) reported that learners frequently misuse tenses and fail to apply grammatical rules appropriately in composition writing. Comparable patterns are evident in Zambia, where Phiri et al. (2023) found that learners' inability to construct coherent sentences, organise ideas, employ appropriate vocabulary, and adhere to writing conventions results in deficient written communication. Similarly, Mzinganjira et al. (2024) identified in Malawi that learners' limited vocabulary, poor organisational skills, and lack of interest in writing curtail their communicative potential in an increasingly globalised world. The absence of these foundational skills, particularly vocabulary, which forms the basis of sentence construction, inevitably leads to underperformance in writing (Majyambere et al., 2024). As Hussain (2017) asserts, effective writing instruction requires that teachers raise learners' awareness of writing processes and the linguistic and textual conventions of second language writing. It may therefore be concluded that

proficiency in vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and punctuation is a prerequisite for developing sound writing skills.

Socio-economic disparities also constrain writing achievement across Southern Africa. Niyibizi et al. (2024) argue that learners from disadvantaged backgrounds often perform poorly due to a lack of educational resources and enabling learning environments. Adeleke and Onyebuchi (2023) similarly report that in South African secondary schools, learners' socio-economic status directly influences the availability of materials that support ESL learning. In Namibia, Haufiki et al. (2022) found that limited access to instructional resources hinders the creation of stimulating learning environments that could otherwise foster imagination and creativity. Exposure to diverse texts, according to Solanki and Patoliya (2024) and Ahmed (2023), enriches learners' understanding of varied text types and structural patterns, thereby enhancing clarity and fluency in their writing. Consistent with this, Mangyvat and Meshak (2022) contend that extensive reading directly improves writing competence. These findings collectively suggest that access to adequate reading materials plays a crucial role in the development of learners' writing skills.

Another significant impediment to writing development is learners' negative attitudes towards writing. In Zimbabwe, Oyedele and Chikwature (2016) found that learners perceive composition writing as difficult and invest minimal effort in improving their weaknesses. A similar trend was identified in Mozambique, where Kwagwanji (2016) observed that learners' lack of motivation to read English texts stems from their perception of English as an inherently difficult subject. The study further revealed that, during assessments, some learners resorted to responding in Portuguese when unable to recall English vocabulary. Evidently, writing proficiency cannot be achieved without an intrinsic motivation to read. Supporting this assertion, Phiri et al. (2023) reported that Zambian learners who engaged in extensive reading demonstrated superior literacy development, creativity, and command of language. Hence, fostering positive attitudes towards reading may serve as a catalyst for improving writing competence.

Collectively, Southern African countries share common challenges in writing pedagogy and learner performance, arising from diverse yet interrelated factors. Despite the implementation of varied language policies across the region, writing difficulties persist among teachers and learners,

and performance levels remain suboptimal. Writing, by its nature, demands a multifaceted set of linguistic and cognitive skills, rendering it one of the most complex areas of language learning. As in neighbouring countries, writing problems are also pronounced among high school learners in Lesotho.

Teaching and Learning of Writing in Lesotho

As in many Southern African contexts, the effectiveness of communication in Lesotho's high schools rests fundamentally on learners' writing proficiency. The significance of this skill is underscored by the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAP)* framework, which emphasises that linguistic and literacy learning should cultivate positive attitudes and values conducive to effective communication (MOET, 2009). One of the stated objectives of English language teaching at both junior and senior secondary levels is to use reading and writing skills to foster a culture of reading and to develop learners' creative potential (MOET, 2020). Within this framework, the pedagogical challenge for English teachers lies in achieving these objectives through interactive and learner-centred teaching strategies. It may also be inferred from the policy that reading and writing should be taught concurrently, with access to appropriate reading materials being essential for achieving literacy goals.

Despite such curricular emphasis, research indicates that many learners complete secondary education without attaining competence in written communication. The *Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL)* (2025) reports that learners continue to exhibit weak linguistic abilities in English essay writing. Although English retains a prestigious position within Lesotho's secondary school curriculum, Masunhloane and Kgothule (2023) observe that insufficient attention is paid to the development of reading habits, particularly through engagement with English novels. This deficiency, as Ndukwe (2015) notes, contributes to weak writing performance, given that reading serves as the primary means of acquiring information, while writing represents the synthesis and expression of that knowledge. Tlali and Thamae (2023) attribute poor argumentative writing among LGCSE learners to a scarcity of reading materials, suggesting limited interaction between learners and texts, and thereby constraining opportunities for writing development.

The problem is compounded by inadequate professional development opportunities for teachers. Moea (2024), in a study on teachers' content knowledge of narrative composition writing, found that educators in Lesotho reported limited training in the integration of creative elements beyond basic storytelling. Consequently, learners struggle to demonstrate writing competence in the absence of guided and contextually relevant instruction. Moea (2024) further notes that over half of the surveyed teachers indicated that the curriculum's focus on examination preparation restricts their capacity to implement creative writing exercises, thereby promoting rote learning over skill development.

Similar concerns have been echoed by Nkhi and Lebona (2022), whose study on enhancing communicative competence through interactive tasks revealed that learners' grammatical deficiencies impede effective communication. Their findings also highlight that learners' written work often lacks clarity, precision, and adherence to formal English conventions. Tlali and Thamae (2023) similarly identified a range of errors in learners' argumentative essays, including inappropriate use of articles, tenses, prepositions, conjunctions, and punctuation, as well as non-standard language, grammatical inaccuracies, redundancy, and ambiguity. In addition, Moea (2024) reported that many learners struggle to employ vivid and descriptive language, rendering their narrative writing unengaging. Writing, as Qasem (2020) observes, is inherently demanding as it necessitates mastery of grammatical rules, coherent organisation, and the structured presentation of ideas for effective communication.

The rise of digital and social media presents an additional obstacle to writing proficiency. Nkhi and Lebona (2022) found that learners' linguistic development is undermined by constant exposure to non-standard English on social media platforms. This exposure contributes to grammatical incompetence, incoherent sentence construction, and an inability to distinguish between formal and informal registers, resulting in diminished writing quality. The persistence of these challenges beyond secondary school is evidenced by Letsoela and Matlosa (2022), who identified numerous lexical and semantic errors in the academic writing of tertiary students, attributing these to the transfer of grammatical patterns from learners' native languages into English. Such findings suggest that writing difficulties in Lesotho span multiple educational levels, highlighting the urgent need for systematic and sustained interventions to strengthen writing pedagogy.

2.5 Teaching narrative writing

Narrative text consists of some fictional types such as short stories, fables, legends, myths and comics and non-fictional ones such as essays on people's true lives, diaries and biographies (Amelia et al. 2023). Commenting on the significance and extensive use of narrative writing, Gutierrez et al. (2015) observe that narrative is the significant means of comprehension and expression of personal experiences over time, which can be shared in every social environment setting. According to Thorsten (2019), writing a narrative is a complicated process, in which the planning and organisational skills in writing are critical and developing competence in the holistic understanding of a text, including linking different components of the text to each other, has posed challenges for a number of learners. Seemingly, to write a narrative essay is a difficult task because learners have to create ideas and organise them meaningfully. Therefore, Putri and Firwati (2020) opine that teaching writing is extremely difficult for teachers because the learners have neither interest nor motivation in writing so teachers should use an appropriate strategy to inspire and encourage learners in writing, particularly in narrative text. It could be deduced that writing problems such as poor grammar and writing styles come as a result of learners' attitude towards writing and that writing a narrative text requires a distinct organisation.

Furthermore, as seen by Muliani et al. (2019), the writer should explain the setting of the story and introduction of the characters, provide problems faced by the main character to lead the reader to the climax, tell whether the problems are solved cheerfully or tragically and give readers constructive messages that can have an influence on them. Lending further emphasis, Ngubane (2018) explains that in scaffolding the structure of a particular text, teachers are assisting learners to understand the structure and order of the parts of the text. Therefore, dedicating a considerable period of time to the development of writing skills, presenting individuals with experiences, and giving instructional support is critical (Bazerma et al., 2017). Next is the purpose of a narrative text.

2.5.1 The purpose of a narrative text

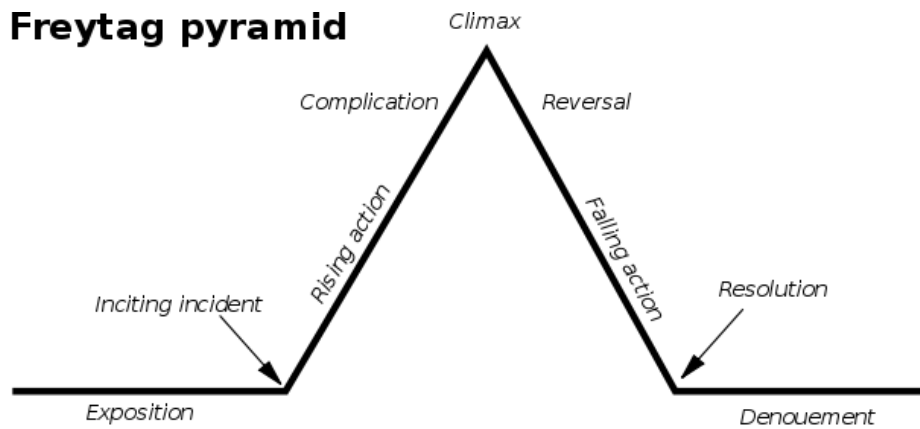
Anderson and Anderson (2003) indicate that the purpose of a narrative text is to make the readers conjure up a complication, to teach them some moral virtues, or simply to stimulate distinct

emotions, such as happiness, thriller and sadness. Put in another way, narrative texts make the reading activities enjoyable and help learners' reading comprehension so that they can discuss the moral values contained in the reading (Rohmana & Amalia, 2022). Correspondingly, Beyhatin and Ozdemir (2023) indicate that the concept of the story is a factor that enables the development of learners in relation to using their personalities and their language. Learners can use their actual or imaginary experiences to amuse, entertain and teach readers and listeners hence develop personal virtues.

2.5.2 The generic structure of a narrative text

A proper narrative writing structure enables learners to write more effectively. According to Falihah et al. (2022) the generic structure of narrative text consists of orientation, complications, and resolution. Orientation denotes the background of the of the story including characters and the location and ambiance of the scene which consists of the environment, character and mood. Further, they indicate that complication elucidates the story's tension, showing the story's crisis, intensifying crisis and climax while resolution illustrates how the issues are being solved and this according to Nurdiana et al. (2023), the writer might finish with either an ideal resolution or a slightly tragic end, especially a sorrowful one. This generic structure aligns with Freytag's pyramid model of narrative essays as depicted in the figure below.

Figure 2: Freytag pyramid



Source: Hanson (2015)

In a similar vein, a narrative typically begins with: a) orientation; b) a sequence of events (complications), which outlines the progression of the story and the challenges faced by the characters; and c) resolution, where the writer explains how the characters resolve the problems (Ardiansyah, 2020). Furthermore, in terms of structure, teaching the body of a narrative requires guiding learners through the process of constructing a series of paragraphs that follow three key stages: complication, a sequence of events building to a climax, and resolution or temporary solution (Ngubane, 2018). Based on these assertions, writing narrative texts effectively necessitates a deep understanding of narrative structure. One could draw a conclusion that the generic structure of narrative texts aids learners in developing a coherent plot and enables readers to follow the flow of the essay. As Madu (2024) notes, the components of a narrative text are essential elements that must be present, as the meaning of the narrative depends on their inclusion. Therefore, it could be inferred that the generic structure will assist learners in composing narrative texts in the present study.

2.5.3 The language features of a narrative text

To produce a high-quality piece of writing, Amelia et al. (2023) emphasise that writers must possess sufficient knowledge of the topics they will address, as well as an understanding of the distinct linguistic features and writing mechanics, which vary depending on the type of text. In agreement, Joyce and Feez (2000) illustrate that narratives typically exhibit linguistic features such as action verbs, the use of past tense, dialogue, descriptive language, and narration in either the first or third person. Watkins (2005) adds that nouns and pronouns are used to identify people, animals, and objects, with participants' characteristics being specified through the use of adjectives. Furthermore, connectives and conjunctions are employed to sequence events, while adverbs indicate place and time. Acevedo and Rose (2007) categorise language features into context, discourse, grammar, and graphic elements, which learners must apply in their writing. Taken together, these assertions suggest that the language features and text structures employed by learners determine the type of text and shape its meaning. Therefore, these elements must be used appropriately to effectively communicate the intended purpose. This leads to the implementation of Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy.

2.6 Reading to Learn pedagogy

To implement the proposed actions, the study adopted the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach developed by Rose (2005). The RtL approach, as outlined by Rose (2017), involves teacher-guided activities that enable all learners to engage with curriculum texts comprehensively. Through this process, learners are guided to analyse language patterns, adopt these linguistic resources in their own writing, and compose texts with effective organisation and language preferences to achieve their deliberate purpose. According to Huang et al. (2019), RtL pedagogy consists of a series of learning activities throughout three stages, distinguished by specific instruction at each stage of preparation and by the coherent connection between tasks, progressing from one to the other in smaller, explicit units. The details of each stage are discussed below.

Figure 3: Reading to Learn Cycle



Source: Reading to Learn Cycle Rose (2005)

Stage 1: Preparing before reading

In the initial stage of the intervention, learners' background knowledge is activated through leading questions designed to build their understanding of the given story. The learners are informed about the general content of the narrative, and as they read aloud, each section of the text is summarised. According to Rose (2005), this stage involves the teacher reading the story or parts of it aloud with the class. However, before doing so, the teacher prepares learners to follow the text with comprehension by providing the necessary background knowledge, explaining the story's subject,

and summarising its sequence. Similarly, Mataka et al. (2021) argue that teachers may also explain the contextual meaning of the text while summarising it into smaller, manageable units for better understanding.

Stage 2: Detailed reading

Once the story has been read silently, learners are introduced to key language patterns and instructed to underline important words and phrases. These are subsequently discussed to prepare learners for the rewriting activity, with the words and their definitions written on the board. Rose (2016) describes detailed reading as a structured learning cycle in which the teacher prepares and reads a sentence, then prompts learners to identify key groups of words by providing meaning cues, such as identifying who or what is being referred to, or paraphrasing unfamiliar terms.

Stage 3: Preparing before writing

Listyani (2018) contends that, in this stage, the teacher encourages learners to envision new texts by focusing on notes, suggesting alternative wordings, and further exploring the field. Here learners are prompted to draw on their prior knowledge, read the story imaginatively, and make notes by underlining significant words, phrases, or sentences. The teacher provides directives and cues, elaborating on concepts, phrases, and grammatical aspects to deepen learners' understanding. Additionally, learners collaborate in interactive activities such as writing on the board, correcting grammar and spelling, and identifying elements of the story with the teacher's assistance.

Stage 4: Joint reconstruction

In this stage, the structural elements of the story from the model text are discussed, and learners are guided to form new sentences. Subsequently, learners take turns writing their notes on the board, forming coherent paragraphs based on the text they have read, ensuring the correct use of grammar. Herazo et al. (2021) argue that learners, alongside the teacher, use the highlighted words from the previous stage to brainstorm ideas for the reconstruction of the text based on their understanding from detailed reading. Rose (2016) emphasises that joint reconstruction is an

effective strategy for helping learners incorporate the linguistic resources of skilled authors into their own writing, thereby broadening their writing skills and repertoire.

Stage 5: Individual reconstruction

In this stage, learners are required to construct texts independently with the support of the teacher. Listyani (2018) states that learners use the text patterns or notes they have practised in class to create their own texts. They are tasked with writing sentences using the language features identified during detailed reading, with the teacher offering guidance. Additionally, the teacher encourages learners to introduce new words and ideas into their writing.

Stage 6: Independent writing

As the final stage of the RtL approach, learners are asked to compose their own narrative essays independently, using the text patterns previously discussed in class. The teacher provides support for those who struggle to write independently. According to Whittaker (2018), most learners will be ready to research a new topic and independently write a new text in the same genre, while the teacher can focus on assisting those requiring additional support. Furthermore, this stage involves learners producing the target genre without teacher guidance (Mamac & Bangga, 2023).

2.6.1 The process of teaching and learning English through RtL pedagogy

The Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy is a five-step scaffolding approach to literacy instruction, which progresses from the conceptual understanding of stories to the decoding of letter-sound relationships, culminating in the written production of new sentences and stories (Lucas et al., 2014). Furthermore, Huang et al. (2019) assert that RtL learning activities offer flexibility and a range of scaffolding options, enabling learners of varying abilities to acquire the necessary skills for specific tasks. In this study, the researcher employed all stages of the RtL cycle to teach learners narrative writing.

2.6.2 Research on RtL in the teaching and learning of English

In recent years, research exploring the efficacy of RtL in promoting narrative writing has gained prominence. In Indonesia, Damayanti (2017) conducted a case study aimed at enhancing learners'

narrative writing through RtL intervention. The results demonstrated that learners were able to gain control over their academic literacy. Similarly, Siregar et al. (2021) found that the implementation of RtL in teaching short stories fostered a competitive learning environment, motivating learners to actively engage in lesson activities. Additionally, Mataka et al. (2023) conducted a case study in a South African secondary school with the objective of decolonising literacy development through RtL. The findings indicated that RtL significantly improved learners' literacy by providing equitable opportunities for academic achievement, aligning with Rose's (2005) argument that RtL is designed to democratise the classroom. However, Huang et al. (2019) note that adapting RtL can be challenging, as each cycle comprises of nearly nine stages for beginners, which requires significantly more time than traditional methods. Thus, in relation to this study, it can be inferred that RtL should be implemented with carefully sequenced learning experiences, allowing learners to write their narratives in chronological order and dedicating sufficient time to each stage.

Moreover, RtL has been utilised in facilitating the transition from secondary to tertiary education. In this regard, Millin et al. (2020) conducted a study in South Africa aimed at supporting predominantly first-generation, first-year English Additional Language (EAL) learners as they transitioned into higher education. A secondary study focused on aiding senior secondary EAL learners in their transition to university-level academic writing. Both studies revealed a statistically significant improvement in learners' academic writing skills when comparing pre- and post-intervention scores. These findings suggest that RtL enhances learners' writing performance, irrespective of context or educational level.

RtL has also been implemented in higher education settings. Bertram et al. (2022) conducted a case study in South Africa, investigating the use of RtL methodology to scaffold literacy practices in tertiary classrooms. While the intervention yielded positive outcomes, such as enhancing learners' academic literacy, it was found that scaffolding academic literacy required extensive preparation by teachers and was time-consuming. Similarly, Mamac and Bangga (2023) reported that RtL intervention helped pre-service English Language teachers in Thailand develop control over the target genre and language features. However, Vencesla (2021) found that Indonesian learners struggled to follow the teacher's sentence preparation due to low English listening

proficiency, suggesting that learners may benefit from greater exposure to detailed reading of model texts to develop the necessary language skills for effective composition.

Research further indicates that RtL can enhance the teaching of a broad range of texts in ESL contexts. Bogale (2018) conducted an experimental study in Ethiopia to examine the effects of explicit reading strategy instruction on EFL learners' comprehension. The post-test results revealed that learners who received reading strategy instruction made greater progress than those taught using conventional methods. This suggests that the development of reading skills is closely linked to improved writing abilities. Similarly, Mataka et al. (2020) examined the impact of RtL on literacy development among Grade 8 learners in a rural South African school. The study revealed that while learners exhibited weak reading skills prior to the intervention, significant progress was observed following the RtL treatment. Additionally, Herazo et al. (2021) reported that RtL effectively promoted spoken discourse in EFL classrooms in Colombia.

RtL has also been applied in non-English language contexts. For instance, Suryati et al. (2021) investigated the impact of RtL on learners' writing skills and their perceptions of the pedagogy in Indonesia. The study found that RtL significantly enhanced learners' writing abilities, with learners perceiving each stage of RtL as contributing to their skill development. Furthermore, the results demonstrated that RtL helped learners understand and organise the target genre, thereby boosting their confidence in writing. According to Huang et al. (2019), RtL cycles provide learners with multiple texts to read which serve as the foundation for writing their own texts. Similarly, Damayanti (2017) states that RtL pedagogy makes the knowledge of texts and written language explicit by offering a flexible set of strategies tailored to learners' needs.

Additionally, RtL provides a variety of scaffolding techniques to develop learners' creative writing skills. Damayanti (2017) highlights that through the deconstruction of mentor texts, teachers scaffold learners to comprehend the text and recognise patterns of academic language, which in turn assists learners in writing similar texts independently. Huang et al. (2019) support this by noting that RtL allows teachers to flexibly adapt various scaffolding strategies according to learners' backgrounds and language proficiency. However, Millin (2015) cautions that learners who are unable to effectively utilise these learning opportunities may be left out of the RtL cycle,

as it is hierarchical in nature, with knowledge building upon previously acquired skills. Nonetheless, the consensus remains that RtL scaffolding activities help narrow the gap between learners' existing knowledge and the skills they need to acquire.

As outlined by Rose and Martin (2012), the RtL process involves explicit guidance from teachers to help learners decode words, interpret sentence meanings, infer connections throughout a text, and apply this understanding to their own writing. Conversely, Damayanti (2017) warns that insufficient support may render the mentor texts too challenging for learners. Therefore, it is essential to use contextually relevant texts and provide close guidance to ensure learners can seamlessly integrate reading and writing activities, ultimately producing well-structured essays.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the literature on teaching writing, including its components, significance, and approaches. It addressed the teaching of narrative writing, its generic structure, and linguistic features. The literature review also sought to address the research questions. The chapter also examined the use of Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy in teaching writing, reviewed literature on RtL. The next chapter outlines the theoretical framework guiding this study.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

According to Handema et al. (2023) the research approach and the science of conducting research need to be driven by the philosophical positions of reality, knowledge, logic and ethical stance of the researcher. Therefore, this chapter discusses theories that were drawn upon to explain language teaching and learning experiences in this study. The choices for the theories are also explained. The conclusion sums up the chapter.

3.2 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (SCT)

According to Vygotsky (1978), social interaction and culture are of considerable importance in the development of cognition. Cognition, which refers to the mental processes involved in acquiring knowledge, such as thinking, memory, learning, and problem-solving, is shaped by the social and cultural context in which an individual is immersed (Eysenck & Keane, 2015). Vygotsky's sociocultural theory posits that cognitive development is not an isolated internal process but is deeply influenced by external sources, such as cultural practices, social interactions, and institutional structures (Rana, 2016). This theory emphasises that individual mental functions are interwoven with the cultural and social frameworks that surround the learner.

In support of this, Sarmiento-Campos et al. (2022) assert that learning and development are interrelated processes that mediate language acquisition. Sociocultural theory (SCT) has long been applied in educational contexts, particularly in collaborative writing, due to the communicative nature of interaction, which has been shown to enhance learners' writing fluency (Stoch, 2018). This underscores the critical role that social interaction and cultural context play in learners' cognitive development during the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, Ghiatau (2023) argues that both participation and context are essential to human cognition, emphasising that learners develop cognitively through engagement with more experienced individuals. Ghiatau (2023) also highlights that teaching is inherently a social activity, where adults interact with children to facilitate learning. This implies that the more children engage in social interactions, the more proficient they become in acquiring language skills. In the context of this study, SCT could

provide effective strategies for enhancing learners' success in narrative writing. According to Sarmiento-Campos et al. (2022), the concepts of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding are central to sociocultural theory, and these are discussed below.

3.2.1 Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

According to Vygotsky (1978), the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) represents the boundary at which a learner can achieve success with guidance from a mentor or collaboration with more capable peers—individuals possessing broader knowledge and skill sets. Irshad et al. (2021) further elucidate that the ZPD delineates the space between a child's current level of development, derived from independent problem-solving, and the extent of development assessed through problem-solving led by adult supervision. Consequently, collaboration emerges as a crucial element of productive work within the ZPD, and instruction should focus on skills and knowledge attainable for learners (Khamkaew, 2024). It can be inferred that scaffolding must be employed to enable learners to collaborate and engage in systematic and creative thinking to achieve classroom objectives.

The primary features of the ZPD include the learner, the interplay of psychological functions, developmental changes in structural relationships, and the learner's actions in social developmental contexts (Kozulin et al., 2003, p.49). In this regard, a teacher may guide learners through brainstorming, questioning, and explanation techniques, as well as instructing them on the generic structure and language features of narrative writing. Furthermore, Vygotsky (1962) posits that assessment should not solely focus on a child's current level of achievement but also consider the child's potential for development. In the context of this study, this implies that when learners are assigned activities, their ZPD should be taken into account to facilitate the acquisition of writing skills. Khamkaew (2024) notes that particularly in English Language Teaching, teachers are responsible for providing learners with appropriate learning experiences and assistance to help them reach their potential development. Given this perspective, learners may enhance their writing proficiency, a skill regarded by Sari (2019) as particularly challenging to master.

Based on this premise, when learners operate within their ZPD for a given task, they are engaged in a process of apprenticeship and may be unable to complete the task independently. Therefore,

they require appropriate guidance, modelling, and assistance, all of which can be facilitated through collaboration with peers or teachers (Khamkaew, 2024). In essence, the teacher, as the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO), can co-construct texts with learners until they are capable of completing the task independently, aligning with the principles of the Reading to Learn (RtL) intervention. An additional inference regarding the MKO concept suggests that assessment should be based not only on a child's existing performance level but also on their potential to acquire new knowledge. The ZPD likely informs the development of writing skills, as it offers teachers strategies for scaffolding learners' prior experiences, thereby enabling them to produce texts independently.

3.2.2 Scaffolding

This study is grounded in Vygotskian scaffolding, which Vygotsky (1978) describes as a strategy that enables learners to transition from assisted to independent performance. Scaffolding is an instructional method designed to progressively enhance learners' independence and understanding during the learning process (Belland et al., 2017). Wood et al. (1976) identify six key features of scaffolding: arousing learners' interest, reducing task flexibility to enhance adaptability, maintaining goal direction, emphasising important details, managing anxiety, and modelling potential solutions. These features suggest that effective scaffolding occurs under the supervision of a skilled facilitator, which aligns with the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach to teaching writing.

Sarmiento-Campos et al. (2022) highlight collaboration, contingency, fading, and the transfer of responsibility as core characteristics of scaffolding. They assert that interaction should be collaborative which is essential for effective learning. Contingent support, as defined by Wood et al. (1978), is tailored to a learner's understanding, indicating that interventions must be aligned with learners' needs. Scaffolding is most effective when support is matched to those needs, enabling learners to succeed in tasks they cannot complete independently (Morgan & Skaggs, 2016). Damanhoury (2021) emphasises that instructors, as More Knowledgeable Others (MKOs), should clearly define task expectations and aid throughout the writing process, from prewriting to final drafts. Thus, support should be gradually reduced as learners demonstrate increased independence in writing, a principle central to this study's intervention.

Another crucial aspect of scaffolding is the gradual release of responsibility. Teachers can leverage learners' existing knowledge and structure activities to expose them to new experiences, progressively decreasing support to foster independent task completion. Boonmoh and Jumpakate (2019) argue that in a supportive learning environment, learners actively construct knowledge with guidance and peer feedback rather than passively receiving information.

Alibali (2006) advocates various scaffolding techniques, such as questioning, explanations, hints, feedback, examples, concept maps, and visual aids. These techniques facilitate the gradual transfer of responsibility from the MKO to learners as they gain proficiency in specific tasks. According to Sarmiento-Campos et al. (2022), scaffolding should diminish as learners achieve higher levels of understanding, consistent with Vygotsky's assertion that it supports cognitive development. Thus, scaffolded instruction necessitates a shift from the teacher as an authoritative transmitter of knowledge to a facilitator who embraces innovative teaching methods. In this study's context, scaffolding narrative texts can effectively mediate learning and support learners in reaching their ZPD.

3.3 Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics

This study is grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), a theory developed by Halliday (1985), which posits that language is intrinsically linked to text structure, function, and meaning. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) define SFL as an analytical approach that examines the interplay between social contexts and linguistic features, focusing on how meanings are exchanged through language across different contexts. Salmaso (2022) highlights that the language system serves as a resource for meaning generation, with texts representing authentic products of social interaction, analysed in their contextual framework. This analysis involves the concepts of field, tenor, and mode.

Nurhayati (2018) suggests that employing an SFL approach can address the challenges faced by senior high school learners when writing narrative texts, as it encourages them to clarify their writing purposes and adhere to the general structure of narratives. Addressing writing difficulties, Rajagopalan and Jie (2016) argue that learners often struggle to generalise and organise ideas using

appropriate lexico-grammatical functions, resulting in limited ability to produce coherent texts. This indicates that SFL can enhance learners' understanding of genre-specific writing and linguistic features, facilitating meaningful communication.

In line with SFL theory, learners can be provided with narrative texts to analyse the construction of narrative elements and observe the relationship between text and context across various situations. This analysis can occur at multiple levels: word, phrase, paragraph, and the entire text, utilising Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy. Almurashi (2016) posit that SFL analyses texts through four lenses: context, semantics, lexico-grammar, and phonology. Salmaso (2022) further asserts that SFL views language as a semiotic system, consisting of choices used to negotiate meaning, thereby advocating semiotic materials to enrich learners' language experiences.

3.4 Bernstein's Pedagogic Discourse

This study is also informed by the concept of pedagogic discourse. According to Bernstein (1986), pedagogic discourse refers to the aggregate relationships between the content and competencies that are transmitted to learners, focusing on how curricular knowledge is imparted and acquired during the teaching process. A key argument in Bernstein's (2000) theory is that schools create a social order in which pedagogic discourse plays a critical role, influencing the success and failure of learners. Based on Bernstein's framework, discourse analysis should be employed to address the challenges posed by social inequalities affecting learning. This suggests that pedagogic discourse can help mitigate disparities in education related to social class, linguistic background, geographical differences, learning abilities, and the distribution of academic resources, thereby promoting equity within the classroom.

In describing pedagogic discourse, Bernstein (1996) states that it encompasses both the specialised skills and their interrelations as instructional discourse, as well as the moral discourse that creates order, relationships, and identity through regulative discourse. Bernstein (2000) further argues that pedagogic discourse assigns specific meanings to time and space. This perspective is reflected in Barrett's (2017) study, where researchers utilise Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing to systematically model pedagogies that mediate the relationship between transmitters and

acquirers, regulating access to knowledge. Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing provide a meaningful framework for analysing classroom instruction. Xu (2021) posits that while the strength of classification delineates the separation of educational knowledge, framing controls communication within the pedagogic relationship between teachers and learners in the school environment.

Consequently, a constructive classroom atmosphere is essential for effective teaching and learning. In the context of this study, learners could be encouraged to create meaning from their experiences across diverse contexts and discourses as they engage with Reading to Learn (RTL) pedagogy, fostering a sense of ownership over the knowledge they have contextualised. Additionally, incorporating learners' cultural backgrounds and exposing them to texts rich in the target language's culture can enhance their understanding. The following section discusses the critical paradigm.

3.5 Critical Paradigm

Research inquiries should be grounded in a paradigm, philosophy, or theoretical base (Okesina, 2020). Khatri (2020) defines a paradigm as a researcher's view of the world, a set of shared beliefs, or a perspective that underpins the understanding of research findings. The critical paradigm, as defined by Okesina (2020), critiques the status quo, focusing on societal conflicts and constraints, and seeks to foster cultural, political, and social transformation to do away with alienation and domination. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) add that it provides a conceptual lens through which researchers examine the methodological parameters of their research, ascertaining appropriate methods and data analysis approaches. In this study, the critical paradigm is particularly relevant as it provides an epistemological foundation aimed at understanding the political, economic, and cultural factors influencing learners' writing performance.

The critical paradigm originates from critical theory, which stems from the work of 20th-century theorists associated with the Frankfurt School (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). It developed as a critique of positivism and interpretivism, which critical theorists argue focus on trivial matters (Alhoussawi, 2023). Positivism, as critiqued by Jaja et al. (2022), is seen as rejecting common-

sense knowledge and over-relying on scientific knowledge, often disregarding the social and cultural contexts of everyday life. Similarly, Junjie and Yingxin (2022) suggest that interpretivism lacks depth, failing to explain the underlying reasons for certain ideologies. Consequently, the critical paradigm emerged to uncover the deeper truths behind societal structures.

Critical theorists aim to challenge the social order and cultural practices that disadvantage the underprivileged, often adopting an activist stance (Habermas, 1984). Blackwell (2019) asserts that the critical paradigm seeks to critique power structures and the worldviews they create. It focuses on exposing oppression and dominant-subordinate structures, advocating the perspectives of marginalised groups (Okesina, 2020). This suggests that the critical paradigm reveals how power dynamics contribute to unequal educational outcomes. As Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) demonstrate, the critical paradigm addresses social justice issues, including political, social, and economic inequalities that perpetuate oppression and conflict. Riyami (2016) further posits that while the critical paradigm aims to empower individuals and establish societal equality, achieving immediate change remains challenging. Overall, the critical paradigm seeks to eradicate alienation and domination, using knowledge as a tool for practical societal transformation.

Epistemologically, the critical paradigm is subjective, presupposing that no object of research can be fully separated from the researcher's influence (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Habermas (1976), a key figure in the development of the critical paradigm, contends that it is framed as an emancipatory theory and critical ideology, with its primary methodological tools being the critique of common assumptions and action research. From this perspective, it is reasonable to conclude that the critical paradigm advocates subjectivism, as the researcher is an integral part of the inquiry. Valdez (2020) highlights that in the context of English Language teaching, critical pedagogy values the diverse experiences that learners bring, recognising language teaching as a vehicle for engaging with cultural aspects. Thus, teachers are not merely transmitters of knowledge; learners' contributions are equally important. Given its transformative nature, the critical paradigm, in this study, can be seen as a tool for empowering marginalised learners who lack access to educational resources and whose learning needs are unmet.

Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) and Rehman and Alharthi (2016) argue that many research activities conducted within the critical paradigm, particularly using action research, aim to reduce power imbalances between the researcher and vulnerable participants. In consequence, this paradigm fosters the empowerment of learners by challenging social constructs that privilege some while hindering the progress of others. Providing learners with equitable learning experiences may lead to more balanced learning outcomes. Alhoussawi (2023) further suggests that the critical research paradigm investigates power dynamics and social justice issues. This implies that teachers should relinquish some of their authority in classroom discourse, acting as partners in the co-construction of knowledge.

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed how Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Systemic Functional Linguistics, pedagogic discourse, and the critical paradigm inform narrative writing instruction through RtL pedagogy. This chapter also explored the contentious debates that provided the basis for critical paradigm which is the main theory of the study. The theories backed up all the research questions presented at the start of Chapter One. The assumptions of the theories provided the framework for the methods and data generating tools used in the present study. The subsequent chapter discusses the study's methodology.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter discussed the theoretical framework which embodied theories which underpinned this study. This chapter gives a description of the methodology that guided the study. It describes the research approach and design that were used in this study. It presents the characteristics of the participants, criteria for sampling and the reasons for the selection. It also describes data collection instruments and procedures, the philosophical underpinning and data analysis methods that were followed to execute the study. Lastly, it discusses the validity of the study and the ethical considerations adhered to.

4.2 Mixed-methods research approach

For the purposes of this study, a mixed-methods design was employed, combining both quantitative and qualitative research approaches to ascertain full comprehension of the phenomenon under investigation. The primary rationale for using mixed methods was to leverage the strengths of both approaches, thereby offering a more intricate response to the research questions than could be attained through a distinct method (Creswell, 2015; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017; Jemma, 2023). Leavy (2017) underscores that integrating quantitative and qualitative data can yield a more complete understanding of the subject under inquiry, particularly when the aim is to describe, explain, or evaluate complex problems or issues. This is reinforced by Creswell (2015), who asserts that combining numerical data with narratives and personal experiences creates a synergistic effect, offering a deeper insight into the research problem than either form of data alone. In the context of this study, such integration is likely to provide a broader understanding of the Reading to Learn (RtL) intervention than either method could achieve independently, thereby enhancing the authenticity of the findings.

However, caution is necessary, as Dawadi et al. (2021) advise that the researcher must ensure the appropriate blending of methods to safeguard the robustness and reliability of the research findings. In light of these considerations, the mixed-methods approach was chosen to complement each method's strengths in addressing various aspects of the same research questions without

yielding contradictory results. Qualitative research was employed to generate open-ended data, while quantitative research was used to generate closed-ended data, ensuring a balanced and in-depth exploration of the research phenomenon.

4.2.1 Research Approach

4.2.1.1 Quantitative Approach

As one of the data generation approaches, quantitative data were employed to describe the phenomena under investigation and to identify statistical relationships between variables. According to Mohajan (2020), in quantitative research, the researcher determines the focus of the study, poses specific and narrow questions, collects quantifiable data from participants, analyses these data using numerical processes, and carries out an investigation in an objective and unbiased manner. Supporting this view, Stockemer (2019) emphasises that the use of statistical analysis in quantitative methods not only enables researchers to numerically describe phenomena, but also helps them ascertain relationships between two or more variables. In alignment with these perspectives, deductive designs were utilised to underpin the theoretical framework. Leavy (2017) further asserts that quantitative research is centred on objectivity, control, and precise measurement, and that methodologically, these approaches are predicated on deductive designs, intended to either refute or provide evidence in support of particular theories.

4.2.1.2 Strengths and limitations of quantitative approach

One of the strengths of the quantitative approach to data collection, as noted by Dawadi et al. (2021), is that it allows for the broadening of a study by helping the researcher to generate data on various aspects of a phenomenon from a diverse group of participants. On the contrary, Pandey (2015) argues that the use of questionnaires can limit the range of responses, with a higher likelihood of receiving incomplete or insufficient data. This suggests that participants may be reluctant to return completed questionnaires, potentially limiting the breadth of the data collected.

Another strength of the quantitative approach, as observed by Xiong (2022), is the ability to generalise findings to a bigger population across different settings. Similarly, Queirós et al. (2017) affirm that quantitative research is particularly well-suited to studies that aim for objectivity and

involve the collection of quantifiable measures of variables, allowing researchers to make inferences from sample populations. In line with this, Taherdoost (2022) stresses that large sample sizes in quantitative research enhance the representativeness of the sample, enabling replication due to the use of standardised methods. These assertions suggest that the findings from quantitative studies can be transferred to other contexts, providing a broader applicability of knowledge, something not typically achievable through qualitative methods.

Moreover, Xiong (2022) highlights that quantitative data collection and analysis is often more efficient and less time-consuming than qualitative approaches, as the reliance on numerical data allows for quicker processing. Dawadi et al. (2021) further note that in quantitative research, concepts can be operationalised through well-defined indicators, facilitating the tracing of trends, making comparisons, and using large and potentially representative samples. However, this strength is challenged by Xiong (2022), who contends that quantitative research often fails to generate a deeper understanding of the underlying meanings and explanations inherent in participants' perspectives. Taherdoost (2022) supports this critique, arguing that quantitative methods are limited in their ability to explore the underlying reasons for respondents' feelings and are inadequate in describing the ways in which social realities are constructed.

For the purposes of the present study, quantitative data were considered essential, as this approach ensures that the data collected remain objective and reliable, thereby facilitating valid comparison and statistical analysis (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2023). Through the administration of closed-ended questionnaires, the researcher sought to generate empirical evidence expressed numerically, allowing for the identification of measurable trends and relationships. To this end, Likert-scale items were designed to target specific focus areas and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy in enhancing learners' narrative writing competence. This approach enabled the measurement and examination of learners' attitudes and perceptions following the intervention.

Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were employed to analyse learners' test scores and to identify emerging trends and patterns in their perceptions and attitudes towards the RtL approach in narrative writing—an analytic depth that purely qualitative methods

may not afford. Additionally, frequencies and percentages were used to provide a concise yet comprehensive evaluation, thereby facilitating a nuanced understanding of learners' perspectives, which is crucial for evidence-based pedagogical decision-making. This approach further enabled the researcher to establish correlations between pre-test and post-test scores, thereby assessing the impact of the intervention.

Moreover, statistical analysis was utilised to enable the generalisation of findings to the broader study population, thereby enhancing the precision and validity of the conclusions drawn and predictions made (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2023). Quantitative analysis also provided a means of generating objective data that are less susceptible to the subjectivity inherent in qualitative approaches. This view aligns with Abuhamda et al. (2021), who contend that when the researcher's direct interaction with participants is limited, the risk of bias in data collection and interpretation is significantly reduced. Consequently, the integration of both quantitative and qualitative analyses served to mitigate potential methodological errors and to yield a more comprehensive and credible understanding of the research findings.

4.2.1.3 Qualitative approach

According to Hennink et al. (2020), qualitative research enables researchers to explore individuals' experiences in depth by employing a distinct set of research methods, including in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, content analysis, visual methods, and life histories or biographies. Mohajan (2018) further asserts that the aim of qualitative research is to systematically depict and elucidate issues or phenomena from individuals' viewpoints within the population under study, while also generating new concepts and theories. This suggests that the qualitative approach generates data in the form of words, texts, and documents.

To gather in-depth information, this study also employed qualitative methods such as interviews, participant observation, document analysis, and focus group discussions. These methods allowed the researcher to gain insight into learners' behaviours in the classroom environment by examining their perceptions and attitudes, addressing gaps identified in the quantitative findings. In this context, Mohajan (2018) highlights that qualitative research data are descriptive, consisting of

interview notes, observation records, and documents. These data are analysed inductively, with the sources emerging from real-life, natural, and non-manipulated settings.

4.2.1.4 Strengths and limitations of qualitative approach

An important aspect of the qualitative approach, as highlighted by Edmonds and Kennedy (2017), is that it frequently enables researchers to employ inductive reasoning, which aligns with the principles of constructivism. Supporting this view, Asenahabi (2019) demonstrates that this approach recognises individuality, culture, and social justice, thus providing a context-rich depth of information which, despite its subjective nature, continues to be relevant and present. Additionally, the qualitative approach enables researchers to point out issues from the perspective of their participants, enabling an understanding of the meanings and interpretations they assign to behaviours, events, and objects (Hennink, 2020). It can be inferred that the qualitative approach offers detailed insights by delving into the underlying reasons behind participants' opinions, which are often shaped by their lived experiences.

Regarding generalisability, Bairagi and Munot (2019) argue that qualitative research places less emphasis on generalisation, focusing instead on the individual, as it is assumed that the world is dynamic and that parameters may change over time. Similarly, Flick (2017) suggests that qualitative findings are generalised based on a solid theoretical framework, where the quality of case selection is more critical than the quantity. These assertions imply that qualitative findings cannot be generalised to the broader population in the same manner as quantitative results but can still be generalised on more credible theoretical grounds. In contrast, Mejeu et al. (2023) point out that qualitative research is often time-consuming and resource-intensive, limiting the number of cases that can be considered.

Despite these challenges, Mejeu et al. (2023) highlight the value of qualitative research, illustrating that researchers often accompany participants, such as school classes, over an extended period, allowing them to iteratively adapt their research questions, data collection methods, analysis, and presentation of findings. Taherdoost (2022) further illuminate that qualitative research offers the advantage of researcher-participant interaction during data generation, allowing for the exploration

of complex issues due to the flexible structure and freedom granted to participants. Similarly, Dawadi et al. (2021) contend that the qualitative approach provides an in-depth understanding of the issue under investigation, considering the personal perspectives of participants. However, Mohajan (2018) cautions that while qualitative methods may yield deep insights, they remain subjective, lack statistical representation, and are not designed to identify correlations. Based on these arguments, it can be reasonably concluded that although the qualitative approach allows researchers to thoroughly explore a phenomenon, ambiguities and biases may arise in the analysis due to the inherent reliance on language and subjective interpretation.

In this study, qualitative approach was used to elicit in-depth and comprehensive information on how learners felt post-intervention. According to Ugwu and Eze (2023) qualitative research allows for detail-oriented data to be collected. The researcher used focus group discussions, an interview, observations and documents to solicit more data which was triangulated to offer credible results. These approaches were adopted to offer respondents opportunities to elucidate their viewpoints since they are not confined to defined boundaries regarding their responses. In qualitative research respondents have the opportunity to be free throughout the research process in contrast to being asked questions with already predetermined answers (Ugwu & Eze, 2023).

The researcher directly interacted with respondents to get their immediate feelings and sought clarifications through readjusting questions and probing. Mohajan (2018) articulates that the purpose of qualitative research is to describe and interpret issues or phenomena systematically from the point of view of the individual or population being studied, and to generate new concepts and theories. Therefore, qualitative approaches were used because they yield high response rate. The researcher has an opportunity to clarify unclear questions which is what quantitative approach does not offer as respondents may overlook questions especially in close-ended questionnaire, contributing to more authentic data.

4.3 Research Design

Research designs are procedures for collecting, analysing, interpreting, and reporting data in research studies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). A research design helps to overcome frustration

by aligning the research through a structured plan that shows how all the main parts of the research work concurrently to try to address the research questions (Asenahabi, 2019). Therefore, the research design that was deemed appropriate for this study was convergent parallel mixed-methods design.

4.3.1 Convergent-parallel design

Both quantitative and qualitative data were generated nearly simultaneously, following the principles of a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. As defined by Asenahabi (2019), this design involves the convergence or merging of quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis of a research issue. Edmonds and Kennedy (2017) further clarify that this approach collects different but complementary data on the same phenomenon. In this study, a single-phase design was used to generate data.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were analysed independently, and then the two sets of analysis were integrated to cross-validate and compare the findings (Creswell, 2015). Efron and Ravid (2020) support this approach, noting that there are three major methodologies in action research: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. However, convergence was approached with caution, as Wilkinson and Staley (2019) observed that one limitation of mixed methods research is the potential for a lack of focus. Researchers may face challenges in attempting to balance the use of both methods in a single manuscript, and often feel compelled to over-justify their use of mixed methods to strengthen their knowledge claims.

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches, which seek patterns in data, can be effectively triangulated. As noted by Asenahabi (2019), triangulation allows for the convergence and corroboration of results generated from multiple methods. Bans-Akutey and Tiimub (2021) emphasise that in order to achieve validity and reliability, researchers should employ triangulation. In the social sciences, triangulation techniques aim to capture the richness and complexity of human behaviour by exploring it from multiple perspectives, which can be achieved by combining both quantitative and qualitative data. Following the convergent mixed-methods design, the data were analysed and merged to provide a more holistic analysis, with the integration of the data informing the interpretation of the overall results.

4.4 Action Research

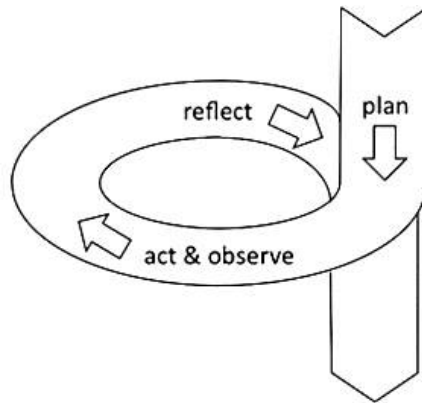
I employed action research within a critical paradigm to implement the Reading to Learn (RtL) intervention in the classroom. Resultantly, in this study, I explored the practical application of action research in teaching narrative composition, aiming to identify immediate solutions to the identified challenges and make informed decisions. According to Abrenica and Cascolan (2022), action research involves a self-reflective, critical, and methodical approach to analysing an individual's teaching environment, with the goal of intervening in problematic settings to achieve improvements and enhance practices.

Pardede (2018) further explains that in action research, the teacher-researcher begins by identifying a problem, determining its causes, planning a solution, implementing it, and subsequently observing and evaluating its effectiveness. To ensure appropriate implementation of action research, Oranga and Gisore (2023) emphasise that actions must be purposeful and age-appropriate, helping learners to develop systematic problem-solving techniques by exploring solutions and applying appropriate remedies. In line with this, the RtL intervention was tailored to the cognitive level and age of the learners.

In this study, the researcher acted as both participant and observer, thereby adopting principles of participatory action research. Efron and Ravid (2020) describe participatory action research as a form of social justice research focused on change, democratic advancement, and equity. They argue that the findings of participatory action research are directly linked to specific actions designed to solve particular problems, ultimately leading to transformations within the entire education system. From these assertions, it can be inferred that action research is recursive, context-based, collaborative, practical, and reflective. Efron and Ravid (2020) further attest that through rigorous research, reflection, and action, participatory action research empowers teachers.

The implementation of RtL in this study followed the action research model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998), which involves four recursive and dynamic phases: planning, action, observation, and reflection. These phases are elaborated below.

Figure 4: Action research cycle



Source: Kemmis and McTaggart (1998)

4.4.1 Stages of Action Research

4.4.1.1 Action research stage 1: Planning

The planning phase, as outlined by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998), involves identifying the problem and devising an action plan to address a problematic aspect of the research context. Cirocki and Farrelly (2016) further assert that in this stage, teachers thoroughly examine their teaching context with the aim of identifying the issue to resolve and formulating a plan of action to find an appropriate solution. During this phase, I prepared lesson plans to teach narrative writing, adapting them from Rose's model of RtL. Additionally, I designed observation sheets that included a list of learners' pseudonyms and the behavioural aspects to be observed during the intervention. Field notes were also prepared to supplement the observation sheets. I selected a relevant and

contextually appropriate narrative writing exemplar, which would be used to implement the RtL intervention, and created tests to collect data.

Action research stage 2: Action

The plan at this stage is a carefully considered one, involving a deliberate intervention in the teaching situation, which is executed over an agreed period of time (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1998). In alignment, Pardede (2018) defines action as the specific strategies, activities, media, materials, innovations, or changes introduced to achieve the desired improvement. This suggests that, for successful implementation, the plan must be well designed. I executed all stages of the RtL intervention to teach narrative essay writing, utilising the prepared lesson plans. Mertler (2021) emphasises that this is the point in the action research process where the researcher actively collects and analyses data to address the guiding research questions. According to Mertler (2021), all data collection and analysis strategies are suitable at this stage. Thus, all planned actions were carried out during this phase.

Action research stage 3: Observation

At this stage, Kemmis and McTaggart (1998) assert that researchers systematically observe the outcomes of the action phase, document participants' responses, and use reliable instruments to gather the necessary data. Again, Cirocki and Farrelly (2016) posit that the teacher methodically collects data to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. In line with these perspectives, as a teacher-observer, I recorded the learners' levels of engagement in the learning activities using structured observation sheets and audio recording device. I then assessed the success of the RtL intervention through both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Action research stage 4: Reflection

In action research, reflection involves a critical review of the teaching practices examined, with the aim of improving or developing them, thereby enabling teachers-researchers to make informed decisions about what to adjust or retain (Pardede, 2018). Kemmis and McTaggart (1998) highlight that, based on the results, practitioners either conclude the research if the problem is resolved and

share the findings, or engage in further cycles to enhance the situation and re-plan for improvement. This stage allowed me to analyse the effectiveness of the RtL intervention and reflect on the actions implemented, thereby deepening my understanding. Mertler (2021) concurs, noting that although this is the final stage, reflection is a critical part of the action research process, allowing teachers to reflect on the entire process.

4.4.2 Strengths and Limitations of Action Research Study

Action research is widely acknowledged as a tool for enhancing teachers' professional growth. Borja (2018) argues that it promotes teachers' development by improving their research output, writing skills, and educational practices. Messikh (2020) supports this, illustrating that teachers enhance their theoretical knowledge and instructional techniques by engaging with existing research. Moreover, Saeb et al. (2021) assert that action research helps teachers acquire a more nuanced understanding of their learners' needs and their own responsibilities in the classroom, contributing to increased professional confidence and improving teacher-learner relationships. Therefore, action research is aimed at improving instructional practices. However, Bennet (2019) highlights potential drawbacks, such as participant fatigue and fluctuating group composition during the research process.

Action research is also valued for providing immediate, context-specific solutions to educational challenges. Oranga and Gisore (2023) describe it as a proactive tool that supports learning by encouraging reflection and problem-solving in the classroom. Asenahabi (2019) argues that action research focuses on addressing specific problems rather than generating findings applicable to other contexts. Similarly, Edmonds and Kennedy (2017) illuminate that the results of action research are credible within the specific educational environment but may lack external validity due to its small-scale nature. Thus, action research findings are often generalisable only within particular settings.

A key feature of action research, as outlined by Clark et al. (2020), is its capacity to encourage educators to explore new initiatives with openness to learning, reflection, and evaluation. This reflective process fosters professional development and helps teachers take responsibility for their classroom practices. For Asenahabi (2019), the practical nature of action research makes it

particularly useful for addressing problems that require immediate solutions, rather than relying on abstract theoretical responses.

Action research is also beneficial for learners. Jensen and Dikilitas (2023) highlight its effectiveness in involving learners as active participants in the research process, fostering research-based teaching activities. In English Language learning, Pardede (2018) emphasises its potential to enhance language skills, vocabulary, grammar, and critical thinking, as well as increasing learners' motivation. In the same vein, Papadopoulou (2021) suggests that action research empowers learners to apply their practical knowledge, develop research skills, and act as agents of transformation within the educational setting. This positions action research within the critical paradigm, enabling both teachers and learners to engage in practical inquiry.

Despite its benefits, action research can be time-consuming and demanding. Bennet (2019) highlights the significant time commitment required for research activities, while Saeb et al. (2021) postulate that many teachers may lack the necessary research expertise. Furthermore, Clark et al. (2020) observe that while the generalisability of action research results may be limited to specific educational contexts, it remains a valuable tool for improving teaching and learning within those settings. In conclusion, action research plays a crucial role in fostering professional growth, improving classroom practices, and enhancing learner engagement, though its practical challenges should not be overlooked.

4.5 Selection of research participants

4.5.1 Population of the study

Population plays a critical role in research as it allows for the generalisation of findings. Stockemer (2019) defines population as the entire group of subjects from which a researcher seeks to gather information. In contrast, the target population is defined by Casteel and Bridier (2021) as the specific, conceptually confined group of potential participants to whom the researcher has access and who represent the characteristics of the broader population of interest. Similarly, Hossan et al. (2023) assert that the target population is limited to those whom the researcher can feasibly reach and is representative of the main group of interest in the study. Willie (2022) adds that

distinguishing between population and target population ensures that research questions are appropriately aligned with the needs and characteristics of the population of interest, thereby enhancing the validity and applicability of the study's findings.

In this study, the participants were Grade 11 learners who had studied English for 9 to 13 years. The total number of eleventh graders from which the sample was drawn was 257, with most classes comprising over 35 learners, aged between 16 and 21. The school selected for this research performs at an average level in the LGCSE examinations. It was chosen due to the researcher's employment there, which allowed for close observation of the subjects and the collection of detailed information.

4.5.2 Sampling procedure

According to Baltes and Ralf (2021), sampling involves selecting a subset of items to study from a broader population. There are two major types of sampling techniques: probability and non-probability sampling. Cohen et al. (2018) explain that non-probability sampling does not intend to represent a wider population, instead focusing on a particular group. In contrast, probability sampling gives everyone the same opportunities of being selected. Kim (2022) highlights the strengths of non-probability sampling, such as faster data collection, lower costs, and easier accessibility to respondents.

For this study, purposive sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, was used to select a Grade 11 class. This class was targeted because the learners had been exposed to various writing styles, particularly narrative writing. The class included learners with differing writing abilities, partly due to unequal access to learning materials outside school. The sample comprised ten learners' written essays and focus group discussions, alongside an English teacher who was invited to observe some lessons and provide insights through interviews.

The aim of sampling is to derive a representative group from which conclusions can be drawn about the larger population (Rahman, 2023). Purposive sampling was chosen because it allowed for the selection of participants with relevant characteristics (Etikan et al., 2016). According to Cohen et al. (2018), this method involves handpicking participants based on their suitability for

the study. Creswell (2013) supports this, noting that purposive sampling ensures participants provide sufficient data to meet the study's aims.

Stratton (2024) adds that purposive sampling requires fewer resources and time, making it advantageous. However, it can introduce bias, as it involves subjectivity (Stratton, 2024). Thomas (2022) also notes that purposive sampling can lead to imprecise statistical inferences and challenges in demonstrating representativeness, particularly in larger populations. Despite these limitations, purposive sampling remains a practical method when specific insights are required.

4.6 Validity

Validity is essential for ensuring credible and accurate research findings. Baimyrzaeva (2018) defines validity as the extent to which a study is free from bias and accurately reflects reality. Cohen et al. (2018) emphasise that validity requires reliable statistical assumptions, sound measures, well-designed sampling, and prevention of threats to internal and external validity. Baimyrzaeva (2018) highlight that a study must genuinely investigate its intended topic, and its data must accurately reflect actual conditions. Jason and Glenwick (2016) suggest that mixing methods can enhance validity by providing mutual confirmation of findings. Three types of validity are discussed.

4.6.1 Internal validity

Internal validity refers to whether the observed changes in the dependent variable are solely due to the manipulation of the independent variable (Hu, 2019). However, Creswell (2014) and Taherdoost (2022) note that internal validity can be threatened by experimental procedures, participant behaviours, or treatments, which may impact the researcher's ability to make accurate inferences. This study investigated the cause-and-effect relationship, demonstrating that changes in the learners' behaviour were due to the manipulated variable, ensuring a valid link between cause and effect was established.

4.6.2 Construct validity

Construct validity refers to the extent to which an instrument accurately measures the theoretical concept or behaviour it claims to measure (Surucu & Malaslakci, 2020). Creswell (2014) asserts

that construct validity occurs when researchers use precise definitions and measures of variables. To ensure construct validity, the construct must be clearly defined, based on relevant theories, and operationalised so that data collection instruments fairly measure the construct while excluding the influence of others (Cohen et al., 2018). This ensures the instrument measures a single construct, and test scores reflect the concept under investigation. Statistical procedures were used to establish cause-and-effect relationships between constructs, with correlational analyses ensuring the accuracy of measurement methods (Cohen et al., 2018).

4.6.3 Conclusion validity

Conclusion validity refers to the accuracy of conclusions drawn about the relationships between variables (Fabrigar et al., 2020). It ensures that a valid relationship is established, which depends on sound sampling methods, measurement techniques, and data analysis. The researcher ensured the study had appropriate sampling, accurate data usage, and correct result interpretation to yield reliable findings. According to Creswell (2009), threats to conclusion validity arise when researchers make incorrect inferences due to insufficient statistical power or violations of statistical assumptions. Therefore, maintaining conclusion validity is essential for producing accurate and consistent results.

4.7 Data collection methods

4.7.1 Document analysis

Document analysis was employed to generate substantial information, utilising lesson plans, teachers' guides, and RtL assessment rubrics that encompass various writing aspects. Morgan (2022) describes this method as the analysis of diverse documents, including books, articles, and institutional reports. The documentation analysed included learners' essays, marks, teaching and learning materials, and field notes, which provided rich contextual insights for the study. Jemma (2023) demonstrates that field notes serve as a key data collection tool during observations, aiming to describe rather than judge observed phenomena. Maharaj (2016) emphasises the utility of field notes in fostering reflective practice among qualitative researchers, and the researcher maintained detailed notes during and after lessons.

Additionally, a one-group pre-test-post-test design was implemented to assess changes in learners' writing ability following the RtL intervention. The pre-test established initial competencies, which were compared to post-test scores to evaluate progress. RtL marking descriptors facilitated the scoring of essays, enabling the classification of learners into weak, intermediate, and strong groups based on performance. This analysis revealed both challenges and achievements in writing. Malik and Alam (2019) affirm that comparing pre-test and post-test scores assesses the effectiveness of the intervention, while Morgan (2022) highlights the stability of data derived from document analysis. Classroom observations further complemented this analysis, as discussed in the subsequent section.

4.7.2 Classroom observations

In this study, observations were utilised to enhance credibility through the interaction between the researcher and the subjects. This approach was employed to track the progress of learners during the RtL intervention. Ekka (2021) defines observation as a qualitative data-gathering method, involving the examination of behaviours, events, or physical characteristics in natural settings. As a participant observer, I engaged in the group being studied while documenting actions and behaviours. I recorded instances of learners participating in reading and writing activities, effectively communicating in classroom exchanges, seeking clarification, and collaborating in groups. This enabled me to closely monitor progress and make informed decisions.

Flick (2018) suggests that observers build relationships with participants, gaining insights into their activities and experiences while producing written records of interactions. The primary advantage of observation lies in its ability to capture contextual interactions and reveal details missed in interviews (Mataka et al., 2021). Ekka (2021) emphasises that observation allows researchers to directly see participant engagement rather than relying solely on self-reported data.

Merriam and Grenier (2019) postulate that qualitative research aims to understand phenomena from participants' perspectives, resulting in highly descriptive findings. Observations serve as a reliable information source, enabling the researcher to witness behavioural changes first-hand. However, Pandey and Pandey (2015) caution that observations may have limitations due to the inability to capture all events, while Creswell (2016) acknowledges the challenges of managing

extensive information. To mitigate these drawbacks, field notes were taken to supplement observations.

4.7.3 Closed-ended questionnaires

A questionnaire is an instrument comprising a set of questions designed to gather information from respondents (Taherdoost, 2021). Cohen et al. (2018) accentuate that questionnaires are widely used for collecting survey data, offering structured, often numerical information that can be administered without the researcher's presence and is generally straightforward to analyse. Questions can be categorised as closed-ended or open-ended. In this study, a closed-ended questionnaire was employed to assess the effectiveness of the RtL intervention, facilitating a broader range of responses. Closed-ended questions utilised a Likert scale (Likert, 1932) to measure attitudes, asking respondents to indicate their agreement with various statements.

Respondents rated their perceptions of the RtL intervention on a scale from extremely positive to extremely negative. The researcher aimed to include all possible responses in the closed-ended questions to avoid limiting choices. Taherdoost (2022) asserts that closed-ended questions are preferable in self-administered questionnaires as they simplify the answering process, reducing the need for assistance. Hyman and Sierra (2016) emphasise that these questions enhance respondents' willingness to complete the questionnaire, allowing for efficient coding and analysis of data. However, while closed-ended questions may restrict the depth of responses, they can yield more accurate data due to the structured nature of the answers. To address potential reliability issues, the questionnaire content was carefully varied and checked (Jemma, 2023).

4.7.4 Semi-structured interview

Research interviews, as described by Bairagi and Munot (2019), explore individuals' perspectives on the problem under investigation. There are three main types of interviews: unstructured (open), semi-structured (semi-open), and structured (Jemma, 2023). This study employed semi-structured interviews to explore the research questions with the invited teacher, eliciting additional insights. Galletta (2013) explains that semi-structured interviews combine open-ended questions with theoretically driven prompts, allowing data to be grounded in participants' experiences while also guided by existing constructs.

Dejonckheere and Vaughn (2019) advocate a qualitative approach, suggesting that interviews should foster unfolding, iterative interactions rather than a transactional question-answer dynamic. This flexibility enables the interviewer to rephrase questions and probe specific topics based on the interviewee's responses (Smith et al., 2022).

The semi-structured format is advantageous for exploring interviewees' opinions and ideas, particularly on complex subjects (Naz et al., 2022). The researcher selected this method for its versatility, allowing for substantial and varied data collection. However, Xu (2024) acknowledges that semi-structured interviews can be complicated, requiring anticipation of challenges. Furthermore, Pandey and Pandey (2015) warn that biases may skew results. To mitigate these issues, semi-structured interviews were conducted with caution in this study, utilising a guide to maintain focus on the main topic while allowing flexibility (Ruslin et al., 2022).

4.7.5 Focus group discussions

Focus groups involve discussions with a group of participants to elicit qualitative information regarding their perceptions, feelings, motivations, needs, and opinions (Manzano, 2023; Vaculovschi, 2024). After receiving post-test feedback, approval was obtained from respondents to conduct focus group discussions aimed at elaborating on key data points and unpacking the meanings behind the statistical findings. Basnet (2018) asserts that focus group discussions reveal deeper insights than personal interviews or surveys, as group dynamics encourage more developed responses.

I conducted focus group discussions with ten purposively selected learners classified as weak, intermediate, or strong based on their post-test performance. This manageable group size facilitated participation, allowing learners to express their views and support one another in articulating their thoughts. The collaborative environment enabled participants to clarify responses and provide diverse perspectives on the research questions. Manzano (2023) elucidates that group settings encourage respondents to build upon or challenge each other's viewpoints, fostering the generation of ideas.

According to Hennink et al. (2020) and Queiros et al. (2017), focus groups aim to identify a broad range of perspectives on specific issues, allowing for immediate clarification of norms. The flexibility of focus groups enabled me to steer discussions towards research objectives, yielding instant insights. However, Busetto et al. (2020) highlight potential disadvantages, including reduced control over the process and unequal participation among individuals. Other methods can help offset these weaknesses to enhance the credibility of findings.

4.8 Data Analysis in Mixed-Methods Research

Mixed-methods research integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches, enriching the exploration of patterns, relationships, and generalisability (Aramide, 2023).. Both methods were employed to answer the research questions, with action research enabling the use of multiple analysis techniques (Lufungulo et al., 2021). Data triangulation served not only to provide comprehensive insights but also to validate and verify findings, identifying inconsistencies (Donkoh & Mensah, 2023). Quantitative analysis of learners' pre-test and post-test scores was conducted first, followed by qualitative thematic analysis, allowing the researcher to interpret shared meanings and experiences. Thematic analysis – a structured process of familiarisation, coding, and thematic synthesis – provides coherent insights (Turobov et al., 2024). Finally, the independently analysed data were merged to examine whether they corroborated one another.

4.8.1 Quantitative results

Quantitative data analysis techniques are used to examine measurable features, promoting numerical findings (Toyon, 2021). In this study, data were collected through closed-ended questionnaires using Likert scales, which produce interval data, allowing for arithmetic operations such as sums, means, and standard deviations (Tanujaya et al., 2023). The data were processed and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), a tool for analysing variable differences after treatment (Afifah et al., 2022). Descriptive statistics were employed to summarise and clarify the data, revealing relationships between variables and providing a basis for inferential comparisons (Kaur et al., 2018). The results were tabulated in terms of frequency, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Pre-test and post-test results were also examined using descriptive statistics to assess any differences, particularly regarding learners' attitudes and perceptions

following the intervention. A paired sample t-test was administered to compare pre-test and post-test scores, a method commonly used to compare two group means (Kim, 2019). This test calculated the differences before and after the Reading to Learn (RtL) intervention, indicating its impact.

4.8.2 Qualitative findings

Thematic analysis was employed to systematically identify and analyse patterns and themes emerging from participants' data. This qualitative method is widely used to organise and interpret large data sets, facilitating deeper understanding (Dawadi, 2020; Lochmiller, 2021). Naeem et al. (2023) emphasise that thematic analysis enhances the consistency and replicability of findings, establishing a clear link between data, interpretation, and conclusions.

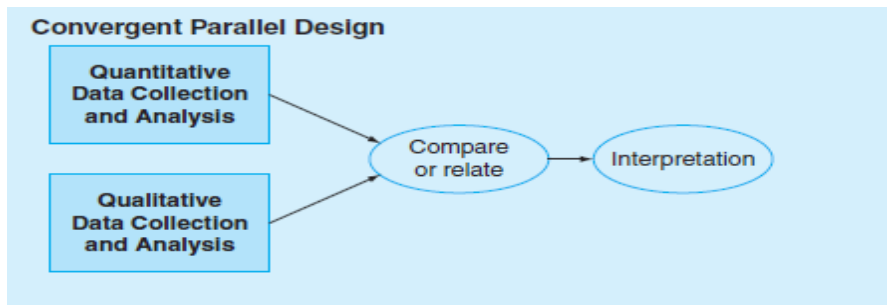
To familiarise myself with the data, I transcribed focus group discussions, interview audios, and field notes, aiming to identify emerging themes (Dawadi, 2020). The data were then organised into categories to distil large volumes of information into meaningful components. Maguire and Delahunt (2017) argue that coding reduces extensive data into manageable chunks of meaning, while Miles et al. (2014) note that breaking data into segments enables comparison, analysis, and inference. This process helped identify themes reflecting Reading to Learn (RtL) implementation and teachers' and learners' perceptions.

Naeem et al. (2023) further assert that developing themes involves grouping related codes to uncover meaningful patterns. The coded interviews and discussions were analysed to generate themes aligned with the research questions, forming the basis of the study's final findings. Thematic analysis was crucial in interpreting and presenting the data

4.8.3 Convergence of data

A convergent design collects and analyses qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously before merging the findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Integration, as Bazeley (2018) points out, is intentional, requiring careful planning of analytic procedures. Triangulation and concurrent designs are commonly employed in convergent approaches (Maree, 2019).

Figure 5: Convergent parallel design



Source: Creswell, 2014

Creswell and Creswell (2018) emphasise that in a convergent design, quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analysed concurrently, often in parallel. Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) argue that integrating both datasets provides a more comprehensive understanding than using either method alone. Similarly, Dawadi et al. (2021) suggest that converging data from multiple sources enhances the credibility and strength of research conclusions.

In this study, emergent themes from both datasets were integrated. Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) highlight that researchers can identify common concepts across both findings. Dawadi et al. (2021) posits that quantitative methods allow for clear operationalisation of concepts, trend analysis, and large sample comparisons, while qualitative methods capture multiple meanings and offer depth in smaller samples. This methodological flexibility allows for both a logical, broad understanding and a nuanced, process-oriented analysis.

Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) further explain that integration can occur by presenting qualitative and quantitative findings sequentially or by transforming qualitative data into quantitative measures. In this study, quantitative findings were presented first, followed by qualitative data to enrich the analysis. After separate analyses, the datasets were integrated to assess convergence. Triangulation was used to validate results by complementing and extending analysis, increasing credibility. Creswell (2016) asserts that mixed methods are distinguished by their ability to draw superior inferences; a strength utilised in this study.

4.9 Positionality

This study adopted a subjective epistemological position, focusing on the relationship between the researcher and the participants. Gemma (2018) distinguishes between objectivism, where social phenomena exist independently of actors, and subjectivism, where the world is shaped by actors' perceptions. As a participant observer, the researcher embraced a subjective stance, recognising that a researcher's position may change depending on the context.

Positionality is defined by the researcher's relationship to the topic, participants, and research design (Grix, 2019; Holmes, 2020). In this study, subjective epistemology ensured credibility in the findings, as participants shared their experiences of Reading to Learn (RtL). The researcher and learners collaboratively constructed transformative knowledge, emphasising the role of joint knowledge generation (Kuyini, 2017).

Kivunja and Jafar (2018) argue that failing to address positionality may challenge the validity of research, particularly in qualitative studies, where the absence of context risks distorting meaning. The researcher's involvement is crucial but must not influence outcomes.

The researcher's position significantly impacts data generation, and reflection on this position throughout the study is essential (Wilson et al., 2022). The researcher's conception of the world shapes the research approach, ensuring that rigour and trustworthiness are maintained (Handema et al., 2023). This close relationship with learners facilitated detailed data generation.

4.10 Overcoming Researcher Bias

To ensure validity, researchers must eliminate bias, distortion, and unsupported assumptions at every stage of the research (Baimyrzaeva, 2018). In this study, efforts were made to mitigate bias, including unfair judgement during data analysis, interpretation, and publication, through the use of an appropriate research design. A representative sample was selected to ensure credible inferences. Thallapureddy et al. (2023) illuminate that bias during interviews can skew discussions, affecting data quality. To avoid this, the study was aligned with its objectives, literature, and methods. Purposive sampling was used, selecting participants knowledgeable about the topic

without leading their responses. Smith (2014) argues that purposive sampling reduces bias, as the sample is continuously refined to meet research aims.

Strauch (2017) highlights that both quantitative and qualitative data involve interaction between researchers and participants, potentially leading to subjective analytic choices. However, personal beliefs and judgements were not allowed to influence data generation. Thallapureddy et al. (2023) emphasise that while unconscious cognitive biases are inevitable, recognising them is crucial to avoiding flawed decisions. To further minimise bias, triangulation was employed, enhancing validity and reliability. As Donkoh and Mensah (2023) assert, triangulation helps validate qualitative results against quantitative findings, and Anita-Akutey and Tiimub (2021) add that using diverse data sources reduces bias, increasing validity and credibility.

4.11 Research Ethics

Ethical issues are integral to research and must be addressed to protect all parties involved. Flick (2018) highlight that regulations for human subject research vary across disciplines, cultures, and countries, requiring researchers to comply with their local context. Ethical guidelines, institutional review boards, and regulatory frameworks provide necessary advice for researchers (Cohen et al., 2018). In this study, ethical procedures were followed by obtaining permission from the university and school administration, safeguarding the institutions' reputations.

Informed consent was a key ethical consideration. Badampudi et al. (2022) state that informed consent involves explaining the study's purpose, research approach, data access, potential risks, and benefits, and emphasising voluntariness. Participants were fully informed about the research objectives, what would be asked of them, and how their data would be used. Consent was given freely without coercion, as advised by Taquette and Souza (2022). Ankaranga and Makau (2016) further highlight that the researcher must explain the study's benefits to participants.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly observed due to the personal nature of qualitative data. While participants' identities were known during focus group discussions, their confidentiality was maintained to protect them from harm. Fleming and Zegwaard (2018) stress that confidentiality is crucial to safeguarding participants. Bos (2020) adds that confidentiality respects participants'

dignity and autonomy, ensuring that their information is used appropriately. Participants were given pseudonyms, and audiotapes were destroyed after transcription.

Cohen et al. (2018) argue that researchers must consider the impact of their studies on participants and conduct themselves in a manner that preserves participants' dignity. By adhering to these ethical principles, the study ensured that participants were treated with respect and their identities protected.

4.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology employed for data generation, detailing the research design, sampling procedures, data collection methods, and analysis, alongside their relevance to the study. Additionally, it addressed how validity was ensured and ethical considerations were upheld throughout the research process.

CHAPTER FIVE: READING TO LEARN

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research paradigm, philosophical assumptions, participatory action research design, sampling methodology, and the rationale for data generation and analysis methods. It also addressed strategies for ensuring data validity and adherence to research ethics. This chapter focuses on the Reading to Learn (RtL) intervention and its effectiveness in enhancing literacy among secondary school learners. It explores the theoretical concepts underlying RtL within classroom action research, the role of scaffolding in teacher-learner interactions, and how the RtL pedagogy positively influences learners' narrative writing skills.

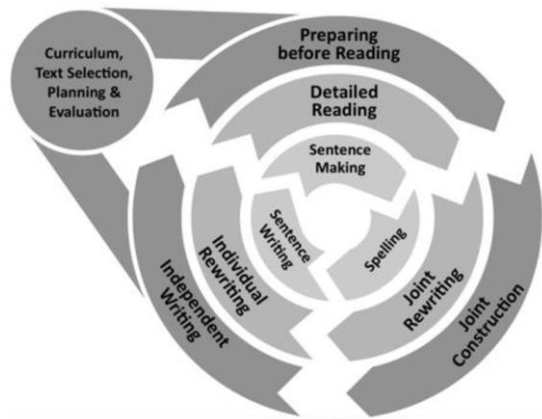
5.2 Overview of Theoretical Concepts

Concerns about low literacy levels among learners led Rose and Acevedo (2006) to develop the 'Learning to Read, Reading to Learn' (LRRL) programme, later renamed Reading to Learn (RtL). This initiative aimed to bridge the significant literacy gap among indigenous children aged five to nine in central Australia's Aboriginal community. In the classroom, some learners struggled due to insufficient support in English literacy, while others were high-achieving and educationally privileged. By integrating reading and writing skills, the project effectively reduced literacy disparities, using language-rich texts to foster advanced literacy skills and inspiring RtL studies worldwide.

Acevedo and Rose (2007) emphasise the importance of high-quality, challenging, age-appropriate texts aligned with the curriculum to enhance student reading and writing. The RtL pedagogy is informed by Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which examines language use within texts, highlighting the connection between text and context to improve comprehension and production. Additionally, Vygotsky's (2012) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) informs the RtL literacy cycle, suggesting that learners make greater progress with appropriate assistance through social interaction. Bernstein's (1999) theory of pedagogic discourse is also incorporated, addressing socio-economic disparities.

RtL is an iterative, genre-based pedagogy tailored to bridge longstanding gaps in language learning (Rose & Martin, 2012), operating on the premise that writing success is predicated on reading success (Bertram, 2022). Its core components include structured teacher-guided activities that engage all learners with curriculum texts that may exceed their individual reading levels (Rose, 2017). Herazo et al. (2020) propose a three-stage cycle: first, teachers prepare learners to understand a model text from a specific genre; second, a collaborative text construction occurs between teacher and learners; finally, learners independently create their own texts within the same genre. The RtL pedagogy is beneficial across all educational levels and various text types. It encompasses nine sets of strategies divided into tiers.

Figure 6: Three levels of strategies in RtL



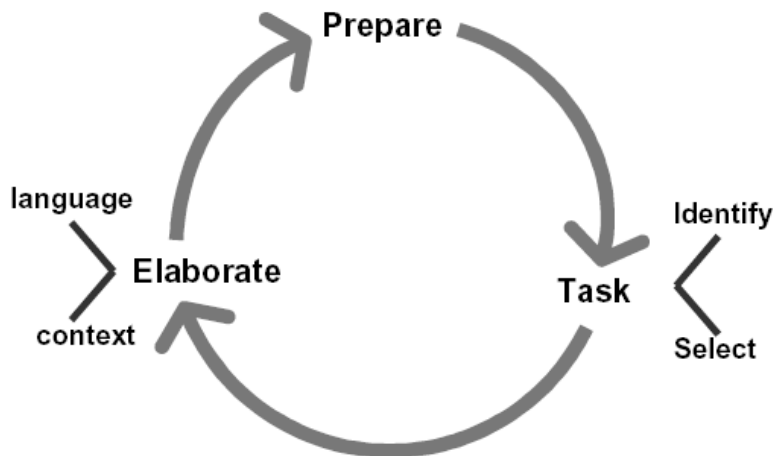
Source: (Rose & Martin, p.127)

According to Yulianeta et al. (2022), the outer tier cycle centres on the highest language strata of genre and field within the text. Tasks at level one are designed for advanced learners, focusing on the overall structure of the text (Huang et al., 2019). This tier includes preparatory reading, collaborative construction, and individual construction. Level two encompasses detailed reading, collaborative rewriting, and individual rewriting, providing enhanced support for learners to understand the language of curriculum texts and apply this language in their writing (Martin &

Rose, 2012). These strategies offer more intricate assistance than the outer cycle, focusing on lower language strata such as grammar, register, and discourse semantics. This underscores the necessity for teachers to engage more actively in the co-construction of knowledge with learners.

The third level focuses on fundamental language skills, including sentence formation, spelling, and sentence writing. Huang et al. (2019) highlight that this level caters to novice learners, emphasising foundational skills in reading and writing. Rose and Martin (2012) support this, indicating that strategies at this level teach core reading and writing skills, including grammar and punctuation. Overall, learners can achieve language proficiency by engaging with sentences and words within their contextual framework.

Figure 7: Scaffolding interaction cycle



Source: (Acevedo & Rose 2007, p.78)

According to Acevedo and Rose (2007), teachers should begin by analysing current classroom activities, identifying the expected tasks for learners, and considering the necessary preparations for these tasks. Such preparatory steps can enhance interactivity within lessons and facilitate effective learner responses. Additionally, it is essential for teachers to evaluate learners' responses

during classroom exchanges. Emphasising the importance of evaluation, Rose (2005) affirms that the second step involves commenting on these responses while consistently expanding upon shared knowledge related to text features. At the third level, the teacher must determine whether further elaboration on a response is warranted.

In their examination of pedagogic activities, Acevedo and Rose (2007) identified various types of interaction moves utilised in classroom exchanges, as depicted in Table 1.

Table 1: Interaction moves

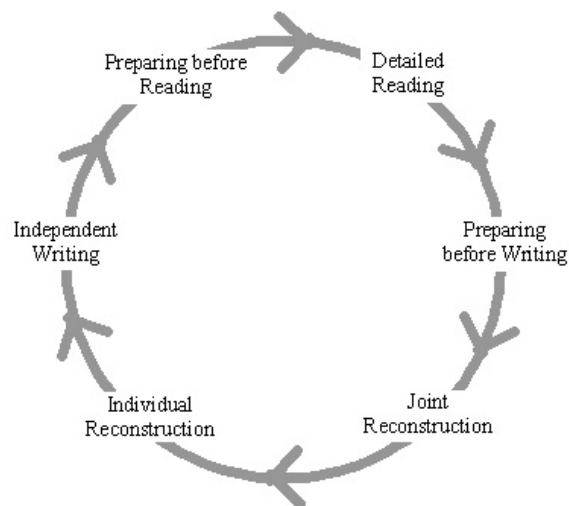
Move	Description
Query	The teacher asks a question without preparing (or students ask question).
Prepare	The teacher provides information to enable successful responses.
Identify	The learners identify elements in the text.
Select	The learners select elements from experience.
Affirm	The teacher affirms student responses (or students concur).
Reject	The teacher rejects the response by negating, ignoring or qualifying it.
Elaborate	Define new terms, explain new concepts or relate to experience (by the teacher or through discussion with students).
Instruct	The teacher directs an activity.

Source: Acevedo & Rose (2007, p.77)

5.3 Implementation of RtL Intervention

All stages of the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach were implemented hierarchically in teaching narrative essays. According to Rose (2020), teaching all RtL tasks in an integrated sequence—progressing from whole texts to paragraphs, then to sentences and words, and back again—effectively manages the complexity of the task. The implementation of RtL occurs in the following manner, shown in Figure 8:

Figure 8: The Reading to Learn cycle



Source: (Rose, 2005, p.147)

Reading to Learn stage 1: Preparing before reading

The initial phase of the Reading to Learn (RtL) cycle focuses on preparation before reading, which is crucial for establishing a foundation for effective reading and writing activities. This preparation allows all learners to understand the text's general meaning as it is read aloud, minimising struggles with unfamiliar word patterns (Acevedo & Rose, 2007). Menco-Haeckermann (2020) affirms that preparing to read ensures all learners are equipped with the necessary knowledge, preventing any from being left behind.

To initiate this process, teachers build contextual knowledge by describing the upcoming text. Engaging learners' background knowledge through leading questions familiarises them with the topic, while introducing key words and phrases enhances comprehension. Summarising the text prior to reading helps learners grasp its content and construct meaning. Mataka et al. (2021) suggest that teachers clarify the contextual meaning of the text, breaking it into smaller,

comprehensible units. Herrazo et al. (2021) further emphasise that this preparation assists learners in understanding the text within its situational and cultural context.

This stage aids all learners in comprehending the text when it is read aloud. Shun and Shi (2017) accentuate that preparation immerses learners in relevant background information, enabling them to engage with more challenging texts. I provided copies of the model narrative essay and a condensed summary before reading it aloud in class, ensuring learners were prepared to comprehend the words.

Preview of the story by the teacher before reading it with the class

For the initial cycle of Reading to Learn (RtL) meetings, the narrative text titled "The Day I Won a Great Competition," sourced from Writing Samurai, was selected as a model due to its creative composition and relevance to learners' interests and experiences. This text illustrates how enhanced learning opportunities and community support can transform learners, which is consistent with the critical paradigm.

The narrative follows a school girl who, initially hesitant, finds the courage to represent her school in a competition. The support she receives enables her to leverage her experiences and seize the opportunity. During this phase, learners were provided with essential background knowledge and a condensed overview of the story's content, helping them understand its context and register. They were introduced to key story components, including exposition, inciting incidents, rising action, crisis, climax, falling action, and denouement, which the teacher structured using familiar vocabulary.

Reading to Learn stage 2: Detailed reading

During this phase, learners are provided with a model text for extensive engagement. The detailed reading process focuses on text attributes, helping learners familiarise themselves with the grammatical features and lexical density, thus preparing them for subsequent reading and writing activities. In the context of narrative writing, this stage introduces learners to the text's generic structure and linguistic characteristics.

As outlined by Kartika-Ningsih (2021), this phase involves reading the text sentence by sentence, highlighting specific wordings, previewing word meanings, and exploring expressions. Menco-Haeckermann (2021) emphasises the teacher's role in guiding learners through this process using purposeful interactions that include responding to text-related questions and identifying keywords.

Detailed reading employs three preparatory cues. Initially, the teacher presents a concise overview of the sentence's meaning and reads it aloud. Next, learners are directed to a positional cue indicating where to find specific wording. Finally, the general meaning is reiterated, prompting learners to locate the wording within the text. This method encourages interaction through structured exchanges: the teacher previews content, reads aloud while learners follow along, and prompts them to identify or highlight words corresponding to the previewed meanings.

Teachers navigate each paragraph while reading aloud, providing scaffolded support by emphasising critical keywords for learners to utilise later. Rose (2008) asserts that defining words, explaining new concepts, and discussing relevant experiences empower students to comprehend passages and understand the author's construction. Similarly, Rose and Martin (2019) highlight the importance of making connections between words and other textual elements, such as illustrations and metaphors. Therefore, intensive reading is essential for enhancing learners' comprehension and expression.

Reading text

The day I won a competition

“Yay! Yippee!” The crowd cheered as I got on the stage to receive the trophy. Some people even took pictures of me on stage. Beaming from ear to ear, I raised the trophy up high with pride. I was quite eager to tell my parents of my good progress... [Exposition]

A week before this happened, I was being selected for a story-telling competition. The teacher informed me, “It is being held next week. Keen to join in?” I nodded, my face glowing with

excitement. My friends were all counting on me to get first prize. I was also excited and determined to know what prizes were. [Inciting incident]

After school, I made a beeline back home. Before my mother could utter a word, I told her about the competition. She spread the news to my father and both of them were delighted. For the whole week, I juggled my studies and rehearsals to prepare for the competition. My parents supported me all the way, and this gave me the energy to continue to rehearse and study for the rest of the week. [Rising action]

In the blink of an eye, it was the day of the competition. I was standing behind the curtain on the stage, with my heart thumping so wildly that I could even hear it throbbing in my ears! Would my friends and teachers be here? At this moment, the curtain opened gradually. I scanned the audience and I spotted my teachers and friends cheering at me at the top of their lungs, “Go! Mary! Go!” [Setting and crisis]

I tried to compose myself by taking deep breaths to put on a courageous front. I read my story out loud and performed some hand gestures, thinking that this would make me stand out from the rest of the contestants. I also paused for suspense and recited faster at the exciting moments. The audience was so enthralled that they applauded thunderously in between my story. So were the judges. When I finished my story, I scampered back to my seat. As I was the last contestant, the judges were deep in their discussions about the winners, right after I had finished. “After much discussion, I would like to congratulate ... Mary for getting first place!” One of the judges announced exuberantly. Was I hearing it wrongly? I was actually the winner! I pinched myself to see if it was real. “Ouch! Oh! It is real!” I chirped gaily. [Climax]

I was breathless! I won! I scurried onto the stage with glee, as I took the trophy from the judge. The crowd went like overzealous football fans as I showed them the trophy. My friends even came up to me and carried me above their heads. I even let them kiss my trophy! Although many people were staring at us, we did not seem to care. We just carried on with all the screaming and

partying. After a lot of clapping, everyone started to leave and go back home. I was worn out too. Without much hesitation, I lumbered back home. [Falling action]

At home, I gazed admiringly at my trophy. Soon, the sky dwindled from orange to dark blue and it was time for me to retire for the day. As I lay on my bed, I recalled all the excitement that happened earlier on. I wished that it would happen again ... and it did ... in my dreamland ... [Denouement]

Exchanges in a classroom interaction

Speakers	Text	Phases
Teacher:	The first sentence starts with an utterance that is used to show extreme happiness. Who can see what that utterance is?	Prepare Focus
Learner: Ivy	Yay yippee	Identify
Teacher:	Very good. Yay yippee is a formal exclamation that is used to express great excitement.	Affirm Elaborate
Teacher:	The sentence also outlines how the crowd reacted after Mary, the winner of the first prize, at the competition was announced. Which word tells us that the crowd praised the narrator for winning the competition?	Prepare Focus
Learner: Thateho	Cheered.	Identify
Teacher:	That is correct. Okay. Let us underline the word 'cheered'.	Affirm Direct

	Cheered means to shout for / to someone for doing something good. Mary was cheered by the audience for winning the first prize in the competition.	Elaborate
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The model essay was introduced through a brief quoted expression, prompting learners to examine the quotation and the initial sentence collectively, which was subsequently summarised. The "wh" cues included "which" for "yay yippee" and "who" for the narrator, while common sense cues such as "praised" were equated with "cheered." To ensure accurate responses, learners received meaning cues, enabling the entire class to identify the word linked to "praised." Engaging Ivy in pronouncing the word through a focused question reinforced the meaning cue, with the response being accurate due to prior contextual definitions established in the preparation phase. Individual engagement fostered active participation among the learners.

The exchange phases of the RtL framework allowed the researcher to scaffold learners' responses, validating and expanding their understanding. Once learners identified the words, deeper comprehension was facilitated through technical definitions, elucidation of new concepts or metaphors, and discussions of relevant experiences (Acevedo & Rose, 2007). This approach enhanced vocabulary by exposing learners to alternative terms.

To clarify expectations, positional and meaning cues for the words were reiterated, enabling learners to determine word positions through sequencing. As the lesson progressed, additional unfamiliar words were extracted from the essay and explored using the same methodology. Learners underlined each selected word, while scribes transcribed them on the board. Following Rose's (2018) approach, the teacher provided a brief preview of the sentence, guided learners as they read along, and prompted them to highlight keywords in alignment with the previewed meaning cues.

I offered examples of contexts for "cheered," such as sports, music, and beauty contests, encouraging learners to propose additional scenarios and identify synonyms. This activity heightened their engagement with the text. Learners were encouraged to connect the words they

encountered with others, facilitating inference (Rose & Martin, 2019). As they suggested alternative words, I elaborated, prompting them to consider vocabulary necessary for their own writing processes.

Exchanges in a classroom interaction

Speakers	Text	Phases
Teacher:	In the next sentence the audience continued to show appreciation towards Mary's achievement. What else did the audience do to express their appreciation?	Prepare Focus
Learner: Thateho	They took Mary pictures.	Identify
Teacher:	Very good. Everyone, can you underline 'people even took pictures.' Mary in turn expressed how happy she was. Can you identify an expression that is similar in meaning to the word happiness?	Affirm Direct Prepare Focus
Learner: Sandiswa	Beaming from ear to ear.	Identify
Teacher:	Beaming from ear to ear. It really is, carry on like this. It means to express happiness in a great way. Mary showed extreme happiness because she defeated everyone in the competition. Underline the expression 'beaming from ear to ear'.	Affirm Elaborate Direct

I employed the elicitation technique to guide and oversee learners' engagement in lesson activities. I assumed a leading role during the preparation phase but relinquished some authority to become a primary participant in the exchange phases, fostering student-centred activities. By assigning additional tasks, I transferred responsibilities to the learners. For instance, one learner demonstrated the audience's enthusiasm when Mary was announced as the winner, while another identified a synonym for happiness. As the researcher-teacher, I dedicated time to explaining the narrator's reactions; ensuring learners comprehended the text, responded appropriately, and expanded their knowledge.

The teacher and learners reached a consensus on how admiration was conveyed. Learners' responses were affirmed through repetition, a vital learning facet that deepened comprehension, enhanced focus, and supported retention. This repetition also assisted the learner transcribing the text on the board. According to Vygotsky (1978), the repetition of learning experiences enables learners to covertly plan their activities.

Furthermore, the teacher's evaluative language stimulated and heightened engagement levels in classroom activities. This aligns with Rose's (2014) assertion that elaborative phases built upon learners' responses by offering comprehensive, technical, or abstract knowledge while connecting to their common-sense understanding. This perspective supports the socio-cultural learning theory, emphasising the relationship between learning and social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978).

Exchanges in a classroom interaction

Speakers	Text	Phases
Teacher:	Looking at the first line in paragraph two, Mary was selected for a story telling competition. I will read what the teacher said: "It is being held next week. Keen to join in?"	Prepare

	The teacher asked Mary if she would be interested in going to the competition. Can you describe how she felt?	Focus
Learner: Mbali	Her face was glowing with excitement.	Identify
Teacher:	Good. Let us underline glowing with excitement. What were her friends hoping for from the competition?	Affirm Direct Focus
Learner: Ntsoaki	Winning the first prize.	Identify
Teacher:	Good. Winning the first prize. They were hoping that Mary would walk away with the top award. Identify a phrase which shows that the narrator was looking forward to winning the first prize.	Affirm Elaborate Focus
Learner: Gumede	Excited and determined.	Identify
Teacher:	Well put. Mary showed that she was looking forward to winning the prize because she was happy and eager to know which prizes would be given to the winners. How would you feel if you were announced as the winner?	Affirm Elaborate Focus
Learners:	Happy / satisfied / proud	Identify
Teacher:	Happy / satisfied / proud. Good answers.	Affirm

	Winning a competition for your school would fill you with good and happy memories. It would make you feel proud and your school would be well-known.	Elaborate
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The lesson excerpt illustrates how the teacher effectively managed the progression of the lesson by maintaining a structured speaking order among learners. Each learner was assigned to respond during the exchange process, ensuring that each preparatory phase focused on different learners, who were subsequently asked to verify and affirm one another's responses. Initially, learners engaged in detailed reading after receiving necessary preparation to tackle the task, which was clearly outlined. Following this, a question was posed, and their responses were elaborated upon. During this elaboration phase, I reiterated learners' answers to stimulate further contributions, aligning with Menco-Haackermann's (2021) view that teachers reinforce learned concepts by providing additional explanations.

Scaffolding techniques were employed to meet instructional objectives, address individual learner needs, and foster a constructivist learning environment. Learners were encouraged to express how the main character felt upon learning about the competition, prompting them to envision various scenarios. They received support to deconstruct the model text and effectively complete their tasks. Probing was pivotal in extracting responses, aiding learners in achieving deeper comprehension. Huang et al. (2019) assert that adaptable learning activities provide diverse scaffolding opportunities, equipping learners of varying abilities with necessary skills for specific tasks. Furthermore, Lestari et al. (2022) highlight that step-by-step summaries, reading exchanges, emphasis on key wording, chunking, and targeted questioning enhance comprehension at all levels.

Utilising learning moves phases, the teacher engaged learners in lesson activities. I played the role of the more knowledgeable other, guiding learners in developing reading skills. After the teacher's prompts, learners were asked to locate various words in the text, a strategy aimed at vocabulary development. Attention was given to pronunciation and spelling as learners mentioned the words. I instructed learners on syllables, explaining that 'glowing' consists of two syllables, with the stress on the first: glow/ing. Another example, 'excitement,' was broken into three syllables:

ex/cite/ment, stressing the second syllable. ‘Determined’ was divided into three syllables: de/ter/mined, with stress on the second syllable. The number of characters in ‘determined’ was identified, as well as in ‘satisfied,’ which has three syllables: sat/is/fied, stressing the first syllable.

Exchanges in a classroom interaction

Speakers	Text	Phases
Teacher:	Let us now shift our attention to paragraph three and I will read the first three sentences. “After school, I made a beeline back home. Before my mother could utter a word, I told her about the competition. She spread the news to my father and both of them were delighted.” What does “I made a beeline home” mean?	Prepare Read Focus
Learner: Ivy	She rushed home straightaway.	Identify
Teacher:	It is so. She had to tell her parents about her selection. Okay. Who was the first person to know about her selection for the competition and how did her parents feel?	Affirm Prepare Focus
Learner: Mlungisi	Her mother. They were both delighted.	Identify
Teacher:	Wonderful. Both parents were excited to hear that their daughter was going take part in the competition.	Affirm Elaborate

	Alright. We have also read that Mary prepared herself for the competition and her parents had shown support to her.	Prepare
	Now, can you show how she prepared for the competition?	Focus
Learner: Thateho	She juggled her studies and rehearsals.	Identify
Teacher:	Good answer.	Affirm
	Mary allocated enough time to her studies and she would drill her presentation skills.	Elaborate
	Can we all underline how she prepared herself?	Direct

In the vignette, the teacher employs the elicitation technique, guiding learners through the 'prepare-task-elaborate' cycle that facilitates the transition from reading to writing. Learners are presented with explicit questions designed to extract specific details from the text. This approach is introduced gradually through guided tasks, focusing on essential content. As learners identify answers, the teacher elucidates the various sentence patterns used. Frames such as 'now,' 'alright,' and 'okay' signal shifts to the next phase of the lesson, while interpersonal elements like 'can we all,' 'can you show,' and 'let us now shift our attention' regulate interactions and engage learners in the activity. These phrases aim to diminish the authority gap, fostering a sense of partnership in co-constructing knowledge, in line with the critical paradigm. Additionally, 'wh' questions ensure that learners read with comprehension.

Through interaction with knowledgeable individuals, learners establish communication relationships. As discussed by Rose (2014), classroom discourse shapes pedagogic relationships during interactions between teachers and learners. Learners' roles are demonstrated through commands, directions, and questions from the teacher. This unequal status facilitates a progressive approach to nurturing cognitive development and closely monitoring learners' progress, enabling appropriate intervention strategies to address their educational needs. Built on a consistent exchange between teacher and learner, the prepare-task-elaborate cycle ensures alignment between

teaching, assessment methods, and the achievement of learning objectives. This cycle also allows for continuous evaluation of learners' responses after each question. Supporting this, Bernstein (2000) asserts that continuous evaluation is pivotal in pedagogic practice, encapsulating the essence of the entire approach. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that the reading and writing process constitutes a social practice that harmonises relationships.

Exchanges in a classroom interaction

Speakers	Text	Phases
Teacher:	Let us read how the narrator of the story reacted when she was about to read her story. How did Mary feel when she was about to read her story?	Direct Focus
Learners: Thope Selina	Her heart was thumping so wildly that she could even hear it throbbing in her ears. She wondered whether her friends and teachers were there.	Identify
Teacher:	Very good answers. Okay, but what was the conflict or problem here?	Affirm Focus
Learner: Reneiloe	Reading the story in front of the audience while she could not notice her friends and teachers.	Identify
Teacher:	That is right. You are getting better every day. You should include a conflict in a narrative composition to create suspense, keep the reader engaged and drive your story forward. Okay. What would have happened if she saw her teachers and friends earlier?	Affirm Elaboration Focus
Learner: Mlungisi	Mary would have not experienced stage fright.	Identify

Teacher:	That is correct. What exactly did she need from them?	Affirm Focus
Learner: Mbali	Their support.	Identify
Teacher:	That is the best answer. Why was it necessary for her to be composed?	Affirm Focus
Learner: Likano	To read the story well.	Identify
Teacher:	You are correct. She had to show no signs of panicking so that she could do her level best. Mary displayed certain qualities which made her to read her story well. Can you mention some of those qualities?	Affirm Elaboration Prepare Focus
Learners:	She is brave. Mary is confident.	Identify
Teacher:	Very well put. She is courageous. Mary is not only passionate about what she is doing but she is also inspirational. When people give you support you can go all the way. Mary read the story confidently and passionately because of that. Taking turns, write the answers on the board.	Affirm Elaboration Direct

During this exchange, learners focused on paragraph 5, lines 3-6, to understand crafting conflict, a fundamental element of narrative writing. The teacher highlighted the importance of

incorporating conflict in their essays and prompted them to articulate how the narrator resolved her challenges. Learners used impactful vocabulary, crucial for acquiring a second language, and engaged in vocabulary exercises in preparation for the individual rewriting stage, which requires demonstrating semantic understanding.

Inferential questions guided learners to address inquiries extending beyond their current competency level, aligning with Vygotsky's social constructivism (1978). Sentences were organised into manageable segments during the preparation phase to avoid cognitive overload, making the text more accessible and facilitating meaningful responses. As noted by Lestari et al. (2022), processing the text using the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach requires learners to navigate both lower-level and higher-level cognitive processes, including literal, inferential, and interpretive understanding.

Exchanges in a classroom interaction

Speakers	Text	Phases
Teacher:	Now, let us read the climax of the story, that is, paragraph 5 line 9-12.	Direct
Learners:	“After much discussion, I would like to congratulate ... Mary for getting the first place!” One of the judges announced exuberantly. Was I hearing it wrongly? I was actually the winner! I pinched myself to see if it was real. “Ouch! Oh! It is real!” I chirped gaily.	Read
Teacher:	Why is it important to quote the actual words of the speaker?	Focus
Learners: Gumedede	To make the story believable.	Identify
Thateho	It makes one's story lively.	
Anita	It brings creativity to the story.	

Teacher:	<p>These are very good answers. Let us give them a round of applause.</p> <p>What effect do ellipses create in narrative writing?</p>	<p>Affirm</p> <p>Focus</p>
Learner: Mlungisi	They keep readers guessing.	Identify
Teacher:	<p>That is a very good observation.</p> <p>Ellipses are useful because they leave the reader in suspense and show how one feels.</p> <p>From what you have just read, what effect is created by ‘exuberantly,’ which for example, would not be achieved by ‘happily’?</p>	<p>Affirm</p> <p>Elaborate</p> <p>Focus</p>
Learner: Thateho	Exuberantly shows that the judge was too excited.	Identify
Teacher:	<p>That is great.</p> <p>Right! Let us move on. The narrator asked herself if it was true that she was the winner and this is called internal monologue or inner voice.</p> <p>Why is it important to have internal monologue?</p>	<p>Affirm</p> <p>Prepare</p> <p>Focus</p>
Learner: Mothabi	Internal monologue allows the narrator to express his/her thoughts.	Identify

Teacher:	<p>Excellent.</p> <p>It helps readers to have a better understanding of how the character feels, making it easy to connect with the rest of the story.</p> <p>Why did the narrator use interjections and exclamation marks?</p>	<p>Affirm</p> <p>Elaborate</p> <p>Focus</p>
Learner: Ivy	To express her emotion.	Identify
Teacher:	<p>Good thinking. Keep up the good work. Correct use of punctuation will enliven your piece of writing and earn you good marks.</p> <p>Now using your own words and following the same sentence structure write the climax of the story on the chalkboard.</p>	<p>Affirm</p> <p>Direct</p>

The provided vignette sheds light on how learners were guided in the process of writing coherently and cohesively, employing a range of sentence structures and punctuation marks. To stimulate diverse correct responses, interpretive questions were employed concerning punctuation marks. Using evidence from the paragraph, learners were tasked with explaining the significance of employing ellipses, direct quotes, and exclamation marks, with subsequent elaboration on their answers. Comprehensive guidance was offered to learners on cultivating intricate and varied sentence structures through the application of diverse punctuation marks.

As outlined by Rose & Martin (2019), at the interpretive level of the text, learners are required to forge connections between the text's elements and their own experiences, attitudes, or knowledge of the subject matter. Additionally, Rose (2006) suggests that a narrative text can be segmented into phases, encompassing setting, descriptive events, effects, reactions, problems, solutions,

comments, and reflections. Building upon Rose's perspective, the following text is categorised into distinct phases to facilitate learners' comprehension of the generic structure.

The day I won a competition

Setting (presenting context: identities, activities, locations)

I was standing behind the curtain on the stage. I scanned the audience and I spotted my teachers and friends cheering at me at the top of their lungs, "Go! Mary! Go!" At home, I gazed admiringly at my trophy.

Description (evoking context: sensual imagery)

I nodded, my face glowing with excitement. "After much discussion, I would like to congratulate ... Mary for getting first place!" One of the judges announced exuberantly.

Events (succeeding events)

The crowd went like overzealous football fans as I showed them the trophy. My friends even came up to me and carried me above their heads. We just carried on with all the screaming and partying.

Effect (material outcome)

I scurried onto the stage with glee, as I took the trophy from the judge. Beaming from ear to ear, I raised the trophy up high with pride.

Reaction (behavioural / attitudinal outcome)

"Yay! Yippee!" The crowd cheered as I got on the stage to receive the trophy. For the whole week, I juggled my studies and rehearsals to prepare for the competition.

The audience was so enthralled that they applauded thunderously in between my story. I pinched myself to see if it was real. “Ouch! Oh! It is real!” I chirped gaily.

As I lay on my bed, I recalled all the excitement that happened earlier on. I wished that it would happen again ... and it did ... in my dreamland.

Problem (counter expectant creating tension)

In the blink of an eye, it was the day of the competition. My heart thumping so wildly that I could even hear it throbbing in my ears! Would my friends and teachers be here?

Solution (counter expectant releasing tension)

I tried to compose myself by taking deep breaths to put on a courageous front. I read my story out loud and performed some hand gestures, thinking that this would make me stand out from the rest of the contestants. I also paused for suspense and recited faster at the exciting moments.

Reading to Learn stage 3: Preparing before writing

The preparatory stages of pre-writing and detailed reading play a crucial role in fostering learners' independent writing. During detailed reading, learners analyse texts, which helps them understand the genre's structure and content, preparing them for rewriting. Rose (2007) demonstrates that this stage allows learners to brainstorm new content using the same language patterns from the text they studied. Sentence preparation not only aids comprehension but also encourages learners to visualise new texts as they construct sentences.

To prepare learners for sentence construction, I transcribed the key words from the text onto cardboard strips, instructing them to disassemble and reassemble the sentences. This method mirrors Rose's (2017) approach, which advocates transcribing important sentences onto strips for learners to deconstruct, enhancing their word recognition and sequencing skills.

As the lesson advanced, the integration of literacy skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—became apparent. While one learner wrote on the board, others read aloud and engaged in spoken communication. Classroom interaction was largely learner-driven, with minimal teacher intervention. Menco-Haeckermann (2021) supports this, highlighting that as learners copy the content written on the board into their notebooks, they engage in writing and handwriting improvement. Rose (2007) further suggests segmenting sentences into word groups, which helps both teachers and learners identify clause boundaries within complex sentences. Thus, dividing the text into word groups and marking boundaries aids in better understanding of sentence structure.

Sentence rewriting using the similar pattern

The audience praised her /as she ascended the stage to be presented with an award.
 Grinning/Smiling broadly, /she lifted her accolade in appreciation.
 The teacher apprised her, “It will take place in the coming week. Are you interested?”
 She agreed, /her face gleaming with contentment.
 Her associates tipped her / to walk away with top award.
 She was happy and eager / to know which accolades were on offer.
 After school, she headed home straightaway / was home-bound.
 Before her mother could say anything, / she briefed her about the contest.
 Barely did her parents give her the much-needed support when she exerted herself in her studies and held practice sessions to be ready for the contest.
 In a flash her heart palpitated fiercely / that she could hear its regular beats.
 Would there be people rallying behind her?
 No sooner did she hear her friends and teachers shouting on top of their voices / than she plucked up her courage / regained her confidence.
 She read her story audibly and used bodily movements / with the hope that she would stand head and shoulders above the rest.
 The audience was so enchanted / that they gave her a resounding round of applause.

“Following the adjudication, it is my profound gratitude to heap my praise on ... for scooping the top award! The adjudicator disclosed deliriously.
To her surprise and amazement, she was announced as the winner.
The crowd reacted like passionate/ardent football lovers when she raised the trophy with pride.
With great exultation, her friends gave her an ovation and lifted her.
They embraced the trophy by kissing it.
Screaming explosively, they continued to celebrate.
After a warm round of applause, all and sundry headed home.
So exhausted was she that without any delay she left for home.
At home, she looked at the trophy affectionately / could not keep her eyes off the prize.
As she rested, she remembered the exciting memories.
She was hoping for another competition.

Reading to Learn stage 4: Joint construction

In the joint construction phase, the teacher engages learners in note-taking, negotiation, and text review. As Rose (2014) explains, the teacher transcribes key content as notes on the board, guiding the class in constructing the text based on these notes. This process helps learners understand the structure and language features of the genre before they attempt individual writing. The teacher’s role includes supporting learners as they reconstruct the text using the notes.

Model texts foster social interactions in the classroom, aiding both joint and individual writing. Kartika-Ningsih (2020) highlights that joint-construction is ideally followed by individual writing, where learners apply the same task with teacher guidance and feedback. Beccera et al. (2019) add that one strategy in joint writing involves using highlighted words or phrases from detailed reading as notes for crafting the text collectively. Thus, joint construction enhances learners' writing skills through collaborative efforts.

Joint construction encourages group collaboration and idea-sharing. Learners actively participated by suggesting sentences, words, and expressions relevant to the text, taking turns to write these on

the board. My role involved demonstrating how to structure sentences with appropriate grammar. Unlike earlier stages, learners assumed a more proactive role, receiving minimal assistance as they began crafting their own accounts. This approach prepared them for independent writing, with struggling learners guided to follow model sentences discussed in class. Acevedo and Rose (2007) note that in joint construction, teachers gradually reduce their input, allowing learners to create their own writing through whole-class collaboration.

Expanding on joint construction, Acevedo and Rose (2007) argue that while the subject matter may differ, the mode and tone remain consistent, providing a scaffold for learners to grasp sophisticated language. Building on this, learners were assigned a new topic—writing a story about a memorable family experience. I guided them in creating new characters, settings, and events, ensuring alignment with the new topic.

Reading to Learn stage 5: Individual reconstruction

The individual rewriting stage offers learners further preparation before independent tasks. Learners practise by rewriting the jointly constructed text, using both the original reading text and the jointly rewritten version as models, following similar language patterns. As Listyani (2018) point out, learners apply the text patterns or notes from class to create their own texts.

At this stage, the teacher focuses on supporting learners who require additional assistance. According to Acevedo and Rose (2007), more advanced learners can work independently, allowing the teacher to provide scaffolding for those who need it. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) view that scaffolding decreases as learners gain independence. However, when necessary, I increased my involvement to support struggling learners.

Learners were tasked with composing sentences using highlighted language features, either independently or with teacher guidance. They were also encouraged to introduce new words and ideas as they rewrote their texts. After being given a topic, learners drafted, revised, and submitted individual narrative essays, receiving feedback on their work.

To facilitate individual reconstruction, a combination of product, process, and genre-based approaches was used. The product approach focused on writing coherent, error-free texts, the process approach involved drafting and revising, and the genre-based approach emphasised context, exemplary texts, and purpose. This blend compensated for any limitations in each method.

Reading to Learn stage 6: Independent construction

This marked the final stage of the RtL cycle. Confident in the learners' readiness to write independently, I administered a narrative essay post-test, assessed using a rubric adapted from Rose (2009). The test aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the RtL pedagogy. Yulianeta et al. (2022) stress the importance of learners constructing new texts after mastering writing processes. Similarly, Menco-Haeckermann (2021) notes learners' growing confidence in applying language patterns. The test results showed improvement, and the same RtL process was followed in subsequent cycles.

5.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an in-depth examination of how the RtL intervention enhances learners' proficiency in reading and writing narrative texts. It commenced by outlining the theoretical foundations of the RtL literacy pedagogy, followed by an exploration of the scaffolding learning cycle and the various interactive strategies employed in teaching and learning. The chapter then illustrated the implementation of the RtL pedagogy to integrate reading and writing through the use of a model text within the context of classroom action research. The forthcoming chapter will offer a comprehensive account of the data generation, analysis, and interpretation processes in addressing the research questions.

CHAPTER SIX: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed how the RtL intervention was implemented. It discussed theories underpinning RtL and how different scaffolding techniques were applied to teach the learners. This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of generated data in relation to the RtL pedagogy intervention. The data generated on each of the instruments identified was subjected to convergent mixed-methods design which included various forms of quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

Quantitative data were gathered through closed-ended responses in the questionnaire, with analysis conducted using SPSS v.20. Qualitative data were collected from learners' written texts, classroom observations, focus group discussions, a semi-structured interview with the teacher, and documentary analysis. The interviews helped confirm and interpret the findings from classroom observations, test feedback, and questionnaires. The research findings are presented according to the themes and categories emerging from the data, providing an authentic reflection of participants' responses and deepening understanding of the study.

The findings are discussed in relation to the literature and theories outlined in Chapter Two. The research followed four cycles of action research—planning, action, observation, and reflection. Consistent behaviours were observed across the cycles, and learners responded to similar focus group questions stemming from the quantitative data. The teacher's input was collected through a semi-structured interview in the final cycle. The quantitative and qualitative findings are presented separately and then integrated to verify and address the research questions.

6.1.1 Research questions

6.1.1.1 Main research question

To what extent does RtL pedagogy contribute to the development of learners' narrative writing ability?

6.1.1.2 Sub-research questions

- What effect does RtL pedagogy have in advancing learners ability to compose narrative texts?
- How does RtL help learners present their ideas and experiences creatively in narrative writing?
- Why does the implementation of RtL affect learners' approach to narrative writing the way it does?

6.2 T-test pairs: pre-test and post-test scores

Pre-test and post-test were sequentially employed to investigate the difference between learners' performance before and after the implementation of RtL. The test scores were analysed using the SPSS v.20, specifically paired sample t-test, which seeks to establish the difference between scores before and after the implementation of the intervention. The tests were administered to a group of 35 learners as depicted in the following tables.

Table 2: Paired samples statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Pre-test scores	19.2857	35	2.82397	.47734
Post-test scores	33.1143	35	1.82743	.30889

Drawing from the table above, the pre-test and post-test means are 19.29 and 33.11 respectively, rounded to two decimal places. Furthermore, there is an increase of 13.83 in the mean pre-test scores following the implementation of RtL, indicating that the RtL pedagogy has positively impacted learners' narrative essay writing performance. The standard deviation is high in the pre-test, suggesting a significant disparity in learners' achievements. However, after the intervention, the standard deviation decreased, indicating that learners' scores are now clustered around the

mean, with most learners performing at a similar level.

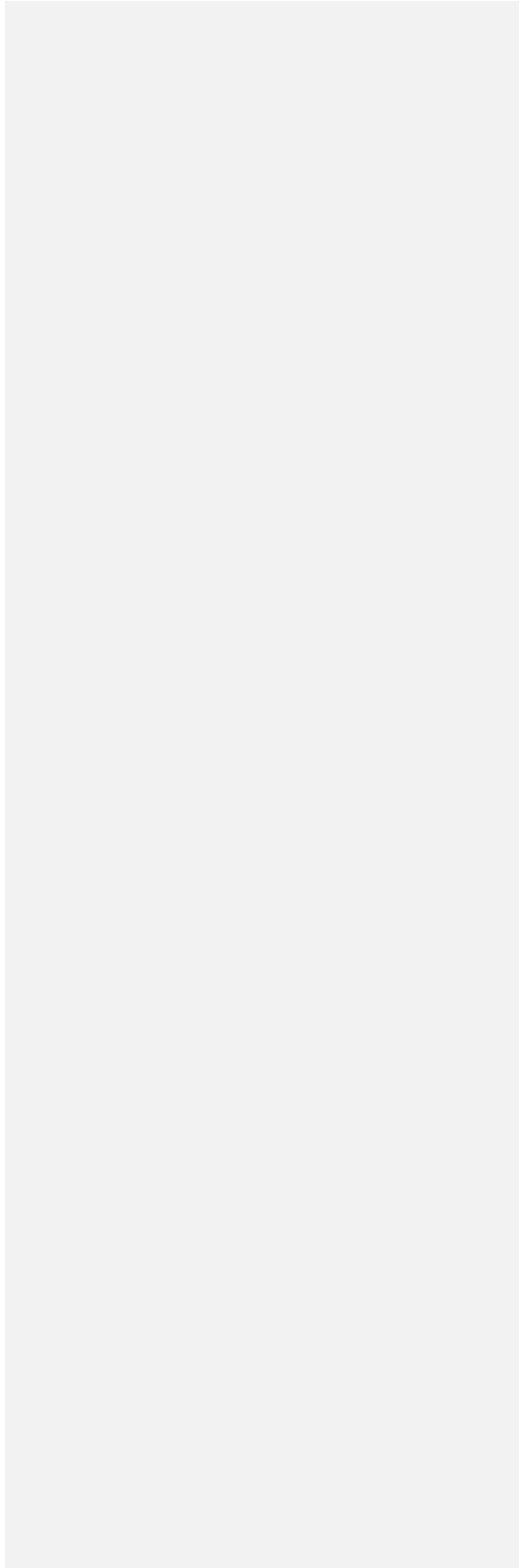


Table 3: Paired samples test

	Paired Differences			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
				Lower
Pair 1 Pre-test scores Post-test scores	-13.82857	3.22204	.54462	-14.93538

The table above shows a 13.83 difference between pre-test and post-test, that is, before and after implementing RtL intervention. This shows that RtL positively affected learners' narrative writing skills.

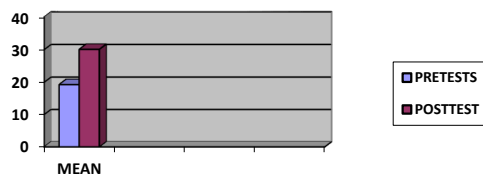
Table 4: Paired samples test

	Paired Differences	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
	Upper			
Pair 1 Pre-test scores Post-test scores	-12.72176	-25.391	34	.000

As depicted in the table above, with a focus on the t-value, degrees of freedom, and significance value (p-value), there is a significant difference between the learners' pre-test and post-test scores, as the p-value is 0.000, well below the 0.05 benchmark. This difference is attributed to the 13.83 increase in the mean pre-test scores following the implementation of RtL. The bar chart below

further illustrates that the learners' post-test scores were markedly higher than their pre-test scores. Therefore, this study concludes that the RtL pedagogy has a significant positive impact on learners' narrative essay writing performance, as evidenced by the increase from a pre-test mean of 19.29 to a post-test mean of 33.11.

Figure 9: Pre-test and post-test results



6.3 Learners' performance in pre-test and post-test

This section presents the learners' narrative essay performance both pre- and post-intervention. The pre-test and post-test were evaluated using the RtL criteria, which assess context, discourse, and graphic features, with various aspects under each category. The total score was 42, with each aspect scored on a scale of 0 to 3. Writing samples were purposively selected from four high-achieving, three intermediate, and three low-achieving learners, based on their post-intervention writing performance. This selection aimed to determine whether the gap in writing achievement had narrowed following their exposure to the intervention. The learners' essays are included as appendices.

Table 5: Learner 1: Mothabi - low achiever

Assessment Scale	Descriptor	Pre-test score	Post-test score
Context	Quick judgements about these context criteria.		
Purpose	Is the purpose appropriate and well-developed for the genre?	1	2

Staging	Does it go through appropriate and well-developed stages?	1	2
Phases	How well organised is the sequence of phases in the text?	1	2
Field	Does the writer construct the plot, settings and characters well?	1	3
Tenor	How well does the writer engage the reader in the story?	1	2
Mode	How highly written is the language for the school stage?	1	2
Discourse	Discourse criteria are marked in the text, to give an accurate picture.		
Ideation	How well is lexis used to construct the field?	2	2
Appraisal	How well is appraisal used to engage, persuade or evaluate?	1	3
Conjunction	Is there a clear logical relation between all sentences?	1	2
Reference	Is it clear who or what is referred to in each sentence?	2	3
Grammar	Are grammatical conventions used appropriately?	1	2
Graphics	What is your first impression of these features?		
Spelling	How accurately spelt are the core words and non-core words?	1	2
Punctuation	How appropriately and accurately is punctuation used?	0	2
Presentation	Are there paragraphs, legible writing and clear layout?	1	2
Totals		15/42	31/42

Pre-intervention essay

Mothabi's pre-intervention essay demonstrated a limited understanding of genre-based writing, struggling to contextualise the topic. Halliday (1995) illustrated that texts are systematically related to the contexts in which individuals acquire language and literary practices. However, Mothabi's essay lacked ideational depth, evident in the absence of synonyms to convey emotions such as excitement or sadness, or to enhance the text's impact. This contrasts with Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) assertion that learners use language to create meaning structured within situational contexts. The essay also suffered from limited use of conjunctions, resulting in a lack

of coherence and sentence variety. Furthermore, there was an absence of vivid appraisals to provide descriptions or character development, while persistent grammatical errors hindered the effective presentation of ideas.

Post-intervention essay

Mothabi's post-intervention essay showed marked improvement. The introduction was engaging and closely aligned with the topic. Fitriati et al. (2018) suggest that learners must grasp narrative structures, vocabulary, and sentence features to achieve an entertaining narrative style. Teaching vocabulary and the use of synonyms enhanced Mothabi's ability to present his ideas more creatively. The essay displayed improved conjunction usage, following Halliday's (1996) categorisation of conjunctions (for example, temporal, additive, adversative), which improved coherence. Appraisals were also effectively used to make judgements and create emotional impact. Mothabi's vocabulary use, including synonyms and idioms, significantly improved, aligning with Shum and Shi's (2017) findings on vocabulary's role in enhancing emotional depth. The essay followed well-sequenced stages, providing the reader with clear expectations, a finding supported by Mammac and Bangga (2023). Furthermore, grammatical errors were minimal, reflecting Suryati et al.'s (2021) observation that learners improve their grammatical skills after explicit teacher guidance.

Table 6: Learner 2: Ntsoaki - intermediate achiever

Assessment Scale	Descriptor	Pre-test score	Post-test score
Context	Quick judgements about these context criteria.		
Purpose	Is the purpose appropriate and well-developed for the genre?	1	3
Staging	Does it go through appropriate and well-developed stages?	2	2
Phases	How well organised is the sequence of phases in the text?	1	3
Field	Does the writer construct the plot, settings and characters well?	2	2

Tenor	How well does the writer engage the reader in the story?	2	3
Mode	How highly written is the language for the school stage?	1	2
Discourse	Discourse criteria are marked in the text, to give an accurate picture.		
Ideation	How well is lexis used to construct the field?	2	3
Appraisal	How well is appraisal used to engage, persuade or evaluate?	1	3
Conjunction	Is there a clear logical relation between all sentences?	1	2
Reference	Is it clear who or what is referred to in each sentence?	2	3
Grammar	Are grammatical conventions used appropriately?	1	2
Graphics	What is your first impression of these features?		
Spelling	How accurately spelt are the core words and non-core words?	2	2
Punctuation	How appropriately and accurately is punctuation used?	1	2
Presentation	Are there paragraphs, legible writing and clear layout?	2	3
Totals		21/42	35/42

Pre-intervention essay

The analysis of the learner's essay reveals a lack of amplified purpose, field, and structural stages, resulting in a low score. Similar findings were reported by Mamac and Bangga (2023), indicating a limited understanding of the contextual and co-textual features of the genre. It became evident that the learner required instruction in genre-based pedagogy to fulfil the social purpose of narrative essays. An (2021) supports this notion, asserting that learners should acquire skills to build the narrative mood, thereby evoking emotions and reactions from readers. The learner demonstrated insufficient exposure to conjunctions, which are essential for achieving generic coherence, and lacked sufficient appraisals to describe events engagingly. Additionally, prevalent errors in tense detracted the essay's flow. The learner's disregard for customary punctuation conventions resulted in confusion regarding meaning. Insufficient use of conjunctions hindered

the expression of relationships between different sentence parts, and a lack of grammatical command limited clarity, causing further confusion.

Post-intervention essay

Following the intervention, Ntsoaki exhibited significant improvement in her writing performance. The learner successfully conveyed the social purpose of narrative writing, reflecting an increase in the use of appraisals due to the implementation of genre-based pedagogy, which emphasises context-specific language. Rose and Martin (2012) suggest that genre-based pedagogy facilitates meaning negotiation through crucial steps such as deconstruction, shared construction, and individual construction. Notably, Ntsoaki demonstrated considerable improvement in spelling post-intervention. Accurate spelling is vital for expressing ideas clearly within an understandable framework (Altamimi & Rashid, 2019). The learner exhibited competence and confidence in spelling, eliminating previous confusions with consonants, homophones, and errors such as omitting letters and inconsistently doubling or singling consonants. This improvement resulted from repeated phonics and pronunciation exercises, where the learner practised articulating words into their constituent sounds while mimicking the teacher's intonation.

Feedback revealed that Ntsoaki employed punctuation effectively. She correctly placed full stops at the end of sentences and used commas to connect words and phrases, thus enhancing cohesion. The learner's scores increased due to the proper use of language to articulate the setting, theme, characters, problems, and solutions within her narrative. Suryati et al. (2021) observed similar improvements in generic structure among learners after explicit teacher discussions. The increased marks across different phases indicate that the learner organised her text logically following the RtL intervention. Additionally, the post-test scores confirm that Ntsoaki effectively utilised conjunctions. These include causal, adversative, copulative, and contrastive semantic links, which help form coherent intrasentential and intersentential units (Mora et al., 2021). The learner's pre-test indicated inadequate use of conjunctions; however, she effectively combined words, phrases, and clauses in the post-test to enhance coherence and cohesion. This finding aligns with Shum and Shi's (2017) research, which noted that logical connections throughout the text were reinforced by conjunctions indicating temporal, causal, and adversative relationships. Overall, the RtL approach

significantly enhanced the learner's use of conjunctions, contributing to clearer communication and the effective expression of events and emotions through correct grammatical patterns.

Table 7: Learner 3: Gumede - low achiever

Assessment Scale	Descriptor	Pre-test score	Post-test score
Context	Quick judgements about these context criteria.		
Purpose	Is the purpose appropriate and well-developed for the genre?	1	2
Staging	Does it go through appropriate and well-developed stages?	1	2
Phases	How well organised is the sequence of phases in the text?	1	2
Field	Does the writer construct the plot, settings and characters well?	1	2
Tenor	How well does the writer engage the reader in the story?	1	3
Mode	How highly written is the language for the school stage?	0	2
Discourse	Discourse criteria are marked in the text, to give an accurate picture.		
Ideation	How well is lexis used to construct the field?	1	3
Appraisal	How well is appraisal used to engage, persuade or evaluate?	1	3
Conjunction	Is there a clear logical relation between all sentences?	1	2
Reference	Is it clear who or what is referred to in each sentence?	2	3
Grammar	Are grammatical conventions used appropriately?	1	2
Graphics	What is your first impression of these features?		
Spelling	How accurately spelt are the core words and non-core words?	1	2
Punctuation	How appropriately and accurately is punctuation used?	1	2
Presentation	Are there paragraphs, legible writing and clear layout?	1	2

Totals	16/42	32/42
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Pre-intervention essay

Gumede partially employed the schematic structure of a narrative text, which hindered his ability to include phases and establish the field effectively. The absence of a clear plot limited the story's direction, resulting in a lack of engagement due to insufficient detail addressing who, when, where, what, why, and how. Additionally, the presentation of the essay suffered because of inconsistencies in following narrative writing schematic structure. The ideation aspect was weak, as the learner relied on abstract and limited concrete descriptions, leading to insufficient elaboration on key points. References to characters were used sparingly, and the learner consistently misspelled even simple words, struggling particularly with silent letters.

Post-intervention essay

Feedback from the post-test indicated that Gumede had significantly improved in the essential stages of narrative writing: orientation, complication, evaluation, and resolution. Labelling story elements in model texts appears to have contributed to his enhanced performance. Furthermore, the sustained purpose and appraisals evident in the essay can be attributed to the use of an exemplar text relevant to the learner's experiences and preferences. This teaching approach fosters the development of content knowledge and promotes retention and appropriate use. Jubhari et al. (2022) assert that "meaningful learning can happen when the learners are engaged or integrate their life context into their lessons in school" (p.55).

Gumede's composition was presented in clear paragraphs, demonstrating neat and legible handwriting. It is evident that the stages of sentence-making and joint construction have significantly contributed to the learner's progress. In terms of ideation, he employed relevant lexis to construct the field, avoiding repetition and effectively expressing characters' feelings. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) argue that using the SFL approach teaches learners to utilise appropriate lexico-grammar to produce written texts that accurately reflect their experiences.

The script also showed improvement in the use of references. The RtL methodology enabled Gumede to use demonstratives, comparatives, definite articles, and pronouns effectively when referring to characters. Notably, reference cohesion improved as events were presented in chronological order. Halliday and Hassan (1976) identify three types of reference: personal, demonstrative, and comparative. For a text to achieve reference cohesion, effective classification of characters, locations, and comparisons must occur. The repeated activities of the RtL approach facilitated learner engagement and reduced achievement gaps, enabling students to write independently. The post-test scores demonstrate that Gumede successfully internalised the field, tenor, and mode; all essential for constructing a text and achieving communicative purpose.

Table 8: Learner 4: Sandiswa - intermediate achiever

Assessment Scale	Descriptor	Pre-test score	Post-test score
Context	Quick judgements about these context criteria.		
Purpose	Is the purpose appropriate and well-developed for the genre?	1	3
Staging	Does it go through appropriate and well-developed stages?	2	3
Phases	How well organised is the sequence of phases in the text?	1	3
Field	Does the writer construct the plot, settings and characters well?	1	3
Tenor	How well does the writer engage the reader in the story?	1	2
Mode	How highly written is the language for the school stage?	1	2
Discourse	Discourse criteria are marked in the text, to give an accurate picture.		
Ideation	How well is lexis used to construct the field?	1	3
Appraisal	How well is appraisal used to engage, persuade or evaluate?	1	2
Conjunction	Is there a clear logical relation between all sentences?	1	3
Reference	Is it clear who or what is referred to in each sentence?	2	2

Grammar	Are grammatical conventions used appropriately?	2	2
Graphics	What is your first impression of these features?		
Spelling	How accurately spelt are the core words and non-core words?	2	3
Punctuation	How appropriately and accurately is punctuation used?	1	2
Presentation	Are there paragraphs, legible writing and clear layout?	2	3
Totals		19/42	36/42

Pre-intervention essay

Feedback indicated that the learner faced some challenges in meeting the requirements of the various descriptors. The narrative's events modestly progressed in chronological order, helping the reader to follow the plot and understand the roles of the characters. Similar findings were reported by Mamac and Bangga (2023), who identified several major issues within the text, particularly concerning an inappropriate genre, unclear stages and phases, difficulties in managing evaluative meanings, and illogical transitions in the pre-RtL intervention text. Furthermore, the learner fairly maintained a clear layout, often writing balanced paragraphs that conflated the beginning, middle, and end of the story. The sentences were quite grammatically accurate, including the correct use of adverbs and adjectives. Additionally, Sandiswa had minimally used conjunctions, which could have led to a more effective communication.

Post-intervention essay

There was a notable increase in scores across all descriptors following the intervention. Sandiswa exhibited significant improvements in both tenor and mode. According to Halliday (1978), the connection between text and context, which informs choices of register, is influenced by contextual variables such as field, tenor, and mode. Sandiswa effectively characterised and described participants using various parts of speech. After the RtL intervention, she confidently described objects, places, circumstances, and processes, thereby establishing the field more effectively, which was reflected in her improved marks. This finding aligns with the study by Kartika-Ningsih and Rose (2021), which reported that learners with initially weak performance were able to use

appropriate field patterns after implementing RtL methodology in contexts where English is the first language.

Sandiswa demonstrated significant improvement in narrative phases, organising the composition's steps logically and effectively. The RtL pedagogy enhanced the schematic structure of her narrative writing, as she successfully incorporated orientation, exposition, complication, and resolution into her work due to continuous instructional support. This aligns with Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) assertion that systemic functional linguistics (SFL) enhances language learning performance through interaction. Furthermore, her grammatical performance improved, indicating that she effectively conveyed ideas by adhering to grammatical rules, generic structures, and language features. This progress resulted from repeated grammar practice, which fostered motivation and confidence. Damayanti (2016) supports this notion, highlighting how explicit teaching and repetitive exposure to language patterns in mentor texts aided learners in recognising grammatical choices post-RtL intervention.

Presentation was another area of achievement, with Sandiswa displaying a clear and chronological layout that met the expected length, likely due to the joint construction activities in collaborative learning. This progress is consistent with Hasanah et al. (2021), who found that joint construction stages led to improved writing lengths. Moreover, her performance regarding conjunctions improved significantly, with appropriate use evident throughout her writing. Halliday (2004) posits that the presence or absence of explicit conjunctions is a critical variable in English discourse. This suggests that while the quantity of conjunctions used is not as significant as their correct application, Sandiswa demonstrated proficiency in this area, leading to clarity in her narrative. Motivated during joint construction activities, she effectively employed conjunctions to link her ideas. Consequently, through repeated writing exercises, her legibility was sustained, contributing positively to her phonemic awareness and word reading.

Table 9: Learner 5: Anita - intermediate achiever

Assessment Scale	Descriptor	Pre-test score	Post-test score
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Context	Quick judgements about these context criteria.		
Purpose	Is the purpose appropriate and well-developed for the genre?	2	3
Staging	Does it go through appropriate and well-developed stages?	1	2
Phases	How well organised is the sequence of phases in the text?	1	3
Field	Does the writer construct the plot, settings and characters well?	2	2
Tenor	How well does the writer engage the reader in the story?	2	2
Mode	How highly written is the language for the school stage?	1	2
Discourse	Discourse criteria are marked in the text, to give an accurate picture.		
Ideation	How well is lexis used to construct the field?	2	3
Appraisal	How well is appraisal used to engage, persuade or evaluate?	1	2
Conjunction	Is there a clear logical relation between all sentences?	1	3
Reference	Is it clear who or what is referred to in each sentence?	2	2
Grammar	Are grammatical conventions used appropriately?	1	2
Graphics	What is your first impression of these features?		
Spelling	How accurately spelt are the core words and non-core words?	1	2
Punctuation	How appropriately and accurately is punctuation used?	2	2
Presentation	Are there paragraphs, legible writing and clear layout?	2	3
Totals		21/42	34/42

Pre-intervention essay

Anita's script demonstrated genre awareness, particularly in conveying the social purpose of narrative writing. However, she struggled to apply imagination and creativity in her expression, suggesting that she would benefit from a constructivist approach to writing. Furthermore, she fell short in completely adhering to the field of the narrative. The relationships between characters

were underdeveloped, and her written language lacked appropriateness for the communicative context. These shortcomings indicated the need for scaffolding her prior knowledge and connecting it with the reading text. Additionally, frequent punctuation errors, including the omission of capital letters, commas, and full stops, were evident. The script was further weakened by a lack of ideational and appraisal resources, reducing its overall creativity.

Post-intervention essay

Post-intervention, Anita's scores improved considerably, particularly in establishing the field of the narrative. This progress can be attributed to detailed corrective feedback, which enabled her to engage more deeply with the subject matter. Throughout her essay, Anita successfully employed clauses that expressed coherent meanings, using relevant vocabulary to describe the plot, settings, and characters, thereby remaining focused on the topic. She effectively described the roles of characters and their circumstances, demonstrating increased confidence, likely a result of the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy. Kartika-Ningsih and Rose (2021) similarly found that RtL pedagogy enabled even the weakest learners to employ appropriate field patterns that are highly valued in English-first language schools. Anita's narrative was easily identifiable due to her use of genre-appropriate lexis.

Anita excelled in ideation, benefiting from the introduction of additional synonyms and antonyms. This finding is consistent with Yulianeta et al. (2022), who observed that learners became more aware of crucial textual devices post-intervention. Supporting this, Shum and Shi (2017) argue that RtL intervention diversifies learners' vocabulary use, leading to more varied expression. RtL appears to provide learners with new vocabulary, which they can contextualise, enhancing both their writing ability and confidence.

Furthermore, Anita's punctuation improved significantly, with correct grammatical patterns employed throughout the essay, contributing to clearer expression. This grammatical improvement validates the effectiveness of the RtL approach. Kartika-Ningsih and Rose (2021) similarly reported that following RtL intervention, even the weakest learners could write grammatically correct short sentences independently, without extensive teacher support. Anita's progress,

therefore, underscores the value of RtL in facilitating grammatical accuracy and overall writing proficiency.

Table 10: Learner 6: Sana - high achiever

Assessment Scale	Descriptor	Pre-test score	Post-test score
Context	Quick judgements about these context criteria.		
Purpose	Is the purpose appropriate and well-developed for the genre?	2	3
Staging	Does it go through appropriate and well-developed stages?	2	2
Phases	How well organised is the sequence of phases in the text?	2	3
Field	Does the writer construct the plot, settings and characters well?	2	2
Tenor	How well does the writer engage the reader in the story?	2	3
Mode	How highly written is the language for the school stage?	1	3
Discourse	Discourse criteria are marked in the text, to give an accurate picture.		
Ideation	How well is lexis used to construct the field?	2	3
Appraisal	How well is appraisal used to engage, persuade or evaluate?	2	3
Conjunction	Is there a clear logical relation between all sentences?	1	3
Reference	Is it clear who or what is referred to in each sentence?	1	3
Grammar	Are grammatical conventions used appropriately?	1	2
Graphics	What is your first impression of these features?		
Spelling	How accurately spelt are the core words and non-core words?	2	3
Punctuation	How appropriately and accurately is punctuation used?	1	2
Presentation	Are there paragraphs, legible writing and clear layout?	2	3
Totals		23/42	38/42

Pre-intervention essay

Although Sana made some effort to follow the schematic structure of a narrative text, it was insufficiently developed. The stages and phases of her narrative were relatively underdeveloped, necessitating deeper analysis during the intervention through additional scaffolding to guide her writing. The field, tenor, and mode were not effectively utilised, limiting the impact of the text. More exposure to model texts would help Sana to identify the subject matter, understand the audience, and learn when and why to use different sentence types and structures. Regarding appraisals, Sana attempted to express emotional reactions and evaluations, describing characters' feelings, personalities, physical appearances, events, and objects, which offered some clarity. This finding aligns with Ashiskali and Maltepe's (2023) assertion that learners with writing skills should express information meaningfully, convey emotions and thoughts in an original style, and organise content within a logical framework, adhering to the text type's conventions.

Post-intervention essay

Following the Reading to Learn (RtL) intervention, Sana showed significant improvement in her writing. She utilised appraisal expressions effectively, drawing the reader's attention and demonstrating an ability to convey emotions, judgements, and evaluations. Fitriati et al. (2018) similarly emphasise that narrative writers should use appraisal expressions to engage readers and make them feel involved in the narrative. RtL fostered Sana's creative thinking and motivation by enabling her to use vivid language to describe people and objects, thus creating a clear atmosphere. This was accomplished through guidance, support, and scaffolding provided during the intervention.

Sana also improved the organisation of her paragraphs. I employed the systemic functional linguistics (SFL) approach (Halliday, 1994; Martin & Rose, 2007) to teach her how to structure a text effectively. This instruction encouraged her to introduce paragraphs with topic sentences, ensuring coherence and unity throughout the essay. Consequently, her text became more understandable. Additionally, Sana demonstrated progress in the aspect of tenor. Halliday (1985) defines tenor as the participants' roles and relationships within the communicative context. In

contrast to her pre-test, Sana included exclamations, rhetorical questions, and quoted speech, clearly establishing the relationships between characters, each fulfilling a specific role.

Her post-test also showed improvement in the mode, largely due to the cognitive support provided through scaffolding. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1987) theory that scaffolding creates a contextual, social, and temporary framework to enhance students' academic writing skills. Sana's improvement in spelling was achieved through repeated phonics exercises, where words were divided into syllables. These exercises helped her decode unfamiliar words and understand the relationship between letters and sounds, contributing to her overall progress in writing skills.

Table 11: Learner 7: Ivy - high achiever

Assessment Scale	Descriptor	Pre-test score	Post-test score
Context	Quick judgements about these context criteria.		
Purpose	Is the purpose appropriate and well-developed for the genre?	2	3
Staging	Does it go through appropriate and well-developed stages?	2	3
Phases	How well organised is the sequence of phases in the text?	1	2
Field	Does the writer construct the plot, settings and characters well?	2	3
Tenor	How well does the writer engage the reader in the story?	2	2
Mode	How highly written is the language for the school stage?	1	3
Discourse	Discourse criteria are marked in the text, to give an accurate picture.		
Ideation	How well is lexis used to construct the field?	2	3
Appraisal	How well is appraisal used to engage, persuade or evaluate?	1	2
Conjunction	Is there a clear logical relation between all sentences?	1	3
Reference	Is it clear who or what is referred to in each sentence?	2	3

Grammar	Are grammatical conventions used appropriately?	2	3
Graphics	What is your first impression of these features?		
Spelling	How accurately spelt are the core words and non-core words?	2	3
Punctuation	How appropriately and accurately is punctuation used?	1	2
Presentation	Are there paragraphs, legible writing and clear layout?	2	3
Totals		24/42	38/42

Pre-intervention essay

Ivy demonstrated a reasonable understanding of the task, but there were issues with plot clarity, engagement, and consistent language use. The essay's plot was easy to follow; however, the language lacked the variety needed to fully engage the reader. I concluded that more connection to Ivy's past experiences was necessary to help her make appropriate language choices. Additionally, her use of transitional phrases was limited, leading to lack of sentence variety. This resulted in a less appealing and unified discourse. Deng (2019) argues that topics should be logically interrelated to support a central thesis, indicating the need for more practice with conjunctions to achieve unity. Despite these issues, Ivy showed strength in maintaining purpose, following stages and phases, and using varied vocabulary.

Post-intervention essay

In the post-test, Ivy demonstrated significant improvement, particularly in her use of conjunctions. She effectively employed coordinating, subordinating, and correlative conjunctions to connect words and clauses, achieving greater cohesion and coherence. This aligns with findings by Millin et al. (2020), who reported that RtL enhances learners' ability to produce clearer, more connected texts. Yulianeta et al. (2022) also found that learners became more aware of crucial textual devices post-intervention. As a result, Ivy's sentences were more interconnected, contributing to overall text unity.

Ivy's post-intervention essay also showed improved use of appraisal language, effectively conveying emotions, judgements, and appreciation. She portrayed characters' emotions—such as

happiness, interest, and worry—through genre-based pedagogy, supporting Ndoricimpa and Nduwimana's (2023) view that this approach enhances learners' understanding of critical linguistic features.

The post-test also revealed Ivy's ability to include purpose in her narrative. Pourdana and Asghari (2021) posit that a narrator must create a meaningful timeline, which Ivy achieved by making the composition entertaining and reflective. The structure of her composition improved as well, with clear exposition, complication, and resolution stages. This improvement can be attributed to the repetitive nature of RtL activities, which allowed her to explore ways to sustain the subject matter. Exposure to language-rich texts likely contributed to her success.

Finally, Ivy's functional knowledge improved, enabling her to better interpret relationships between utterances and the broader context. Khansir and Pakdel (2021) suggest that this knowledge is crucial for understanding language users' intentions and the relevant features of language settings. The implementation of text-based learning increased Ivy's engagement, as she actively contributed to lesson activities.

Table 12: Learner 8: Thateho - high achiever

Assessment Scale	Descriptor	Pre-test score	Post-test score
Context	Quick judgements about these context criteria.		
Purpose	Is the purpose appropriate and well-developed for the genre?	2	3
Staging	Does it go through appropriate and well-developed stages?	2	3
Phases	How well organised is the sequence of phases in the text?	2	3
Field	Does the writer construct the plot, settings and characters well?	1	2
Tenor	How well does the writer engage the reader in the story?	2	2
Mode	How highly written is the language for the school stage?	1	2

Discourse	Discourse criteria are marked in the text, to give an accurate picture.		
Ideation	How well is lexis used to construct the field?	1	3
Appraisal	How well is appraisal used to engage, persuade or evaluate?	2	2
Conjunction	Is there a clear logical relation between all sentences?	1	3
Reference	Is it clear who or what is referred to in each sentence?	1	3
Grammar	Are grammatical conventions used appropriately?	2	3
Graphics	What is your first impression of these features?		
Spelling	How accurately spelt are the core words and non-core words?	2	2
Punctuation	How appropriately and accurately is punctuation used?	1	3
Presentation	Are there paragraphs, legible writing and clear layout?	2	3
Totals		22/42	37/42

Pre-intervention essay

Thateho fared relatively well in most aspects. He struggled to include the mode since there was lack of appropriate language, different kinds of conjunctions and common omission of full stops. Giving this learner more exposure to model texts would help to correct these setbacks. The essay lacked forms of references to make the text coherent. The learner did not make sufficient use of spatial pointing devices to give the essay direction. For Sulstonov and Numonova (2021) reference denotes something that has previously been stated or will be mentioned in the preceding or subsequent sentence or clause, in this way creating cohesion. There was also insufficient usage of nouns and pronouns to refer to the subjects. The learner made mistakes such as omitting definite and indefinite articles when referring to objects. Furthermore, Thateho's script was devoid of appropriate grammatical devices. There were mistakes in sentence construction, spelling, tense and punctuation, hampering expression. Given average performance, a new and interactive teaching method that would respond to the learner's needs had to be devised.

Post-intervention essay

There was a significant improvement in reference as Thateho was able to use entity, spatial and temporal reference with mature grasp. Again, different pronouns were correctly used to refer to characters and things in the texts. Furthermore, articles and demonstratives appeared frequently in the essay for reference. This was achieved through using generic features to refer people or things in a general way and non-generic references to specify people or objects. According to Halliday and Hassan (1976) a reference is the relationship between elements in the text and other elements that provide explanations in the benchmarks. They further explain that reference can be located on the left or right of the antecedent in the text. Reference cohesion in the learners' script became accomplishable after scaffolding reading texts.

Furthermore, after the RtL intervention the learner used grammatical features well to express the flow of events. Thateho committed few mistakes in tense, verbal and syntax forms. According to Sampa et al. (2022), in attempting to master writing skills, it is necessary for teachers to analyse errors learners make in narrative composition writing to find out how much they acquire in the learning process. Thateho's improvement in grammar could be related to the study by Damayanti (2016) who reports that learners used tenses carefully after RtL intervention. It is rational to conclude that RtL provides solutions to learners with problems in grammar. It shows that the learner took responsibility to engage in grammar and improve on writing performance.

Field – as one the components of context – constitutes the register of a text. It was easy to see what a learner's composition was about. In consensus, Darong (2022) stresses that one way to find out what is being discussed in certain texts is the lexical writing selected by the writer. Regarding the mode, Thateho has used appropriate language features in the essay and relationships between characters. This finding is congruent with the insight hinted by Shum and Shi (2017) that the learner's writing composed in the post-test was more inclined to a narrative story because the plot, settings and characteristics were constructed to well signify the field of the text.

Table 13: Learner 9: Mphohali - low achiever

Assessment Scale	Descriptor	Pre-test score	Post-test score
Context	Quick judgements about these context criteria.		
Purpose	Is the purpose appropriate and well-developed for the genre?	1	2
Staging	Does it go through appropriate and well-developed stages?	1	2
Phases	How well organised is the sequence of phases in the text?	0	2
Field	Does the writer construct the plot, settings and characters well?	1	2
Tenor	How well does the writer engage the reader in the story?	1	2
Mode	How highly written is the language for the school stage?	1	3
Discourse	Discourse criteria are marked in the text to give an accurate picture.		
Ideation	How well is lexis used to construct the field?	1	3
Appraisal	How well is appraisal used to engage, persuade or evaluate?	1	2
Conjunction	Is there a clear logical relation between all sentences?	1	3
Reference	Is it clear who or what is referred to in each sentence?	2	2
Grammar	Are grammatical conventions used appropriately?	1	2
Graphics	What is your first impression of these features?		
Spelling	How accurately spelt are the core words and non-core words?	1	2
Punctuation	How appropriately and accurately is punctuation used?	1	2
Presentation	Are there paragraphs, legible writing and clear layout?	2	3
Totals		15/42	32/42

Pre-intervention essay

Mphohali's script displayed numerous avoidable errors, with little effort made to include purpose, phases, or stages. The underdeveloped stages and phases indicated that more scaffolded instruction was required during the intervention to familiarise her with the correct structure. Additionally, Mphohali struggled to incorporate field, tenor, and mode, which are essential in establishing context. According to Halliday (1985), these three factors in context—field, tenor, and mode—significantly influence language choices. The learner also committed frequent spelling errors, particularly with homophones, silent-letter words, and words affected by mother tongue interference. These mistakes were partly due to a lack of correspondence between spelling and pronunciation, further impeding her writing success.

Post-intervention essay

Post-intervention, Mphohali demonstrated noticeable improvement across all marking descriptors. Her spelling improved after targeted activities focusing on sound units, syllables, rhymes, and phonemes were practised. Breaking words into syllables and repeated pronunciation helped her become a more accurate speller. Additionally, her composition was more engaging, evoking thoughts, emotions, and humour. Feng (2021) found that learners who used genre-based pedagogy could better identify and analyse textual features, including generic structure and language features, which was applied to assess Mphohali's essay. The application of the genre-based approach significantly contributed to her improvement, in line with Azhar and Maolida (2019), who argue that the process genre approach not only enhances writing but also deepens learners' understanding of the text genre. Before writing a full text, learners are introduced to the genre, aiding in their comprehension of text structure and purpose (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

Guidance, advice, and elaborations provided during the intervention contributed to Mphohali's success. The positive shift in her writing was further supported by Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where capable and less capable learners collaborated, allowing them to apply skills independently after completing tasks together. Her essay also showed progress in tenor, as she successfully incorporated characters' roles and positioned herself within the text. As Djatmika

(2022) illustrates, tenor reflects interpersonal meaning and explores relationships, contact frequency, and interactions within the text.

Mphohali's grammatical proficiency improved post-intervention, as she demonstrated correct use of past tense, tense sequences, and various clauses in her narratives. This aligns with Suryati et al. (2021), who found that RtL participants showed mastery of grammatical features post-intervention. Treating grammar as a meaning-making resource, as in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), enabled Mphohali to organise language components more effectively. This also highlights how RtL reduces learning inequalities, as her writing exhibited similar sentence patterns to those of her peers.

Table 14: Learner 10: Reneiloe - intermediate achiever

Assessment Scale	Descriptor	Pre-test score	Post-test score
Context	Quick judgements about these context criteria.		
Purpose	Is the purpose appropriate and well-developed for the genre?	2	3
Staging	Does it go through appropriate and well-developed stages?	2	3
Phases	How well organised is the sequence of phases in the text?	1	3
Field	Does the writer construct the plot, settings and characters well?	2	3
Tenor	How well does the writer engage the reader in the story?	1	2
Mode	How highly written is the language for the school stage?	1	2
Discourse	Discourse criteria are marked in the text, to give an accurate picture.		
Ideation	How well is lexis used to construct the field?	1	3
Appraisal	How well is appraisal used to engage, persuade or evaluate?	2	3

Conjunction	Is there a clear logical relation between all sentences?	2	2
Reference	Is it clear who or what is referred to in each sentence?	2	3
Grammar	Are grammatical conventions used appropriately?	1	2
Graphics	What is your first impression of these features?		
Spelling	How accurately spelt are the core words and non-core words?	1	2
Punctuation	How appropriately and accurately is punctuation used?	1	2
Presentation	Are there paragraphs, legible writing and clear layout?	2	2
Totals		21/42	35/42

Pre-intervention essay

The learner's pre-intervention essay presented significant challenges. The narrative text did not meet its social purpose of entertaining and teaching social or moral values. This highlighted the need for increased focus on demonstrating how a text's social purpose is achieved through character interaction. The learner struggled with spelling and punctuation, making errors such as misplaced or missing commas, full stops, and speech marks, as well as confusing colons and semicolons. These mistakes suggested that the learner did not proofread or revise the essay.

In terms of presentation, the paragraphs lacked organisation, unity, and appropriate length, which weakened overall expression. The learner was able to meet the required writing length, though there was insufficient language proficiency to express ideas and experiences. Whittaker and Pajero (2018) argue that a genre-based approach helps improve the writing skills of low-achieving learners by accelerating their progress to an average level. This was pertinent, given the learner's struggles. Additionally, the learner moderately used theme progression to indicate the sequence of events and mark crisis and resolution points. However, spelling errors further hindered expression.

The essay was also deficient of appraisals to evaluate characters' feelings, behaviours, and objects. Martin and Rose (2007) define appraisal as a system of interpersonal meanings, which is concerned with evaluating attitudes, the strength of feelings, and how values are sourced and aligned with readers. This missing element further weakened the effectiveness of the narrative.

Post-intervention essay

After the intervention, the learner's essay showed considerable improvement, meeting the requirements of most marking descriptors. The learner used a variety of punctuation marks correctly, which guided the reader through the text and made comprehension easier. For instance, direct speech was punctuated accurately, and different punctuation marks were employed effectively to separate words, phrases, and clauses. This improvement was likely a result of collaborative peer editing, with minimal punctuation errors observed.

The learner also demonstrated more confidence in spelling, and RtL's effectiveness became apparent in the chronological flow of events. Ideas and experiences were expressed cohesively, with logically structured paragraphs. Reneiloe's improved performance aligns with Huang et al. (2019), who demonstrated that learners under the RtL pedagogy effectively structured their paragraphs with clear writing threads. Additionally, the learner successfully established the field, as they showcased ideational meanings that described the topic, social activities, and representation of reality (Djatkika et al., 2022). This highlights RtL's role in guiding learners to remain focused on the central theme of their writing.

Another area of improvement was the use of appraisals. The learner used words, phrases, and structures to address emotions and make evaluative decisions on characters, events, and objects. Martin and Rose (2005) emphasise that appraisal in SFL is key to emphasising meaning beyond the clause. Similarly, Shum and Shi (2017) reported that learners were able to connect human relations with the story, allowing them to discern the author's judgement of character personalities and moral behaviours. This progress was achieved through my role as the learner's more knowledgeable other (MKO).

6.4 Learners' overall writing performance

Overall, there was substantial improvement in the learners' narrative writing performance after the RtL intervention. Learners demonstrated various writing competencies, meeting most of the requirements for each descriptor. While there was a significant increase in performance, only a few learners came close to achieving maximum results. This improvement can be attributed to the

extensive, iterative RtL activities. Learners showed that they had assimilated the necessary skills for each stage of the writing process. The continual progress was facilitated by the use of scaffolding, which supported learners in composing narrative essays. Instructional strategies such as modelling, contextualising, instructing, and cognitive structuring were employed to enhance learners' performance.

Additionally, the improvement could be linked to Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where learners were scaffolded to develop their writing potential further. The learners' perceptions and attitudes towards the RtL intervention are explored in the following section.

6.5 Findings from closed-ended questionnaire

All 35 learners completed a questionnaire consisting of 10 statements, anonymously providing their feedback. The responses were analysed using frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation in SPSS. A 5-point Likert scale (5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree) was used to assess the impact of the RtL pedagogy on learners.

Table 15: Learners' perceptions and attitudes towards the implementation of RtL

Items	SD %	D %	U %	A %	SA %	M %	SD %
1. RtL improves my ability to write grammar and mechanics.			1 (2.9)	7 (20.0)	27 (77.1)	4.74	.505
2. RtL helps me to use appropriate narrative writing structure.			1 (2.9)	8 (22.9)	26 (74.3)	4.71	.518
3. Learning vocabulary through RtL helps me to express myself effectively.				8 (22.9)	27 (77.1)	4.77	.426
4. It makes me to collaborate with my peers and present my ideas better.				6 (17.1)	29 (82.9)	4.82	.382

5. RtL approach learning activities are engaging.				9 (25.7)	26 (74.3)	4.74	.443
6. RtL stimulates me with the motivation to write narrative essay.				9 (25.7)	26 (74.3)	4.74	.443
7. RtL instills me with writing confidence.				8 (22.9)	27 (77.1)	4.77	.426
8. RtL offers me equal learning opportunities as the rest of the class.				5 (14.3)	30 (85.7)	4.85	.355

Note: M: Mean and SD: Standard Deviation

6.5.1 Learners' perceptions of RtL approach

A significant number of learners expressed positive opinions towards the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy. The data showed that the standard deviation was clustered around the mean, indicating homogeneity in responses. Afifah et al. (2022) explain that standard deviation reflects how much data deviates from the mean, with a smaller deviation indicating greater precision. In this case, the low standard deviation suggests that learner responses were consistent, demonstrating the effectiveness of RtL.

A particularly strong consensus was seen in response to item 8, with 85.7% of learners strongly agreeing that RtL offers equal learning opportunities, alongside the lowest standard deviation of 0.355. This aligns with Bernstein's (2000) pedagogic discourse, which posits that RtL can reduce inequalities in writing performance. Similarly, item 4 received strong agreement, with 82.9% of learners affirming that RtL promotes collaboration and the ability to present ideas more effectively. This reflects Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism, which emphasises learning through social interaction, such as class discussions, small group work, or pair activities, guided by a facilitator.

Although item 2 recorded the highest standard deviation, it still had a strong overall agreement rate of 97.2%, indicating that learners believe RtL helps them use appropriate narrative structures. Items 1, 3, and 7, all recorded similar agreement percentages (77.1%) and mean scores (4.74 to 4.77) with learners agreeing that RtL improved their grammar, mechanics, vocabulary, and

confidence in writing. These results support the concept of scaffolding, as described by Vygotsky, and Halliday's systemic functional linguistics, where learning activities were scaffolded to help learners unpack the contextual meanings of texts and use appropriate registers in their writing.

Items 5 and 6 also recorded strong agreement, with 74.3% of learners strongly agreeing and 25.7% agreeing, and a mean score of 4.74 with a standard deviation of 0.443. These results suggest that RtL learning activities are engaging and motivating, encouraging learners to write narrative essays. Chalak and Karimi (2022) similarly found that collaborative writing fosters full engagement, allowing learners to share ideas and improve the accuracy of their texts.

Notably, no learners expressed negative attitudes towards RtL, as none disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the statements. This highlights high levels of satisfaction with the RtL pedagogy in teaching narrative writing. Only a small percentage (6%) was hesitant to express their opinions, indicating minimal uncertainty. These findings are consistent with previous studies, such as those by Ganapathy et al. (2022), Thaksanan and Chaturongakul (2023), and Thongchalem and Jarunthawatchai (2020), which show that learners exposed to the genre-based approach improved their writing performance.

6.6 Data from focus group discussions with learners

The focus group discussions were conducted immediately after administering the questionnaire to gather more in-depth data by exploring learners' perceptions and attitudes in greater detail. The discussions were recorded, transcribed, coded, and analysed in alignment with the interview questions. Ten focal learners, representing different achievement levels—high, medium, and low—based on their test scores, participated in the interviews. Their responses were analysed using content analysis to complement the findings.

6.6.1 Research Question 1:

How does RtL help learners present their ideas and experiences creatively in narrative writing?

6.6.1.1 Collaborative writing

When learners were asked how Reading to Learn (RtL) collaborative writing activities supported them in presenting ideas and experiences creatively, they highlighted that these tasks made their work easier, while enabling them to learn from each other and their teacher. They highlighted how collaboration fostered the generation of new ideas for writing improved compositions. Sandiswa remarked:

RtL makes us work in groups, share ideas, and write properly as we can correct one another.”

Similarly, Anita observed:

The new way of teaching makes us collaborate, for example, when we write sentences and compositions together. We get good marks because we share different ideas and write them correctly.

Reneiloe also pointed out that

RtL enables us to collaborate by discussing in class, when writing sentences, and you [the teacher] correct us when we make mistakes.

Mphohali added that this approach helped him seek clarification, stating:

RtL made us learn from each other because we were mixed and able to write better and more easily.

Learners' responses suggest they could successfully edit and correct their work without relying solely on the more knowledgeable others in their groups. Moreover, they indicated that the teacher's presence, providing scaffolding, enhanced their creative writing by raising awareness of narrative writing language patterns. This collaborative learning aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist principle that learning is socially constructed through interaction with peers and teachers. Mawela (2018) supports these views, demonstrating that after the RtL intervention,

learners interacted effectively by sharing ideas in groups mixed by ability—competent, average, and struggling learners working together. This highlights the importance of collaborative strategies in enhancing comprehension, enabling learners to produce error-free texts by following correct language models.

From the excerpts, it is evident that collaborative learning, a key aspect of constructivism, challenges learners to develop higher-order thinking skills, fostering creativity. As Chen (2021) reiterates, learners with positive attitudes towards a teaching model are more likely to embrace it, learn effectively from it, and collaborate well with peers during writing practice. Through such collaboration, learners likely develop a sense of audience and purpose. As they deconstruct texts, they guide each other, expand their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and take greater responsibility for their learning, ultimately improving their writing skills.

6.6.1.2 Knowledge of vocabulary

Respondents were also asked how teaching vocabulary through the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy aided their creative expression. They remarked that RtL facilitated their acquisition of a broader vocabulary, which in turn enabled them to write their narratives more effectively and relevantly. Regarding this, Mphohali's submission was as follows:

RtL helps me to know vocabulary. The fact that we are underling and defining the words in the composition when we read and write on the board helps me to express myself well when I write.

Sana interjected:

I also know synonyms for many words because you are helping us to come up with the correct words and that makes me to get ticks in my composition.

On a similar note Thateho claimed:

I learned a lot of vocabulary when we were discussing and I use it to express my ideas when I write a composition.

The statements indicate that learning new vocabulary enhances learners' background knowledge and influences their sentence construction. According to the interviews, vocabulary is essential for creative writing; sufficient exposure enables learners to use the appropriate register and write contextually. These findings align with Nagao's (2020) study, which highlighted that the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) genre-based approach, particularly modelling and deconstructing texts while focusing on specific vocabulary, was particularly beneficial for lower-proficiency learners. Further supporting this, Suryati et al. (2021) found that the majority of respondents believed that collaboratively writing keywords into sentences made individual writing of the target text easier. Additionally, Siregar et al. (2021) emphasised that learners' active involvement, supported by the teacher during the detailed reading stage, allowed them to explore linguistic resources within the texts. These studies underscore the significance of scaffolding in vocabulary instruction, as it not only enhances language proficiency but also addresses vocabulary disparities among learners. Overall, the findings suggest that supporting vocabulary development through the RtL approach fosters learners' creativity in constructing texts.

6.6.1.3 Motivation

In examining how the implementation of the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach motivates learners to write creatively, respondents indicated that guided reading and writing activities played a significant role. Ivy remarked:

It makes me feel motivated because you guide us step by step to the answer until we finish our work.

Similarly, Thateho stated:

The fact that we read a lot makes me familiar with many words, phrases, and ways of forming sentences, so I feel motivated to write them.

Anita reinforced this notion, saying:

Cutting words and rearranging them to form sentences motivated me. I like this activity because it allows me to express myself when I write.

Sandiswa added:

I liked the exercises we did; some were challenging, but I enjoyed them because you gave us motivation. We got them correct since you guided us and encouraged us to do better.

These excerpts highlight the positive impact RtL has on learners' motivation to compose narrative essays, with support facilitating their creative expression.

Regarding the efficacy of motivation in learning, Mauliya et al. (2020) argue that motivation can stem not only from within learners but also from external influences. Additionally, Juma (2024) argues that reflective teaching practices significantly enhance learner motivation and achievement. This suggests that RtL encourages teachers to foster a motivating environment conducive to effective learning by creating a constructivist classroom where learners actively engage in knowledge construction through authentic experiences, RtL motivates learners and encourages them to negotiate meaning. Supporting this, Jubhari et al. (2022) assert that teachers should employ creativity to make learning enjoyable, thereby enhancing the meaningfulness of the learning process and increasing learners' interest.

The findings reveal that learners exhibited both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation when writing about familiar topics. This aligns with Rezvani and Saecidi's (2019) assertion that genre-based instruction significantly motivates learners when addressing relevant topics. Similarly, Mataka et al. (2021) found that learners enjoyed reading aloud together, which improved their understanding of the text. Thus, it can be deduced that fostering motivation enhances learner engagement and task completion.

6.6.2 Research Question 2:

What effect does RtL pedagogy have in advancing learners' ability to compose narrative texts?

6.6.2.1 Ability to use grammar and mechanics

In their responses, learners unanimously highlighted that the RtL approach and model texts significantly improved their ability to write better narrative compositions. This was reflected in several interview quotes, such as Thateho's observation:

When I write, I am able to use correct tense and conjunctions because of the copies that we discussed and the sentences we wrote on the board.

Similarly, Mphohali presented:

The new approach has taught me to see the difference between forms of tenses.

Sana added:

I am now no longer writing incomplete sentences and using wrong tense or verb forms, and that makes me write better.

Another participant, Ntsoaki, remarked on their improvement in writing mechanics:

For me, I am no longer committing many mistakes in spelling and punctuation. I know how to express myself.

Meanwhile, Anita commented on her ability to write a variety of sentences:

I now know how to spell even the difficult words and use different punctuation, and I have passed, Sir.

The learners' responses suggest that the RtL approach improved their ability to apply grammar and mechanics, thus enabling them to compose narrative essays more effectively. It is evident that learners recognised improvements in their performance due to their adherence to the rules and conventions of narrative text production. These observations align with the objectives of the LGCSE Grade 10 and 11 syllabuses, which stipulate that learners should use language, experience, imagery, and creativity to respond to new situations, create original ideas, and make a positive

impact. Since grammar and mechanics are essential competencies for effective communication, improvements in these areas represent significant progress in writing.

This study's findings resonate with those of Resdiana (2018), who reported that various preparatory steps were taken to guide learners in understanding texts contextually and producing new compositions based on model texts. Similarly, Suryati et al. (2021) emphasise that the majority of respondents believed the RtL approach helped them to learn from model texts, comprehend them, and ultimately create new narrative essays. This suggests that learners are capable of creative writing when the structural elements of a text are explained in manageable chunks. As Millin et al. (2020) rightly argued, in academic literacy instruction, complexity can be reduced by providing real-time textual cues, drawing attention to sentence or paragraph features related to the discourse. In this study, the RtL pedagogy was equally effective in equipping learners with the linguistic tools needed to compose narrative essays using correct grammatical structures and mechanical devices.

6.6.2.2 Appropriate narrative writing structure

Respondents indicated that the RtL pedagogy had effectively taught them how to structure events in their stories. Mothabi remarked:

I am able to write all the stages of a story in order without any problem.

Sandiswa similarly stated:

I am able to include all the stages. I have learned how to write stages like complication and resolution.

Gumede added:

The new way of teaching has taught me how to write an introduction, plot, and setting appropriately.

Ivy echoed these views, commenting:

I have learned how to write the rising action, the plot, climax, and falling action, and that makes my work easy and clear.

These statements highlight the significance of RtL in helping learners organise their narratives using an appropriate structure. The ability to apply the fundamental structure of a narrative essay enabled learners to plan their compositions and express their ideas more clearly. Their stories consistently included a beginning, body paragraphs, and a conclusion, facilitating a smooth flow for both the writer and the reader. It is evident from their responses that RtL encourages learners to follow the conventional structure of narrative writing, comprising orientation, exposition, complication, and resolution, thereby making their work well-organised. With this structure, they were able to integrate the key phases—orientation, tenor, and mode—effectively.

Nagao (2019) similarly accentuates that revisiting and editing tasks, coupled with exchanging information with peers, enhanced learners' understanding of the generic structure in the SFL genre-based approach to writing. This aligns with the learners' feedback in this study. Additionally, Damayanti (2016) affirms that after implementing the RtL approach, learners were able to successfully incorporate the stages of a narrative essay. These findings suggest that the genre-based approach enables learners to compose narrative texts using a clear and appropriate structure, drawing from model texts as examples.

6.6.2.3 Engagement

Another important theme that emerged was engagement. According to Qureshi et al. (2021), high engagement is a reliable predictor of high scores and learners' achievement. They further add that engagement is the interaction between the environment and individual, due to which social and academic reforms occur which transform the perception and engagement of learners. This suggests that learners should be emotionally, cognitively and behaviourally involved in lesson activities. The responses from the learners are grounded in Vygotsky (1978) social cognitive theory which focuses on the significance of human interactions through mediators in the learning process. Learners highlighted that breaking learning activities compelled them to engage fully with lesson activities and write good essays. They further revealed that pre-reading activities such as

summarising, explaining and underlining the key words and sentences made them to engage in lesson activities.

One interviewee, Thateho observed:

RtL makes me to engage because before we could read the composition after you explained it to us and that made me to understand it and write mine well.

Another responding learner Sandiswa confirmed:

I like the activities we are doing because they make me to concentrate and come up with ideas which I use when I write the work.

More to this, Sana said:

I believe that what engaged me was the fact that most of the time we were asked questions after the explanation and I was able to express myself.

The statements from the learners reveal that RtL has changed their engagement levels since it was introduced. Given the findings generated, it is observable that other scaffolding techniques such as giving tasks for each step, encouraging questions, building schemata and giving feedback helped learners to narrate stories. In the study conducted by Damayanti (2016), teachers and learners reported that extensive scaffolding that featured RtL pedagogy was considered beneficial. This means that when instructional activities are scaffolded learners engage better in lesson activities. This finding supports consensus from the previous study by Whittaker (2018), who revealed that as the complexity in writing was broken down into steps and was both shared with all the class and supported by the teacher, all learners participated and proposed phrases to include. Pursuing a similar view, Uddin (2019) affirms that teacher-guided dialogical approach will contribute towards nurturing learners to achieve a grown mindset of thinking with openness and reasoning. Given these affirmations, one is led to conclude that RtL engages learners by providing rich learning experiences which they use to achieve success in writing. It is clear that gradual removal of scaffolding leaves learners engaged and they can do their writing tasks independently.

6.6.3 Research Question 3:

Why does the implementation of RtL affect learners' approach to narrative writing the way it does?

6.6.3.1 Confidence in writing

In their responses regarding the extent to which writing confidence aids them in composing narrative essays, learners unanimously indicated that the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach had significantly enhanced their confidence in this area. According to Bruner (1966), instructors should encourage learners to construct knowledge based on their existing understanding and engage in active dialogue with the teacher. The learners expressed that the support they received, combined with their familiarity with narrative writing, enabled them to articulate their ideas creatively.

One of the respondents, Anita, expressed as follows:

Before we were taught with RtL, I did not have the confidence to write but now I have it because I know how I should write a story because you are helping us to get to the correct answer where we need help.

Confidence improves learners' performance as Gumede says:

Since you taught us in a new way, I have learned how to write sentences without making a lot of mistakes. Yes, I have confidence now and my feedback shows that I am making few mistakes.

Ntsoaki interjected and commented that she writes with ease of late because she is confident:

The new approach helps me to write things which I have seen in the past well, I am confident now. She went on to express her feelings:

I can also spell words better because we practised pronunciation a lot.

The responses show that teaching learners through genre-based approach makes them to grow in confidence since their focus is on a particular context and they know how to present their stories following the framework they are given to write.

In light of learners' articulations, Mataka (2018) reveals that continuous interaction enhances learners' confidence in both writing and reading. This suggests that the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy fosters learners' confidence to generate new ideas, create their own stories, and improve their writing achievements. Addressing learners' needs through scaffolding and providing corrective feedback likely contributes to the increase in their confidence. Furthermore, learners' statements align with Chomsky's (1965) transformative generative linguistic theory, which posits that a teacher's ability to transform sentence formation improves writing performance, enabling learners to approach their work with enthusiasm due to their newfound confidence. This is consistent with Whittaker (2018), who asserts that "students, especially those with more difficulties, appreciated the confidence they found in the routine given by the RtL cycle" (p.25). These findings resonate with Mgqwashu and Makhathini (2017), who contend that reading texts enhances the morale and confidence of both learners and teachers, ultimately improving academic performance in rural, educationally disadvantaged settings. When learners are confident, they take responsibility for their own learning, which becomes particularly evident in their independent writing.

6.6.3.2 Equal learning opportunities

Respondents provided several reasons why the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach offers them equal learning opportunities in narrative writing. According to Freire (2000), if all learners had equal access to education, disparities among them would diminish. This assertion implies that learners must have equal access to learning materials to achieve equality in their educational experiences. In this context, respondents pointed that the gap between high-proficiency and low-proficiency learners was eliminated, as they learned in the same manner and received equal support, enabling them to attain similar writing achievements.

Learners expressed overwhelmingly positive perceptions regarding the equal learning opportunities afforded by RtL, with no participants exhibiting conflicting sentiments. As Reneiloe articulated, the approach fosters an inclusive environment that benefits all learners, reinforcing their sense of equality in the learning process:

RtL gives us equal learning opportunities so that we can be on the same level of understanding and knowledge when we write compositions.

In agreement Ivy emphasised:

In the past few students were not getting better marks, so with this new way of teaching you want us to do well when we write compositions because we are doing things together like reading the same essays and sharing ideas.

Gumede articulated:

I think with RtL you want us to be equal because you want us all to pass and you do not want anyone to be left behind.

From these extracts, learners indicate that the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy enables them to engage with narrative essays on an equal footing regarding their skill sets, as it equips them with comparable writing competencies. Given this uniformity of perspectives, it is reasonable for the researcher to conclude that RtL is effective in providing equal learning opportunities in narrative writing. When learners perceive the teacher as a partner in their educational journey, the classroom transforms into a democratic space, offering students opportunities to express themselves in both speaking and writing activities.

In emphasising the significance of critical pedagogy in education, Sharma (2021) notes that it encompasses the curriculum, materials, teachers, and learners, fostering a healthy classroom social relationship devoid of oppressive policies that overshadow individual thought. Additionally, Mqwashu and Makhathini (2017) assert that the RtL pedagogy presents learners from

underprivileged backgrounds with a unique opportunity to potentially compete on an equal footing with their more privileged peers in better-resourced environments.

It appears that RtL serves as a viable strategy for mitigating educational inequalities, as it promotes knowledge construction by dismantling less emancipatory teacher-learner models and providing learners with the issues and challenges they encounter in their daily lives. This practice aligns with the LGCSE Grade 10 and 11 syllabuses, which mandate that teachers instil moral values in their students. Thus, a constructivist approach not only fosters equal learning opportunities but also enhances learners' motivation and sense of responsibility in writing narrative essays.

6.7 Data from a Semi-Structured Interview with a Teacher

One of the English teachers was invited to observe the impact of the Reading to Learn (RtL) intervention on the classroom environment. A semi-structured interview was conducted to gain his insights regarding the implementation of RtL in teaching narrative writing. The interviewee, a former principal of the school, possesses over thirty years of teaching experience. The interview questions were aligned with the research objectives to ensure relevance and depth of understanding.

6.7.1 Engaging learning activities

When asked about his impressions regarding the implementation of the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy, the teacher expressed positive views on its engaging learning activities in teaching narrative texts. His responses indicated that various scaffolding techniques significantly contributed to high levels of learner engagement. Several interactional exchanges between the teacher and the learners were employed to sustain this engagement. This was highlighted in the following excerpt from the interview with the teacher:

From a practical perspective, it is evident that the teacher engages learners, who, through this approach, activate a hunger for texts with the ambition to enact a playable text.

This statement suggests that through RtL, the teacher was able to engage learners behaviourally, emotionally, and cognitively, facilitating their ability to articulate their ideas and experiences in

narrative essays. Scaffolding strategies such as questioning, instructing, providing feedback, bridging concepts, and building schemas effectively engaged the learners. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that RtL fostered learner participation in writing, and the engaging classroom atmosphere encouraged them to compose essays with greater ease.

6.7.2 Motivation

During the interview with the teacher, it was revealed that the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach motivates learners by drawing on their experiences through the provided prompts. The observing teacher provided positive commentary on how scaffolding effectively stimulated learners' background knowledge. This was encapsulated in the following extract:

Learners begin to relate real-life experiences. They tap into their consciousness in line with reality. They voice concerns relating to storylines and bring all to the contemporary world.

This statement referred to the detailed reading, note-making, and joint construction stages, during which learners were guided, advised, probed, and given opportunities for practice. Thus, the teacher's perspective aligns with the RtL principle that, in the detailed reading and note-making phases, identifying and mastering known information and familiar language-based cultural modes of expression serve to reinforce the reduction of cognitive overload necessary for successful joint construction (Menco-Haeckermann, 2021). Evidence suggests that RtL encourages learners to read beyond the text, enhancing their narrative writing proficiency and further motivating them in the writing process.

6.7.3 Collaborative and individual learning

When asked how Reading to Learn's collaborative learning activities assist learners in expressing their experiences in writing, the teacher responded positively, highlighting how learners effectively utilised appropriate language features during the sentence-making and joint construction stages. Learners contributed various ideas to construct new texts and took turns writing them on the board. They successfully created meaningful texts through both small group and whole-class discussions. This was supported by the teacher's remark:

Learners enjoy collectively, and the competitiveness in texts exposed to them and they experiment progressively in groups and individually.

He further added: *"Learners, through this approach, have a zest to excel."* The teacher observed that learners enjoyed the collective process of writing and were motivated to perform well.

This observation aligns with the findings of Kartika-Ningsih and Gunawan (2019), who argued that exposure to rich language and texts fosters high expectations, and the sentence-making strategy provides essential support before learners attempt independent writing. The evidence from this study clearly demonstrates that RtL's collaborative learning activities enhance learners' ability to express themselves creatively in writing.

6.7.4 Improved writing performances

The interview with the teacher revealed that the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach significantly improves learners' writing performance. The teacher emphasised that reading and writing should not be taught separately if learners are to compose creative narrative texts. He remarked:

Given that reading and writing are intertwined through human language skills, it is observable that the approach in both is indispensable.

This underscores the teacher's belief that RtL is essential for narrative writing. Supporting this view, Siregar et al. (2021) found that learners enjoyed the RtL process because it allowed them to explore their imagination and creativity through methods such as keywords, paraphrasing, and joint construction. The teacher further noted that RtL's integrated reading and writing activities would benefit learners in the long term, adding:

It is a notable approach, a go-ahead venture for learners who see reading and writing as not far-fetched phenomena.

The strength of RtL lies in breaking down complex, subject-specific academic literacy tasks into manageable micro-tasks, scaffolding learners to develop advanced reading and writing skills (Millin et al., 2020). This supports Rose and Acevedo's (2006) assertion that learning occurs when

teachers support learners in completing tasks beyond their independent abilities, enabling all learners to succeed at the same higher standard. This approach fosters creativity and academic achievement in narrative writing.

6.7.5 Equal access to learning

The interview with the teacher revealed that the Reading to Learn (RtL) approach effectively reduces learning inequalities in the classroom. He noted that learners from diverse social backgrounds learned in the same way because RtL accommodates all learners, stating:

No learner feels left out in any learning process within a classroom setting. They feel the same, and so they should in a normal educational setting or environment.

The teacher further emphasised that addressing learners with limited access to educational resources is a crucial priority in the learning process.

These observations suggest that when learners have equal access to opportunities, such as learning from the same text, they do not feel marginalised, and their confidence and engagement in writing tasks increase. The teacher highlighted that learners from underprivileged backgrounds often lack access to print and audio-visual media, such as books, newspapers, and the internet, which disadvantages them.

This notion of reducing learning inequalities is supported by Mataka and Mgqwashu (2022), who argue that RtL can create a more democratic classroom by providing equitable access to literacy development. Additionally, Ahern et al. (2018) suggest that consistent use of the RtL approach enhances equity and opportunities for all learners to progress in literacy across languages. These findings collectively indicate that RtL effectively addresses disparities in access to reading materials and writing proficiency, motivating learners to engage with writing tasks on an equal footing.

6.8 Convergence of Findings

To ensure the reliability of results, quantitative data from the pre-test and post-test were compared alongside qualitative findings, such as perceptions from rating scales, classroom observations, and focus group discussions. This triangulation involved merging descriptive statistics with thematic analysis to assess data from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives.

6.8.1 Ability to write with correct grammar and mechanics

The findings indicate a marked improvement in learners' engagement and performance in classroom writing activities during the intervention. Increased interaction was experienced in sentence construction and joint writing exercises, reflected in enhanced independent writing. Post-test results demonstrate a significant improvement, with a difference of 13.83 from pre-test scores. The attitudes reflected in learners' rating scales corroborate this, with 97.1% affirming the positive impact of the intervention (77.1% strongly agree, 20.0% agree), and a standard deviation of 0.505 indicating clustering around a mean score of 4.74. This suggests that the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy has consistently improved learners' grammar and mechanics in composing narrative texts. Observational data, teacher notes, and focus group discussions also confirmed this trend, with learners expressing satisfaction. One learner remarked: *"For me, I am no longer committing many mistakes in spelling and punctuation. I know how to express myself."* This positive outlook was echoed by other learners and the teacher, who illustrated the substantial improvements in writing due to integrating reading and writing tasks. These outcomes align with Lesotho's *Curriculum and Assessment Policy* (CAP, 2009), emphasising communication as essential for lifelong learning, self-expression, and managing diverse experiences.

6.8.2 Using appropriate narrative writing structure

A key theme identified was the ability to use an appropriate narrative structure. The post-test scores reveal considerable improvement, as learners demonstrated competence in structuring their narratives into defined stages. For example, one low-performing learner achieved 31 out of 42 in the post-test, indicating meaningful progress in narrative composition. Questionnaire and focus group results supported this, with high agreement on the effectiveness of the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy in organising thoughts. Specifically, 74.3% of learners strongly agreed and 22.9%

agreed that RtL supported their ability to organise narratives; the standard deviation of 0.518, close to the mean of 4.71, shows consistent responses. A learner highlighted the impact of model texts on structuring narratives, saying: *“I have learned how to write the rising action, the plot, climax and falling action, which makes my work easy and clear.”* This aligns with Piaget’s (1971) constructivist theory, which emphasises learning as the systematic organisation and adaptation of experiences. Additionally, the Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education (LGCSE) syllabus for Grades 10 and 11 expects learners to write coherent narratives. The findings suggest that RtL effectively meets these curriculum aims by familiarising learners with the narrative structure required in English.

6.8.3 Vocabulary learning

Vocabulary acquisition through RtL was also recognised as crucial in enhancing expressive skills for narrative writing. The scaffolding provided by the teacher enabled learners to employ relevant vocabulary, as seen in their ability to offer accurate responses after instructional guidance. Evidence from learners’ work showed that they applied suitable vocabulary, reflecting the scaffolding’s positive impact. Frequent use of ideation resources encouraged learners to generate new ideas, which was further validated by questionnaire and focus group data. An overwhelming 77.1% of learners strongly agreed, and 22.9% agreed, that RtL’s text-based pedagogy significantly enhanced their vocabulary. With a questionnaire mean of 4.77 and post-test mean of 33.11, learners displayed a substantial increase in lexical application, affirming RtL’s role in vocabulary development. Supporting this, Van and Quoc (2023) found that vocabulary retention improves within a constructivist framework, suggesting that learners retain vocabulary more effectively when it is contextually relevant.

6.8.4 Collaborative learning

The findings indicate that Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy promotes collaboration among learners, allowing them to share ideas effectively through classroom discussions, small group work, and paired activities. According to Vygotsky (1978), cognitive development relies significantly on social interaction, a view mirrored by the study’s closed-ended questionnaires, where 100% of learners affirmed that RtL enhances collaboration (82.9% strongly agree, 17.1% agree). Notably, no disagreements or uncertainties were recorded. This unanimous support aligns

with focus group discussions, where learners and the observing teacher confirmed the collaborative atmosphere fostered by RtL. Furthermore, a paired-sample analysis revealed a statistically significant improvement in learners' narrative writing following collaborative activities, with a p-value of 0.000, well below the 0.05 threshold. This can be connected to Halliday's (1978) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory, where RtL's scaffolded approach allows learners to link language and meaning in a social context. The teacher's support enabled learners to generate ideas, construct stories, and perform successfully in the post-test, with mean scores rising from 19.29 in the pre-test to 33.11 in the post-test.

6.8.5 Engagement

This study revealed strong engagement from learners throughout the RtL intervention, both in interest and attention, which translated into active participation in lessons. Observations of this behaviour align with closed-ended questionnaire results, where 74.3% of learners strongly agreed, and 25.7% agreed that RtL activities are engaging, with a high mean rating of 4.74. Vygotsky's (1997) educational theory underscores this approach, advocating that learning should immerse students in activities where "the teacher is the director of the social environment... guide of the interactions" (p.49). Such a constructivist classroom setting enhances learner engagement in writing. Both the learners and the teacher supported this view, with one learner noting: *"I believe that what engaged me was the fact that most of the time we were asked questions after the explanation, and I was able to express myself."* The RtL pedagogy was shown to stimulate cognitive engagement significantly, a notion corroborated by Vygotsky's (1978) social cognitive theory, which values interactional mediators in learning. As my colleague observed, following the lesson observation he experienced, *"The teacher engaged learners, activating their hunger for texts with the ambition to re-enact a meaningful text."* This observation was supported by the RtL descriptors, which recorded a decrease in standard deviation from 2.82 in the pre-test to 1.82 in the post-test. These findings align with Lestari et al. (2022), who demonstrated that RtL scaffolding tools—reading exchanges, step-by-step summaries, and reading aloud—enhanced text comprehension.

6.8.6 Increased motivation

A constructivist classroom environment significantly motivated learners, who displayed eagerness in problem-solving activities and active teacher-learner exchanges. This motivation was reflected by the large number of learners participating enthusiastically in class, as observed by the invited teacher who remarked that Reading to Learn (RtL) had transformed learners' approach to learning. Closed-ended questionnaire results corroborated these observations, with 74.3% of respondents strongly agreeing and 25.7% agreeing that RtL stimulated their motivation to write, resulting in a high mean score of 4.74 and a low standard deviation of 0.443, indicating uniformity in perceptions. The statistically significant difference between post-test and pre-test mean scores at a 0.05 significance level further emphasises RtL's role in enhancing motivation. One learner shared: *"It makes me feel motivated because you guide us step by step to the answer until we finish our work."* Rose (2017) supports this, illustrating that success fosters motivation, while failure discourages learning. RtL, by enabling success, instils motivation in learners to create narrative texts.

6.8.7 Writing confidence

RtL significantly boosted learners' writing confidence, enabling them to create texts creatively and accurately by utilising their background knowledge in both individual and joint tasks. The post-test mean score of 33.11, up from a pre-test mean of 19.28, signifies an improvement attributed to increased confidence. Rating scale results also support this, showing total affirmations (100%) and a mean of 4.77 with a low standard deviation of 0.426, affirming RtL's effectiveness in building confidence in writing. Interviews revealed that RtL instilled learners with confidence by providing guidance, support, and constructive feedback. The invited teacher echoed these sentiments, pointing out visible progress in learner engagement and assurance. Studies corroborate this, as Ahern et al. (2018) and Mqwashu and Makhathini (2017) report similar findings on RtL's confidence-boosting impact. Likewise, Damayanti (2016) found that even low-attaining learners showed significant improvement, independently completing writing tasks—a key indicator of confidence. This aligns with the LGCSE English syllabus, which advocates outcomes that foster learner autonomy and self-assurance in writing.

6.8.8 Equal learning opportunities

The results and findings indicate that the positive classroom environment provided learners with equal opportunities for learning. The teacher observed that all learners, regardless of their backgrounds, were willing to contribute meaningfully to enhance their narrative writing performance. The bar chart illustrates that post-test scores were significantly higher than those of the pre-test. With a standard deviation of 0.355 in the rating scale, it is evident that learners' views clustered around a mean of 4.85, thereby affirming that RtL facilitates equal learning opportunities. This sentiment was echoed during interviews, where respondents confirmed that RtL enabled them to learn uniformly, reducing inequalities among them, a point also supported by the observing teacher. One learner articulated: *“RtL gives us equal learning opportunities so that we can be on the same level of understanding and knowledge when we write compositions.”*

Furthermore, the t-test scores align with learners' perspectives, demonstrating a reduction in the gap between high and low achievers. The standard deviation decreased from 2.82 in the pre-test to 1.82 in the post-test, indicating that learners' scores clustered more closely around the mean following the intervention. This finding is reinforced by Freire (1973), who posits that educational institutions must focus on teaching literacy to liberate learners from oppressive social and economic structures. Mataka et al. (2023) further argue that improved results motivate literacy teachers to adopt practices that transcend colonial methodologies and challenge the status quo. Collectively, both quantitative and qualitative findings reveal that RtL significantly diminished the existing disparities in narrative essay writing. According to the CAP of Lesotho (2009), learners should be equipped with competencies to navigate challenges and improve their lives sustainably. In consequence, it can be concluded that RtL has effectively supported learners in developing the necessary competencies for narrative writing.

6.9 Reflection on data generation methods

This study, which aimed to assess the effectiveness of the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy in enhancing learners' narrative writing, achieved its objective, as evidenced by the generated data. The findings, corroborated by both quantitative and qualitative results, indicate a significant relationship between the variables under investigation.

The pretest-posttest design provided a measurable framework for assessing progress, allowing learners to reflect on their own development through score comparison. The analysis of learner scripts yielded valuable insights into a range of skills, including writing proficiency and critical thinking, facilitating the tracking of performance and the subsequent development of metadiscourse. However, reliance solely on script analysis was deemed insufficient for robust results, due to potential inconsistencies in marking and inherent subjectivity in comparing pre- and post-intervention texts. Furthermore, as the scripts constituted a large volume of data, only a sample was analysed, thereby limiting the generalisability of these specific findings. To address concerns of reliability and validity, quantitative analysis was incorporated.

The use of closed-ended questionnaires proved effective in eliciting data on participant perceptions and attitudes. A rating scale with clear and concise statements was employed to ensure a high response rate. Each item was designed to measure a distinct construct, thereby contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the RiL pedagogy and its perceived impact. To ensure validity, the items were carefully reviewed and worded to avoid ambiguity, enabling participants to articulate their views accurately. This approach allowed for the expression of a spectrum of opinions, providing a nuanced measure of underlying perceptions. As noted by Elegunde et al. (2024), the Likert scale is an efficient and adaptable instrument, suitable for offering varied response options. The questionnaire data permitted categorisation and statistical comparison, an advantage over purely qualitative data. Subsequent analysis identified response patterns meriting further investigation through focus group discussions, as rating scales offer limited depth and can be susceptible to certain response biases.

Focus group discussions were utilised to garner deeper qualitative insights into the effectiveness of the pedagogical strategies. Singh (2017) contends that in social and educational research, focus groups are vital for generating data on human conduct, emotions, and attitudes. This technique elicited a diversity of opinions, substantiating the qualitative findings. The discussions included learners of varying abilities low, intermediate, and high achievers ensuring a range of perspectives post-intervention. The interactive nature of the focus groups enabled participants to readily express and build upon each other's viewpoints, deepening the collective understanding of RiL's influence.

The dynamic flow of interaction also allowed for the emergence of spontaneous questions, further elucidating the intervention's impact.

Incorporating the perspective of a fellow English practitioner through lesson observation provided an additional validation point. The observer noted a positive learning atmosphere during the RtL intervention and reported a high level of learner engagement in activities. This direct observation afforded an informed, external perspective, enriching the overall data interpretation. A subsequent semi-structured interview with the observer allowed for a focused exploration of predetermined themes while permitting flexibility to probe emergent topics, thereby facilitating a more straightforward data analysis.

As a form of interactive classroom action research, this study fostered the development of learners' metadiscourse and narrative writing strategies. The consistent use of scaffolding techniques engaged learners actively throughout the intervention, gradually shifting responsibility to them and establishing them as informed contributors to the learning and data generation processes. This active participation cultivated their command of complex skills such as idea generation, organisation, and development. The RtL approach enabled the tailoring of pedagogical strategies to diverse learning styles and needs, which is critical for effective writing instruction. This method also improved mechanical skills and fostered a more profound understanding of narrative structures.

A collaborative environment was cultivated through designed activities that required close tutor-learner interaction. For instance, structured classroom exchanges intensified this interaction, thereby improving writing performance and developing metacognitive awareness. This collaborative atmosphere subsequently prepared learners to articulate their viewpoints confidently during the focus group discussions.

Furthermore, guided and authentic RtL activities such as rewriting sentences using similar patterns, joint construction, and immediate application of new vocabulary directly developed writing skills, which positively influenced their contributions in post-intervention discussions. Consistent instructional support and various preparatory moves appeared to stimulate learner motivation. The RtL framework also enhanced teaching practices by enabling the identification of

specific gaps in learners' writing performance. This allowed for the provision of targeted writing tasks and the tracing of their writing evolution. The iterative nature of RtL facilitated consistent observation of learner behaviour, permitting the readjustment of teaching strategies to address needs by building upon learners' background knowledge. Moreover, using reading texts situated within the learners' own context appeared to heighten engagement and made them more aware of how narrative elements cohere.

6.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the action research in which the RtL intervention was implemented to enhance learners' writing performance. A mixed-methods approach, utilising both quantitative and qualitative instruments, was employed to generate and analyse data. This process involved classroom observations, teacher interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis to address the research questions. The findings were synthesised and related to the research questions and objectives outlined in Chapter One of this study. Additionally, this chapter drew upon the literature discussed in Chapter Two to substantiate the data analysis. The subsequent chapter will provide a summary of the findings and recommendations derived from this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

As the final part of this study, this chapter discusses the themes that emerged from the findings in response to the research questions. It presents a summary of all the data from the previous chapter. Based on these findings, recommendations are provided for future research, aimed at guiding the implementation of RtL. Additionally, the limitations of the study are addressed to offer insights for other studies pursuing similar interests and objectives. Finally, a personal reflection on the study is included.

The purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of RtL in enhancing learners' narrative text writing abilities. The primary research question is formulated as follows: To what extent does RtL pedagogy contribute to the development learners' narrative writing ability? In relation to this, several key findings emerged from the study, framed by the following questions:

- What effect does RtL pedagogy have on advancing learners' ability to compose narrative texts?
- How does RtL help learners present their ideas and experiences creatively in narrative writing?
- Why does the implementation of RtL influence learners' approach to narrative writing in the observed manner?

7.2 Summary of Key Findings

7.2.1 The effect of RtL pedagogy on advancing learners' ability to compose narrative texts

The study has established that the RtL pedagogy significantly improves learners' ability to apply grammatical conventions and language mechanics in composing narrative essays. This enhancement was achieved as learners modelled their writing on the sentence structures found in exemplar texts. As a result, they demonstrated the ability to use correct tense, construct sentences employing appropriate language patterns, and improve punctuation and spelling. The findings

indicate that the repetition of activities through the scaffolding interaction cycle facilitated the effective use of language features, which are essential components of narrative writing. Emphasising the importance of repetition, Damayanti (2016) posits that the teacher's repetitive elements in the mentor text assisted learners in recognising grammatical choices necessary for completing a story in English.

Results indicate that RtL enabled learners to articulate their ideas and experiences using suitable narrative writing structures. They successfully incorporated the stages of narrative writing—exposition, orientation, complication, and resolution—along with the necessary phases to establish the narrative context. The essays produced were cohesive and coherent, with events unfolding chronologically due to the application of the schematic structure. This finding underscores the efficacy of RtL in guiding learners to compose well-structured texts. Supporting this, the study by Yulianeta et al. (2022) confirms that learners' scores increased from pre-test to post-test as they were better able to sequence their texts following the RtL intervention.

Additionally, the study found that RtL enhances learners' levels of engagement. It was established that pre-reading activities, reading sentence by sentence, and various scaffolding techniques foster emotional, cognitive, and behavioural engagement, thereby creating an interactive classroom environment. This pattern aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) assertion that successful cognitive and intellectual development relies on social interaction. Furthermore, the findings validate the effectiveness of the learning phases proposed by Rose (2014)—such as preparation, focus, task, evaluation, and elaboration—in maintaining learner engagement. Evidence indicated that providing support and guidance in a step-by-step manner reduced cognitive overload, thus sustaining learner engagement. It was also revealed that clear and interesting instructional activities inherent in the RtL approach further contributed to maintaining learner engagement.

7.2.2 How RtL helps learners present their ideas and experiences

The study underscores that collaborative learning activities within the RtL framework enable learners to express their ideas and experiences creatively. By effectively utilising their background knowledge, learners constructed and edited new texts collaboratively within their groups. Interaction with both the teacher and peers facilitated the negotiation of text in joint construction,

exposing learners to diverse ways of self-expression and idea presentation. This finding resonates with Bernstein's (1975) assertion that a visible pedagogy is performance-based, placing emphasis on learners' performance within the discourse they create and the extent to which their texts meet established criteria.

Moreover, results demonstrate that RtL contributes to the enhancement of learners' vocabulary. The study found that identifying and defining key words from texts played a crucial role in vocabulary development, enabling learners to express their ideas and experiences more creatively. This aligns with the findings by Lestari et al. (2022), which indicated that following the implementation of RtL, learners developed decoding abilities, made meaning of words, and differentiated between them.

7.2.3 Why RtL affects learners' approach to narrative writing

The study demonstrates that the RtL approach significantly enhances learners' confidence in narrative writing. Various forms of support, facilitated through scaffolding, instil writing confidence in learners. Individual attention to learners' specific needs fosters greater self-assurance, allowing even less academically gifted students to experience growth in confidence and improvement in their scores. This finding aligns with Bernstein's (1990) assertion that within the pedagogic relationship, teachers possess the authority to control the processes of acquisition and transmission.

Moreover, the research results confirm that equal access to teaching and learning materials enables learners to engage in the learning process uniformly, thus reducing educational inequalities. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses indicate that fostering equality in learning cultivates a democratic classroom environment where learners feel free to express their ideas. This underscores the critical importance of the RtL approach, as it effectively eliminates the disparity between more and less capable learners in terms of both reading and writing skills. This approach promotes social justice, which is one of the principal objectives of RtL.

7.3 Implications of the Study

The findings of this study reveal that the RtL methodology is effective for teaching narrative writing. Resultantly, the implications of this study hold considerable theoretical and practical significance for learners, teachers, and policymakers. Teachers are encouraged to apply the RtL approach to enhance learners' narrative writing performance. Through RtL, both teachers and learners can integrate reading and writing activities more seamlessly.

Schools facing educational injustices, such as unequal access to learning opportunities stemming from students' home backgrounds, should implement RtL to scaffold learning and provide additional support. This aligns with Bernstein's (1971) assertion that teaching is context-tied and context-dependent. The findings strongly suggest that policymakers should consider formalising the RtL pedagogy as a programme for schools, particularly for English Language teachers.

Furthermore, teachers may gain increased insights into genre-based writing styles, enabling them to instruct in both creative and directed writing. This understanding would allow teachers to emphasise the social purposes, generic structures, and linguistic features of each genre. Additionally, it would facilitate cultural and contextual teaching of texts, rendering learning experiences authentic and meaningful for learners.

By employing the RtL approach, learners can develop a better understanding of schematic structures and the appropriate language features crucial to any genre. The RtL methodology is also beneficial in monitoring the learning process, ensuring that learning objectives are met. Furthermore, the learner-friendly nature of the RtL approach allows students to practise independently, accommodating a variety of learning styles.

7.4 Limitations of the Study

The case study design employed in this research may limit the generalisability of the findings to a broader population. Future researchers are encouraged to implement the RtL pedagogy over an extended duration, as the current study faced constraints due to a congested syllabus and limited time. Additionally, learners' performance on the post-test may have been influenced by their

familiarity with the questions presented in the pre-test, which could have affected the validity of the results.

7.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that the RtL pedagogy be introduced more widely as a teaching pedagogy in schools. For future research, it would be beneficial to expand upon these findings by examining the effectiveness of RtL in enhancing writing performance across various genres, as this study was limited to a single genre. Further research is warranted to explore how RtL can improve teachers' pedagogical practices. Teachers and policymakers are encouraged to implement RtL interventions through various forms of action research, such as collaborative and school-wide action research.

Moreover, it is advisable for teachers to engage in self-study action research to assess how such efforts can contribute to their personal and professional development. Teachers should also promote access to language-rich texts to mitigate learning inequalities arising from limited resource availability. Supporting this notion, Mataka et al. (2023) assert that the RtL pedagogy should be considered as a viable solution to literacy challenges due to its decolonial principles. Additionally, the implementation of RtL in primary schools is recommended to help learners develop essential reading and writing competencies, facilitating a smoother transition to secondary education.

Curriculum developers should consider integrating the RtL pedagogy into the curriculum, ensuring it aligns with learners' needs. However, this should occur only after providing adequate training for teachers, as they are the key implementers of this approach. In addition to these recommendations, several avenues for future research may prove beneficial.

7.6 Self-Reflection

Juma (2024) posits that self-reflection serves as a powerful tool for educators to evaluate their instructional practices, identify strengths, and pinpoint areas for growth. The RtL approach has significantly contributed to my personal and professional development. It has not only enhanced

my ability to design effective instructional strategies but has also improved my capacity to scaffold learning. Given that RtL is genre-based, I am now applying it across all genres of writing, which has deepened my content knowledge in various writing forms.

This experience has provided valuable insights into aspects of my instructional practices that require improvement. Since adopting RtL, I have transformed into a more reflective teacher. Engaging with critical pedagogy has underscored the necessity of continually reflecting on my teaching methods to adapt to the diverse needs of my learners. I have come to understand the importance of considering learners' socio-economic backgrounds, as these factors significantly influence their approaches to learning.

7.7 Conclusion

This study investigated the effectiveness of the RtL pedagogy in enhancing learners' narrative essay writing performance. The results derived from observations, learners' scripts, questionnaires, and interviews indicate that RtL has accelerated learners' narrative writing skills. Evidence suggests that RtL can improve writing achievement among both resource-deprived and privileged learners; a necessity in today's educational landscape. This chapter has discussed the key findings of the study, outlining the implications, limitations, recommendations, and personal reflections arising from the research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Learners pre-test and post-test

Figure 1: Mothabi's pre-test

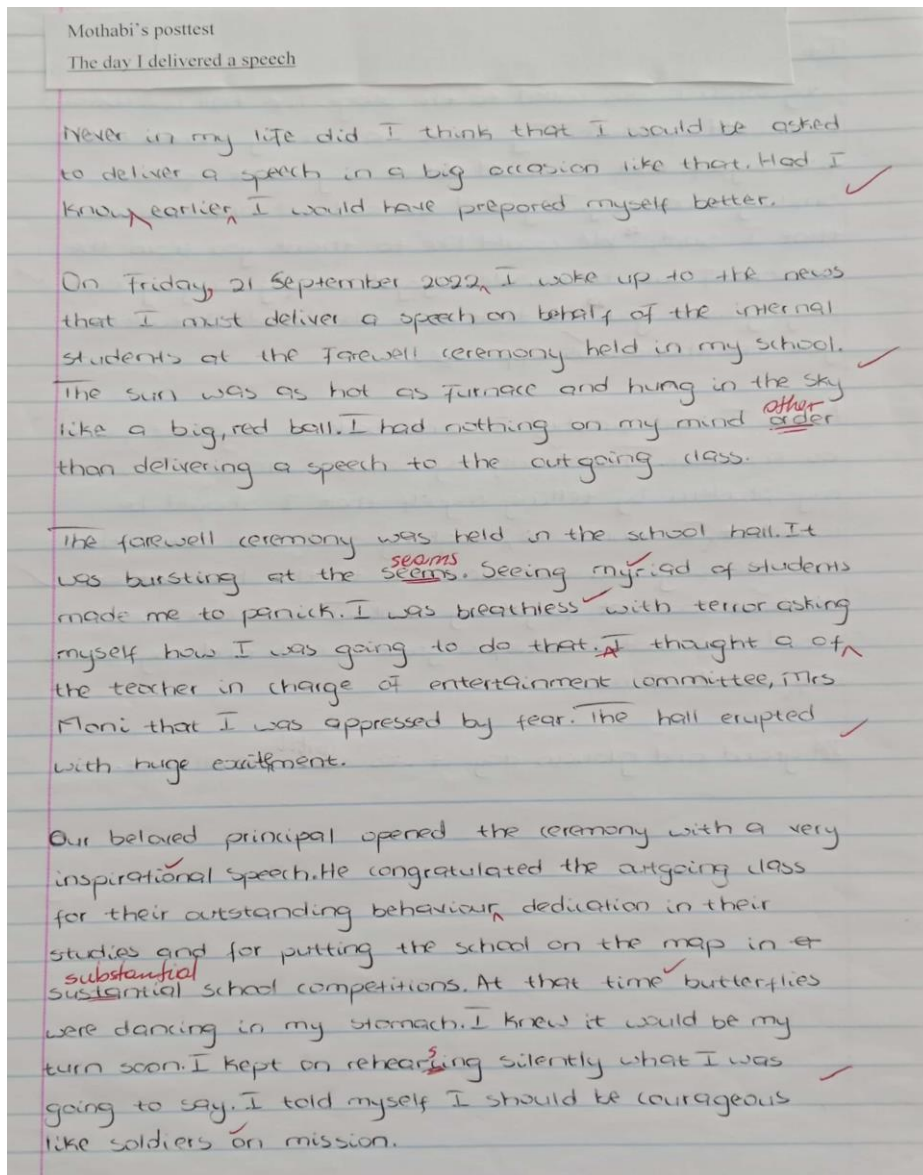
Mothabi's pretest
 The day I delivered a speech

I never ^{thought} think that the ^{entertainment} teacher ^{would} ask me to make a ^{farewell} ^{He} speech, he said I must do that because I was ^{older} than everyone. It was on the 13 September 2022 when I ^{woke} up to ^{the} news that I must make a speech for grade eleven students. The sun was as hot as a ^{fire} ^{stove}. I was thinking of nothing but delivering a ^{speech}.

The ^{farewell} was ^{held} in school ^{hall}. It was ^{bursting} ^{bursting} with people when I saw many students. I ^{promised} ^{promised}. I ^{thought} think of telling Mrs Mone that I was ^{afraid} ^{afraid}. It was noisy, students were full of ^{excitement} ^{excitement}. The principal was the ^{first} ^{first} speaker and ^{congratulated} ^{congratulated} them for their good behaviour and working hard then hard I was still afraid when he ^{spoke} ^{spoke}. I practiced ⁵ ⁵ my speech so that I ^{could} ^{could} be ^{courageous} ^{courageous} like soldiers on mission.

The ^{disc jockey} ^{disc jockey} played a good song. I was called to the stage. The hall made a ^{loud} ^{loud} ^{noise} ^{noise} because students were ^{applauding} ^{applauding}. I was afraid but I said that we ^{enjoyed} ^{enjoyed} being with them and for playing together. They ^{give} ^{give} big applauses then after that we ate and left.

Figure 2: Mothabi's post-test

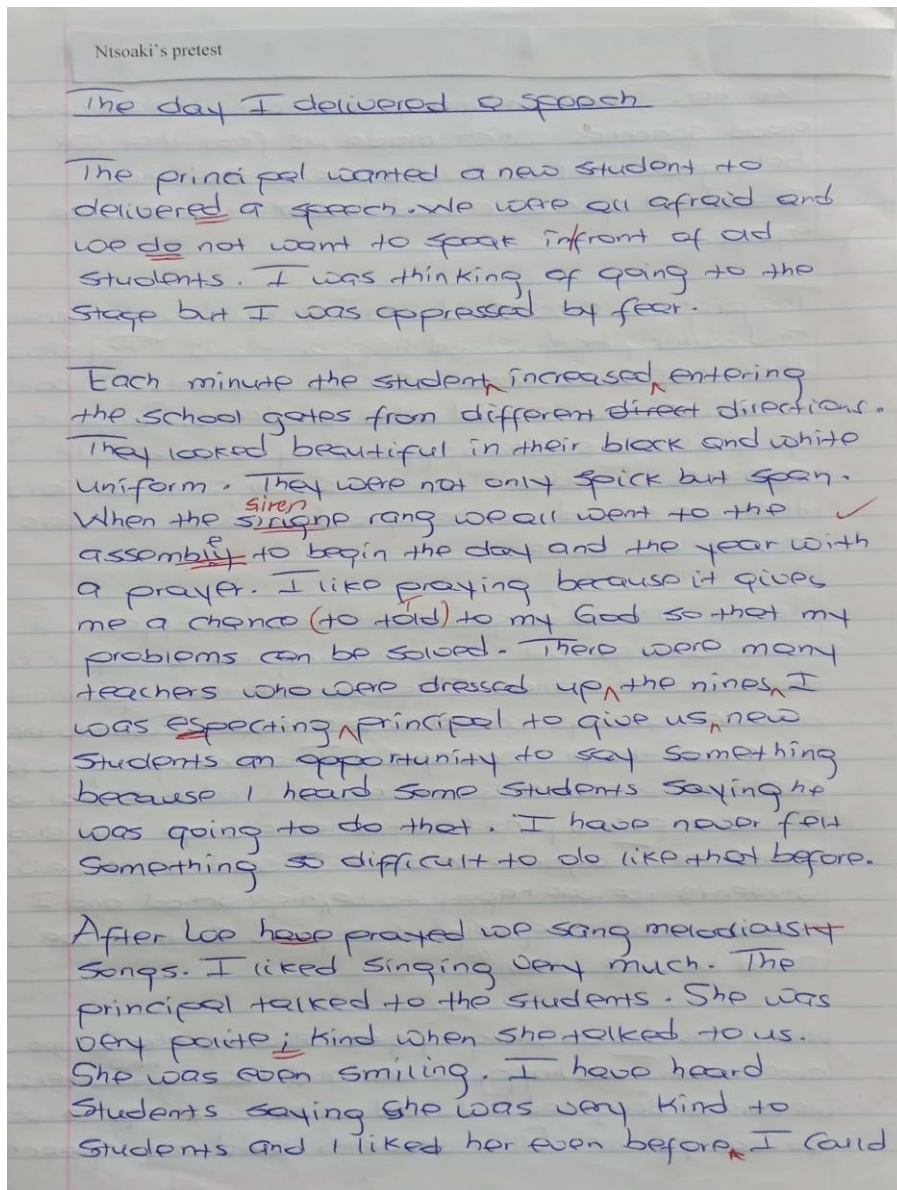


It was after the disc-jockey had played a serenading song when I was called to the stage. The hall reverberated with wild applause. My heart was in my mouth but I told myself that I should deliver a greatest speech. Smiling wisely, I greeted the audience and then after that I said, "We would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We enjoyed studying, singing and playing with you." At that time the Grade 11 students gave me thunderous applauses.

After I had finished I went back to my seat proud as a peacock. Thrilled me, my worries were over. I solved my problem by telling myself that I should be confident. I cannot be laughing stock. Soon after that the ceremony was over. We went to the hall to eat delectable food not forgetting drinks. I have never been proud like that. I delivered a great speech and my friends were proud of me.

A grand and glorious day it was ~~until~~ until we all left.

Figure 3: Ntsoaki's pre-test



See her. There were many teachers who delivered good speeches which made us feel that we belonged. They told old students that they should not give us a bad treatment. We were equal.

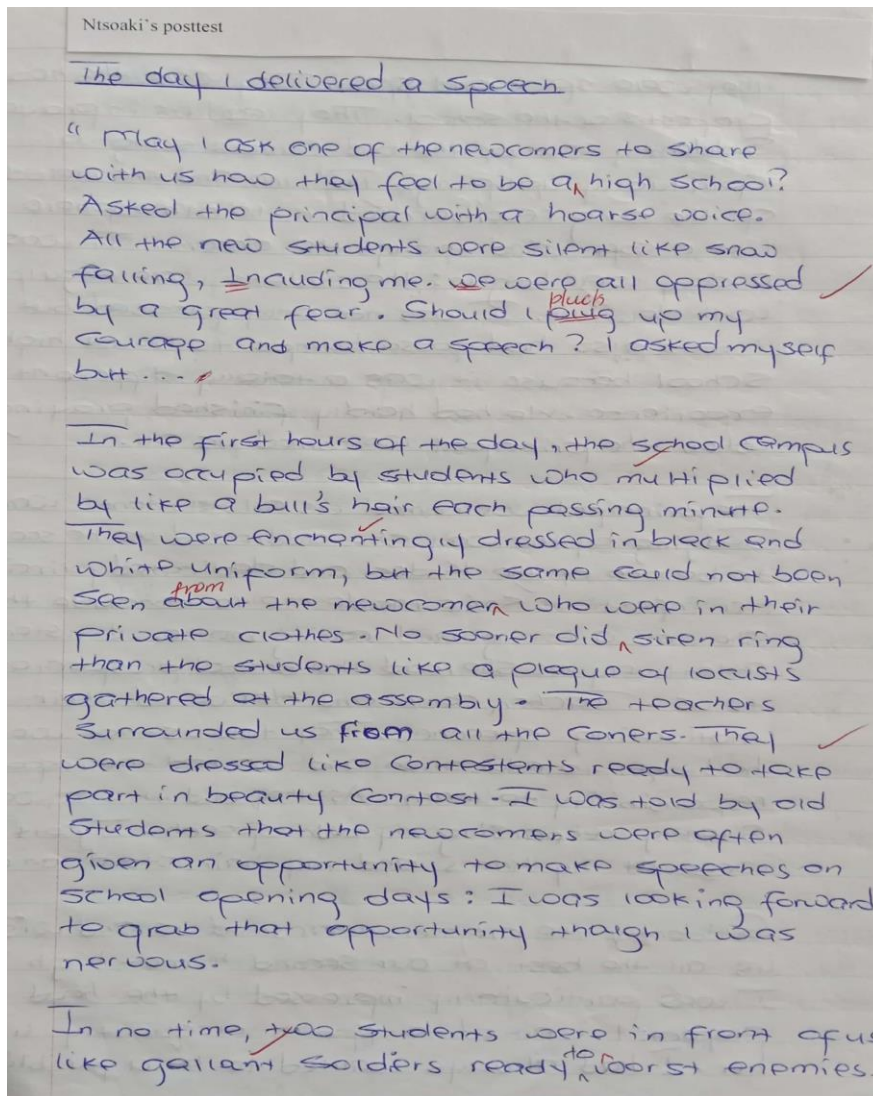
The prefects also said that we should not be afraid and nothing bad would happen to us. They showed that they cared about us new students. I wanted to be like them to lead other students. Our principal gave us new students opportunity to make our speeches. Madam Menthatisi, our principal, said that we should not be afraid because we were at our new home.

No one wanted to go in front because of fear. I wanted to go but I was shaking like a leaf in a storm at that moment. I had to take that opportunity because I always wanted to be a leader. I went to the stage even though I was afraid. It was not going to be first time to make a speech because I had done that when I was at primary. As I walked to the stage other students cheered me. I began to be brave. I said as the new students we were happy to be high school and I asked them to help us to pass so that we could be like them.

When I was done delivering my speech students cheered me up once more. I was happy to see and hear my ^{new} teachers. We were all delighted and I did not expect things to work so well for me. Other students said my speech

was interesting. It was an unforgettable day
for me and I told my parents what I had done.

Figure 4: Ntsoaki's post-test



They were spick and span. They were the head prefects of the school. They led us in prayer. Suddenly one of the old comers sang a spiritually uplifting. The tune and the melody of the song reverberated in the atmosphere like a soft wind through the desert. It was a day well begun; the students were engulfed with delirium. I was not only pleased but I was also had goose bumps to be at high school because it was a totally different experience. We had hardly finished praying when the principal welcomed us all.

The principal welcomed us all students warmly. Judging by the way she addressed us he seemed to be one of the kindest and dedicated principals. Her infectious smile made me to conclude that she was a loving and caring mother. I listened attentively as she read the school prospectus to us. Teachers came and delivered their motivating speeches. They told us that we all had right to education and we had the responsibility to learn. As they did that I was silently rehearsing my own speech. I felt weak at my knees and my hair stood on end.

Suddenly the prefects welcomed us and wished us all the best at our second homo-high school. I was particularly impressed by the head prefect: I wanted to speak eloquently like her. I had always wanted to be a public

Speaker when I grew up. That is why I was interested in saying something on behalf of the newcomers. As I have expected we were given an opportunity.

We had all hesitated for we were struck by mortal fear since we were at unusual surroundings. For one panic stricken moment, I shook like a leaf in a storm. Since I had a drive to be a leader when I grew up, I saw that as an opportunity that could not be let pass by. Instantly I was in front on the stage. I had always been courageous when I delivered speeches in the past and I relied on my past experiences. I cleared my throat and with a great exultation in my voice I said, "It is our profound gratitude to be at high school as the new comer and I hope everyone is going to play a monumental role in helping us to turn our dreams into reality."

No sooner did I finished my speech than euphoric screams filled the air. It was as noisy as a taxi rank on a hot day in Bombay. Proud as peacock, I thank them for their massive ~~attent~~ attention. I felt that I have made good speech. My teachers also joined the screams. It made me feel like a king receiving homage from loyal citizens. My principal could not hide his excitement.

He thanked me and asked who I was.

It was indeed a day one cannot forget.

What a scintillating and educative speech!

It was one of the proudest moments.

Figure 5: Gumede's pre-test

Gumede's pretest
The day I delivered a speech

The day I was chosen to deliver a speech was when my teacher ^{asked} ~~ask~~ me to do that at my school.

It was on the 13 January 2023 when I was asked to deliver speech. I never thought I ^{could} ~~can~~ do that in my life. I was ^{afraid} ~~scared~~ and I ^{asked} ~~ask~~ myself if I would manage to do that. When I ^{peeped} ~~peeped~~ ^{through} the window I saw the first rays of the sun, there were white clouds.

When I arrived at school my class teacher asked me to welcome new students. I ^{told} ~~tell~~ her I was ^{shy} ~~shy~~. I ^{did} ~~do~~ not know how ~~to~~ make speeches. My hair stood on end and my body ^{shook} ~~shooked~~. I wanted to speak but I could not. As we ^{stood} ~~stand~~ there, after few seconds I told her I ^{was} ~~am~~ ready. She did not listen to me, she said I must do it. *Use past tense to describe things that have happened.*

The whole school was busy and students were as many as stars, they ^{were} ~~was~~ ^{spoke} ~~talk~~ and ^{spoke} ~~talk~~ the teachers engaged ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ deep ^{conversations} ~~conversations~~. My friend did not ^{believe} ~~believe~~ what I ^{told} ~~tell~~ him. ^{He} ~~he~~ laughed and ^{said} ~~says~~ I must do what madam ^{said} ~~says~~. I was ^{frightened} ~~frighten~~ not knowing what to do.

When I ^{was} ~~am~~ about to ^{deliver} ~~delivered~~ my speech madam ^{said} ~~says~~ I should not be ^{afraid} ~~afraid~~. My ^{heart} ~~heart~~ was in my mouth. In a ^{flash} ~~flash~~, we were told to go to the hall. I ^{delivered} ~~delivered~~ my speech but was afraid. The ^{principal} ~~principle~~ was the one who ~~talked~~ talked to us first. He said new students and old

^{ones} ~~once~~ must not break rules and regulations. We were as ~~silent~~ ^{silent} as a ~~heel~~ ^{hill}. ~~then~~ after that it was me.

I told new students we ~~are~~ ^{were} happy to be with them and we welcome. My ~~heart~~ ^{heart} was ~~still~~ ^{still} in my mouth ~~and~~ when I ~~said~~ ^{said} those words. I recalled the points I wrote and talked about them. I ~~wondered~~ ^{wondered} if I was the one who was in front of many students. ~~Then~~ after that my teachers were happy. I was also delighted.

Figure 6: Gumede's post-test

Gumede's posttest
The day I delivered a speech

"We are going to welcome new students, so I am asking you to deliver a speech on behalf of old students," insisted my class teacher. I thought she was not serious.

No day dawned like another, so did Monday, 15 January 2023. No sooner did I did I peep through the window than I saw the first rays of the sun hitting mountain summits. White clouds drifted across the sky. The morning was hot and and muggy. Never in my life had I thought that I would be asked to deliver a speech in front of multitude of people.

Scarcely did I arrive at school when one of the blue my class teacher requested me to welcome new students. My heart palpitated, my hair stood on end and my body shook ~~ten~~ tremendously. ~~I~~ I tried to speak but speech refused. Few seconds later, I told her that I was not ready but she turned deaf ears on me. She told me that she would not take no for answer.

The school campus was full of hustle and bustle. Around the the students were as many as stars, looking spick and span. Few meters from the hall teachers were engaged of in deep conversations. The air was filled with an aroma of delectable food from the kitchen. At that moment I told my friend what I was asked to do. Smiling winsomely, she said that she trusted me and I can do. My heart was still in my mouth. In a flash, the head prefects ushered us to the hall.

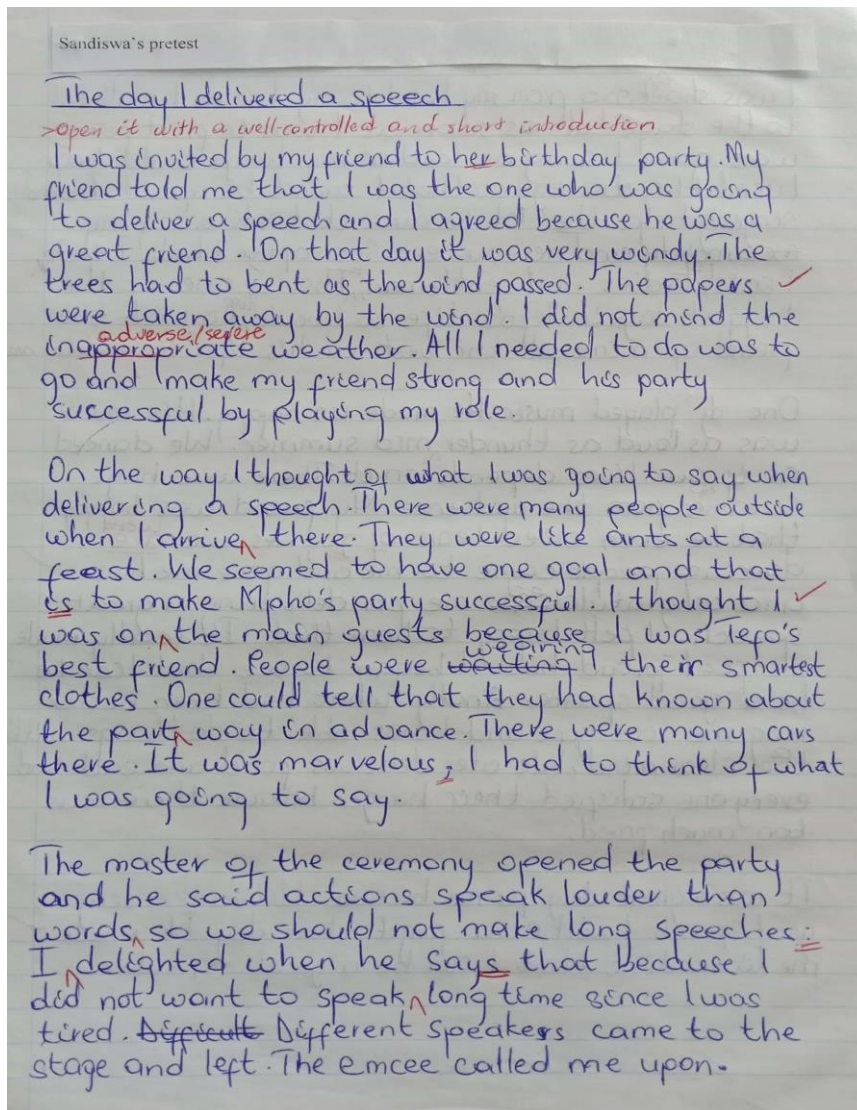
In no time we all seated down in the hall. After the prayer the principal address us with a hoarse voice, he told us ~~that~~ the school rules and regulations and ordered us to respect them. All the students were as silent as a hill at that time because we feared him. Teachers also gave students instructions and welcomed them. While they were addressing us I was busy writing the points for my speech. I wondered if I was going to do it. Biny, my reliable friend, kept encouraging me.

No sooner did the head prefect deliver his speech than it was my turn. My heart was in my mouth when I looked at the audience. I recalled Biny's word, "You are a good motivational speaker that's why madam has chosen you." My class teacher madam Pule whispered to me that I should not be afraid. Soon after, I became as brave as a lion. I began my speech by greeting the principal, teachers and schoolmates. I also stressed that we should behave ourselves well. Thereafter I welcomed the new students. In my speech I said that we should bond like a mother and her child.

I could not finish my speech, the whole hall roared like thunder. I heard many ~~speaks~~ ^{write neatly} the whole hall roared like students saying, "Well done, well done girl." The teachers joined their hands to ^{congratulate} congratulate me. Mrs Pule came to me and gave me a hug. I could not believe my eyes. My classmates were jumping, calling my name. After I had dismounted the stage they came to me and said they were proud of me. At that moment I was very exhilarated and thanked Biny for being by my side.

Will I ever miss an opportunity to deliver a speech?
Never. I look forward to another opportunity. ✓

Figure 7: Sandiswa's pre-test

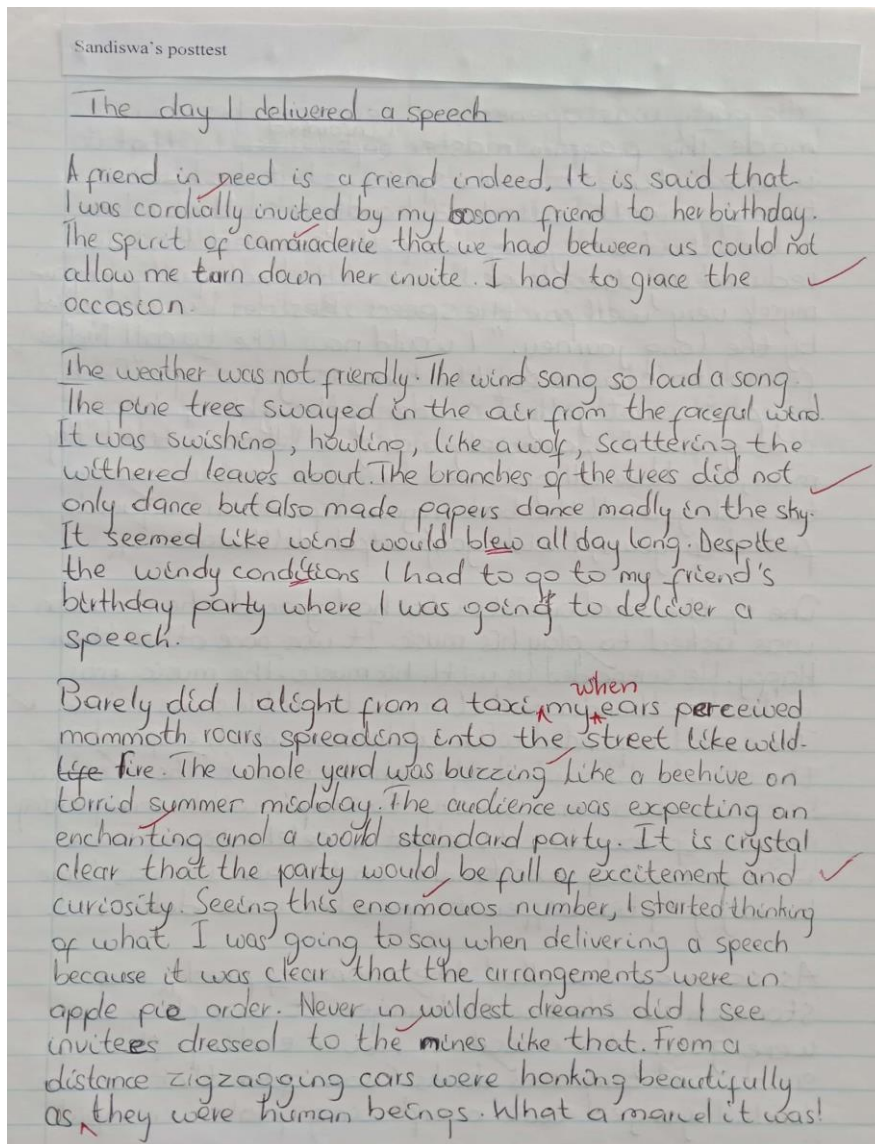


I was shaking from my head to my toe as I walked to the stage but as soon as I was in front fear was gone I sang as loud as my lungs could bear. I used this strategy so that I cannot be afraid. Indeed singing helps the lot because it took away my ~~an~~ anxiety and nervousness. Soon after that I spoke I said, "Ladies and gentlemen, this is one of the biggest days in Tefo's life so I would ^{like} to wish this friend of mine all the best in his life." Use quotation marks

One ^{in full} ~~of~~ played music. He made us happy. His music was as loud as thunder mid summer. We danced as if our lives depends on it. There were huge ~~scree~~ screamers from the audience. My friend was happy that he even cried tears of joy. As we ^{were} are dancing people came to me and gave me hugs and congratulations ^{ed} me for delivering a great speech. I felt happy to hear that. It really made me feel proud but I began to see that I can be a good speaker. Finally what had been bothering me was gone and I was able to do things with the clear mind. We ate delicious food and each and every one satisfied their hunger because there was too much food.

It was a great day for me because I delivered a very good speech. I will never forget that day. It made me to realize that I can be a great speaker.

Figure 8: Sandiswa's post-test



The party was opened and few speeches were made. The program master ^{informed} us that it was not time to make speeches but to have a time of our lives. He had hardly said that when I breathed a sign of relief. He seemed to have reduced my stress levels because I did not fully prepare myself very well for the speech. Besides I was exhausted by the long journey. "I would now like to call Mpho's friend to come over, the time is yours Tefo". Ouch, my feet went jelly. I suddenly thought of how I was going to, anxiety was gone. What a trick! "Hey man, we have all gathered here from various corners to wish you all the best in your life. As an exquisite friend of yours, I wish you fruitful deliberations."

One of the local artists who had graced the occasion was asked to play his music. It was none other than Happy. He serenaded us with his music. The music was as loud as thunder and it made the table seats rattle. The crowd responded with ululations which erupted in the streets like wind through the desert. The sensational songs made all and sundry to erupt with ear-piercing screams of excitement. What a celebration! There ^{was} a thrill of excitement in the air. It was time to enjoy after different speeches were delivered.

As soon as I smelled the aroma of fresh, my stomach rumbled with hunger. It was clear we were going to absorb a never ending flow of snacks and sumptuous drinks. Soon after that it was lunch. I gorged two overflowing plates in rapid

Succession for I was famished and haggard after body trembled like a land hit by a volcano. I had not anticipated that it would be a plain sailing to deliver a speech. Leaving the delectable beef ribs on the plates was the last thing I could do. It was time to eat after we had done so much work.

It was a glorious celebration which had everything: love, food and entertainment. The last was endless. I could not think of any better speech than the one I had delivered.

Figure 9: Anita's pre-test

Anita's pre-test

The day I delivered a speech

My heart beat faster and I felt weak feelt like crying. It was after I was chosen to deliver a speech at family reunion.

It was on the ~~October~~ ¹ ~~October~~ 2022. I wake up early in the morning. It was already beat. I was chosen to deliver speech and I could not believe it. It was time to be with relatives, we have not seen in a while, to wind the clock to the old times and make new memories.

It was held in the park which was easy for everyone to access. It was just a short drive from our village. There were games for our elders and activities for the younger generation of the family like facing painting, balloon twisting, a bouncy castle. We planned a talent show, a group photo and friendly competitions.

I was afraid because I was asked to make a speech and it was my first time to do that. I had delivered a speech. The food is arranged on the table in different stages, such as salad bar, a hot food star and (dessert/dessert) station. This set up allows members to easily choose the food they wanted. Mr. Johnson, my grandfather, was the one who was running the programme. I liked the fact that he was fluent and he was the one who knew more about the family history. He appealed to all family members to come together. As he was speaking we were all listening attentively. Since he was saying important things, I did not want to miss a word. It was exciting and we were exuberant to hear other members delivering informative and helpful speeches.

When senior members of the family had delivered their speeches, I was asked to come in front and deliver a speech. I heard some of the parents encouraging me. They said that there was ~~no~~ ^{nothing} to fear and I should

not be afraid. I did not no where I should begin because I was nervous. After few seconds I was no longer afraid. I said that young people should always behave themselves well so that they cannot give the family image a bad image. *Use direct quotes*

My grandfather was proud of me. It was a great reunion because I was able to reunite with my father. We ate nice food after the event and played some nice games. There was loud music after that. We had to leave because it was getting dark. After I had delivered my speech, I could feel my eyes releasing few drops of tears. They ~~were~~ were tears of joy because I could feel that the speech was great. *Show variation in sentence structure*

Figure 10: Anita's post-test

Anita's posttest

The day I delivered a speech

My heart was a wild thing in my chest, superabundant tears filled my bloodshot eyes and my body trembled vigorously. I was only thinking one thing delivering a speech at a family reunion.

At long last, the day for family reunion arrived. It was on the 13 October 2022. It was the day to reminisce about old times and create new and lasting memories as a family. I was awakened by the beat of the sun on my face for it baked through the curtains, birds hopped about in the sky chirping different songs. Indeed the night was gone and I had to prepare myself for the monumental day in the history of our family.

Quick as lightning, luxurious vehicles arrived and took us to the prestigious Schlabg - the national park that was the place where the reunion was held. We had hardly arrived when we saw a chain of towering mountains which offered an excellent view of the park. The valley was blanketed with flowers. Down the valley, there were traditional houses which offered abundant accommodation rooms. We were all exhilarated to see the beauty of the park and to unite as a family.

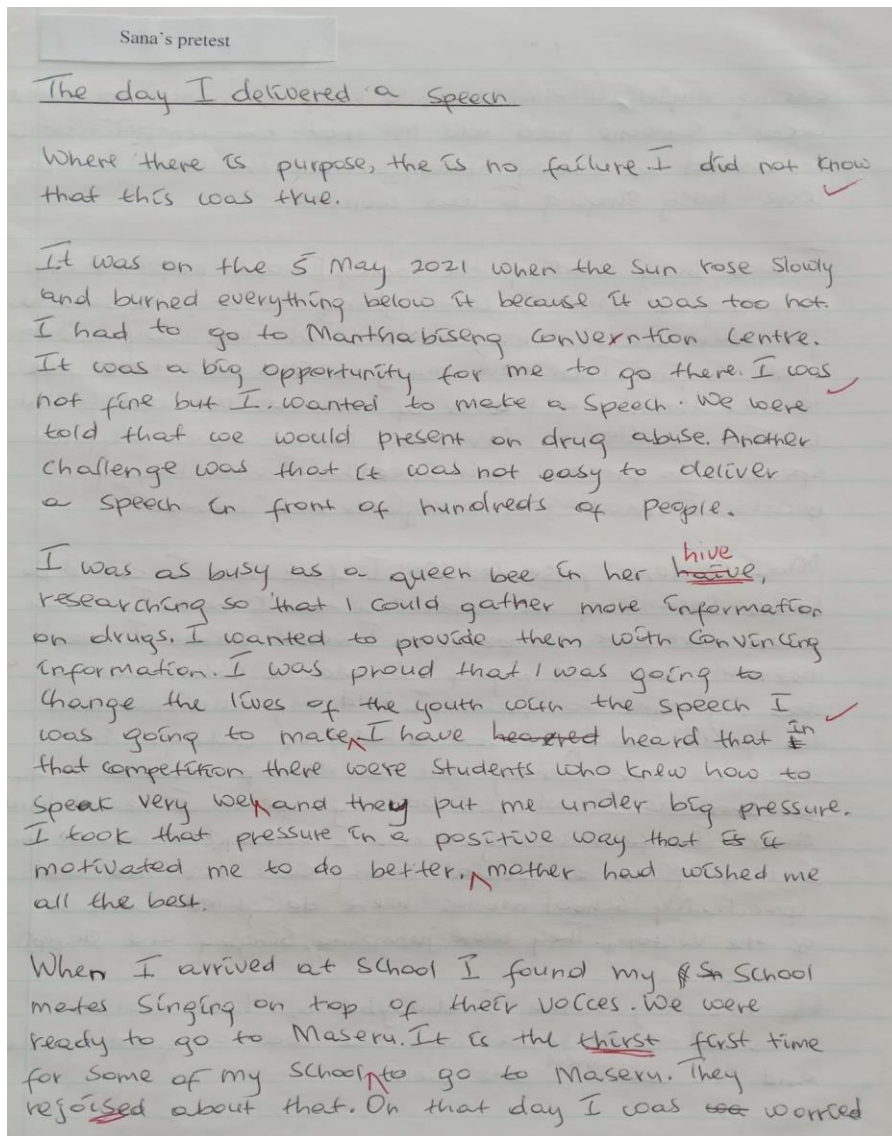
No sooner had we arrived than we were directed to an open space by the tour guide where the family will discuss its matters. Hearing that we were about to begin, my heart beat against my ribs. I was asked by my grandfather to deliver a speech on behalf of the teenagers. I was told to tell them that family unity was the most important thing. The eloquent priests of the family opened the gathering with a prayer. Soon after that my grandfather Mr. Johnson delivered his speech. I was shocked to hear him saying that some of the members of the family were no longer doing things together. We were exuberant to hear different family members delivering inspiring speeches.

No sooner was I called upon to give a speech than my heart heaved with quick breaths. In no time, I said with my soft but clear voice, "I welcome this great opportunity to say a few words on behalf of all teenage boys and girls... Let us not give our family a bad image by behaving in a bad way." I could not contain as deepening cheers filled the atmosphere. I was congratulated for delivering a great speech. I was able to deliver my speech because I was encouraged by senior family members. I told myself that I should not be afraid.

Soon after I had delivered my speech, sudden hot tears streamed down my cheeks in pairs. Those were tears of joy because I had delivered a great speech. I could not hide my excitement because on that day I reunited with my father whom I never thought I would see again after he had left the family. He was the proudest man on earth because I had done the unbelievable. Then after that we treated ourselves with ~~many~~ ^{with} palatable food. Not only did I hear speakers rumbling like angry thunder but I also heard ear-splitting ululations.

It was a great reunion which taught me important lessons in life. We left delightedly when darkness swallowed the earth.

Figure 11: Sana's pre-test



asking myself whether I would have a chance to speak because someone had told me that the competition consisted of many speakers. While the other students were busy singing I was worried.

I was busy reading the notes I have prepared and thinking of what I was going to say. As soon as we got there we saw many students who were noisy and some were singing. There were many vehicles who took the lanes there. In a matter of seconds we were called in. The master of ceremony called upon different speakers to present their speeches. I was happy because I managed to register my name.

Most students presented well. I felt that I could do better because of the experience that I had. In school when there were competitions I would present. I was nervous but told myself I should be calm. Soon it was my time to present. I told my audience that the youth should the bad habit of indulging in drugs as our country will not develop because of us. as soon as I had finished my speech I heard loudest cheers. The fear was gone and I knew I had made it. I was given a special certificate for the best speech. My school mates were delighted because of the victory. They were jumping, singing and clapping.

On the way home I thought of how mother was going to react since she was a good speaker and she wished me well.

Figure 12: Sana's post-test

Sana's posttest

The day I delivered a Speech

Where there is purpose, there is no failure, a great and powerful African proverb says. Little did I know I would be a living testimony of this adage.

At long last, 12 April 2021 arrived. The sun rose slowly and started to burn everything on earth. It had dried up the early and shimmering morning dew. The temperatures were already high as it was on radio and television that they would reach thirty five degrees Celsius. Going to Manthabiseng convention centre was not an opportunity to be missed through I was not in excellent health. I was bothered by a persistent flu. I had always wanted to make the speech in youth conference. The theme for the day was drug abuse.

For the whole week I had been hitting the sheets late. I was as busy as a queen bee in her hive, navigating the internet so that I could gather more information on drugs. I felt confident that I was going to make phenomenal contribution in the lives of the youth. I was under enormous pressure because from what I heard there was going to be powerful speakers there. I also wanted to be counted among them. My mother had always been my source of inspiration because she

was a chairperson at Tale Community Council and people always talked about her eloquence when she addressed her audience. Would I be able to follow on her footsteps? It was a question to be answered in a matter of minutes.

Upon my arrival I heard my exhilarated schoolmates singing melodic and scintillating songs. Instantaneously, we prayed and left. I was concerned asking myself whether I would get an opportunity to make my speech. I asked Mrs Irene, our French teacher if she knew how many students were going to present. We had hardly arrived Life Community hall when we saw multitudes of students. They were singing, taking pictures, shouting and some of the female teachers were ululating enchantingly. Outside, there was a fleet of captivating vehicles hooting thunderously.

In an instant the siren rang and we got inside. I was still concerned whether we would get an opportunity to present my speech. The master of ceremony led us in singing the national anthem. Then he told us the purpose of the conference which was to ensure that the youth was to empower young people by discussing matters which concern them. I was walking on the air after I had successfully registered my name to be one of the speakers. I was sure that my mother would be jubilant to hear that because I was worried asking myself whether I would deliver

Speech.

The time for speeches came and speakers were
 as many stars at night in a moonless
 sky. Most students were well prepared and they
 presented well but I had a feeling that I could
 stand head and shoulders above them since ^{at} ~~as~~
 school I had always jumped at every opportunity
 to address the audience and my schoolmate had
 confidence in me and I would not let them down.
 At long last I was called to the stage. My ~~heart~~ ^{heart}
 palpitated and armpits emitted streams of sweat.
 In no time, I was confident when I remembered that
 Mrs. Mapalesa, my mother said I should through
 fear out of the window and do what I liked best.
 "The youth should stop indulging in drugs.
 Remember that you are heartbeat of this country,
 I mean the future of this country ~~is~~ ^{is} in your
 hands." No sooner did rapturous rounds of applause
 reverberate in rhythm than I was overwhelmed
 by emotion. Ecstasy, anxiety, disbelief. All those
 words described how I felt. I was given a special
 certificate in acknowledgement of the greatest
 speech I spoke the show.

Getting out of the taxi, I made a beeline home.
 How would my mother react when I told her I
 made a moving speech and I ~~made a moving~~
^{speech} ~~speech~~ and I was second to none?

Figure 13: Ivy's pre-test

Ivy' pretest

The day I delivered a speech

~~Was~~ I dreaming or ~~it was~~ real I was saying goodbye to our brothers and sisters. I was panicking on that day. It was difficult to deliver a speech.

As ^{always} is the case, I was ~~awakened~~ ^{awakened} from my sleeps by spoons and cups in the kitchen. However on that ^I woke up because there was thunder and rain outside. I could see the rays of the sun in my room. I knew that my time was up at home. I had to prepare myself quickly or else I would be late. Then after that I ran to school.

It was a farewell ceremony at my school for the outgoing class. I was selected give a speech on behalf of internal students by a teacher in charge of the entertainment committee. It came as a surprise to me because I have never delivered a speech before. I wondered why I was the one who was chosen and I felt uncomfortable. I tried to convince myself that I could do it but I failed to convince myself. It was a big responsibility for me. There were many guests and they wore smart clothes. They seemed to have put on their best clothes. They were as clean as a chemist. I could see many cars outside with some

hooting. It was noisy and I could see that it was going to be a successful farewell. As I looked at how things were happening I became afraid even more. How Mr Ali do this to me? I was almost sweating everywhere because of ~~fear~~ fear.

There was no use to complain I had to do what I was asked to do. Sir Ali had some trust in me, even when he wanted to send someone somewhere he would choose me, so I thought that maybe I should not disappoint him. Without waste of time I was on the stage standing in front of the other students. I wished them all the best in their examinations, which they were about to write. I did not look directly at them but above them so that I could not be afraid. I even told them that as the internal students we are proud of them and we were happy to be with them. They were listening attentively. I said, "We are going to miss you."

After I had said thank you I heard a lot of noise. Students, teachers and parents were cheering me. I wondered how I managed to do that. Mr. Ali saw something I did not know about myself. Thereafter the master of the ceremony played the interesting

Song, I found myself dancing but I did not know how because I was afraid. After the ceremony I ate from the same pot with the teachers and the external students.

I will never forget that day it made me a better person. How can I forget Sir Ali? ✓

Figure 14: Ivy's post-test

Ivy's posttest

The day I delivered a speech.

Was I dreaming or it was a reality that I was given a mammoth responsibility of bidding goodbye to the external class? I could hardly believe it. I was struck by terror.

As it was always the case, I awakened from my deep sleep by the overpowering chatter and clatter of spoons and cups in the kitchen. Contrarily, on that I was awakened by the noise of the incessant rain and thunder. The first rays of sunshine brilliantly lit up my room. The sun rose and clouds disappeared. The birds were busily ecstatic that they could not stop singing in rhythm. Realizing that I was going to be late for school, I took a quick bath. In lightning speed, I took a nourishing lunchbox, with my umbrella on my hand and I ran like mosquitoes chasing after their favourite prey to school.

I remember that day with fond and lovely memories. It was the most important day at school: a farewell ceremony for the outgoing class. As an internal senior student I was selected by Mr Ali, a teacher in charge of the entertainment committee to say goodbye to them. It came as bold from the blue because he neither saw nor heard of me delivering a

Speech before. It was during his Economics lesson when he ordered me. A glance at him made me my knees weak and my heart fluttered. How could he choose me? What was even worse was that I was the youngest in class but he put a huge responsibility on my shoulders.

Special guests were smartly dressed like contestants ready to take part in beauty pageant. Euphoric noise was the order of the day. From a distance zigzagging cars were approaching the school. The entire ground was swept clean and well decorated. Seeing that it was going to be a big event due to the preparations made in every corner, great fear arrested me. It sent chills on my spine and my armpits were emitting rivulets of sweat.

Then came the biggest moment for me since I had arrived at school: to deliver a speech. My heart was beating uncontrollably. I kept on telling myself that it was time for me to make myself known. Sir Ali was hard to please, I knew him very well and if I could trust for such a gigantic occasion, how could I disappoint him? First I wished them all the best in their examinations and they were as silent as snow falling. They were listening very carefully with interest. "As internal students, we are deliriously happy to say that we are proud of ~~to~~ you. We are going to

miss you because you we won a substantial number of accolades with you --- The dedication you have shown in your studies had always inspired us". There was a thunderous round of applauses after I had put the mike on the table. It was crystal clear that I had delivered a motivating speech. Screams of excitement filled the air. I could see my teachers joining their hands for me. It gladdened my heart; I had to thank Mr Ali because he saw something I did not see in me. I never thought I would do it.

The master of ceremony played a scintillating song after that and it was one of my favourites. On the way back to my seat, I danced because I had done something that gave me the hardest time. The music was as loud as thunder, it made the table seats rattle. The beats of both high and low pitch African drums stomped through the air. Upon sitting I received a lot hugs for my efforts. No sooner did our principal close the event than we ran to the kitchen to be treated with mouth-watering food.

It is said that in life big moments get the best out of you. I am a living testimony of this.

Figure 15: Thateho's pre-test

Thateho's pretest

The day I delivered a speech

Winning is something that I really like. I felt proud to deliver a good speech and win something very important in my life.

It was on the 10 June 2021. Outside it became dark in an instant. There was too much lightning in the atmosphere and made me afraid. The streams and valleys were filled with water. It was raining cats and dogs. I was angry because there was a great possibility that the competition I wanted to attend might be canceled.

I was thinking of the competition I was going to enter. It was a competition whose purpose was to promote the economy of the country. The venue for the competition was pioneer mall in Maseru. I entered the competition by registering myself online. The message I received showed that the winner would get a scholarship and win a brand new car. I think that was made me to ignore the bad weather conditions. The prizes were too big to miss. I was eager to try my luck of that.

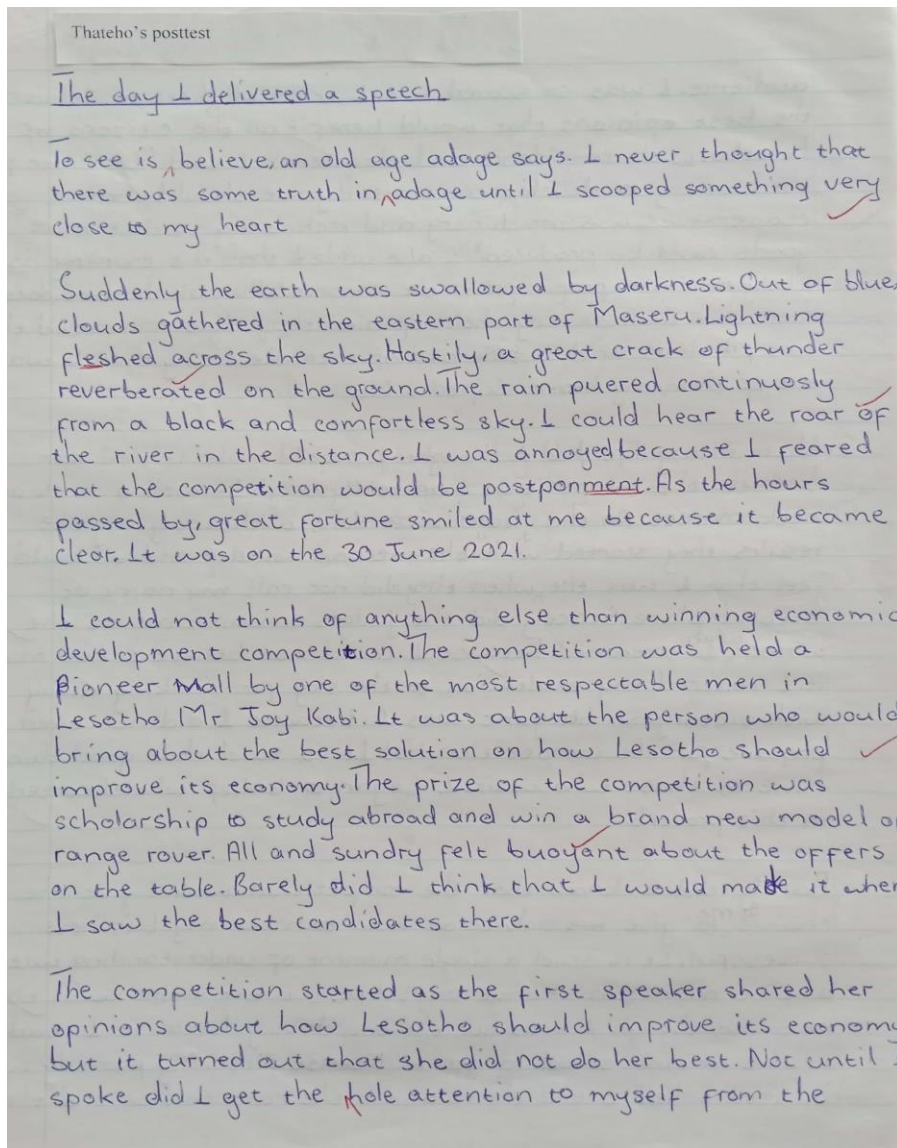
There were many competitors who shared their opinions about how Lesotho can improve its economy. I was afraid when I heard how fluent my competitors were. I spotted one weakness from them: they were not emphasizing their points with gestures. I told myself that I should be brave like soldiers on mission and move when I delivered my speech. It was going to be my first time to be at pioneer mall let alone delivery a speech.

After the presentations, the judges added their scores. At that time my heart was ~~on~~ my mouth. I could not believe it when the judges announced me as the winner. I was jubilant because that have been my dream since I entered the competition. I screamed out loud and wept for joy. People congratulated me and wished me all the best. I wept tears of joy not knowing what I should say and do.

To win a car and a scholarship was a dream come true for me. I did not expect myself to walk away with the ~~most~~ first prize. I wondered how they were going to react at home when I broke the most exciting news to them. The unfortunate part was that I did not have a license. It would have been even more interesting. Since that I had been looking forward to studying in one of the most developed countries. my family was delighted, amazed and surprised.

I could not think of any better day than that one. It filled me with wonderful memories. It was no longer a dream but a reality.

Figure 16: Thateho's post-test



audience. I was so scared but I tried all [^]best to deliver the best opinions that would benefit all the citizens of Lesotho. With confidence and eloquence I said, "In order for the country to develop economically, we should form cooperatives, use machinery and technology so that more goods could be produced." I also added that the country is likely to make profit from the exports. When all the candidates were done with sharing their opinion, the judges announced the two finalists and I ~~was~~ one of them. Realizing that I was one of them, my heart skipped a bit.

Never in my life had I thought I would make it that far because the competition was really tough. It was a neck and neck contest. As the judges were done with analysing the results they started with the second winner and I could feel that I was the [^]when they did not call my name at second place. Scarcely did the judges announce me as the winner ^{when} I screamed because I could not believe I had made it. I roared my exultation to the sky for walking away with victory. So blatant was I because I did not even prepare for the competition. Ha! It is said that good things come to those who wait. I began to believe wholeheartedly in this proverb.

Barely did I know that the competition would give the chance ^{to me} to give me advice on how to make my business successful. It is said a single moment of understanding with a wise man can change one's life. I went home with the new car, though I was not the one driving because I had to go [^]the driving school to get a license first. My family was amazed when I told them about the competition and they

were proud of me.

As for the scholarship, I was told that as soon as I got admitted in one of the overseas, I should ~~make~~^{meet} the organizers of the competition so that arrangements for paying the fees could be made. That win ~~make~~^{made} me to move heaven on earth at school so that I could make it to an overseas country and further my studies. The speech made me to look at life in a different way. I began to approach things with total care and dedication.

I could not think of any better day than that one; it was the best and wonderful day of my life. It is a well-known fact that people become what they want to become. With that victory I will be what I want to be.

Figure 17: Mphohali's pre-test

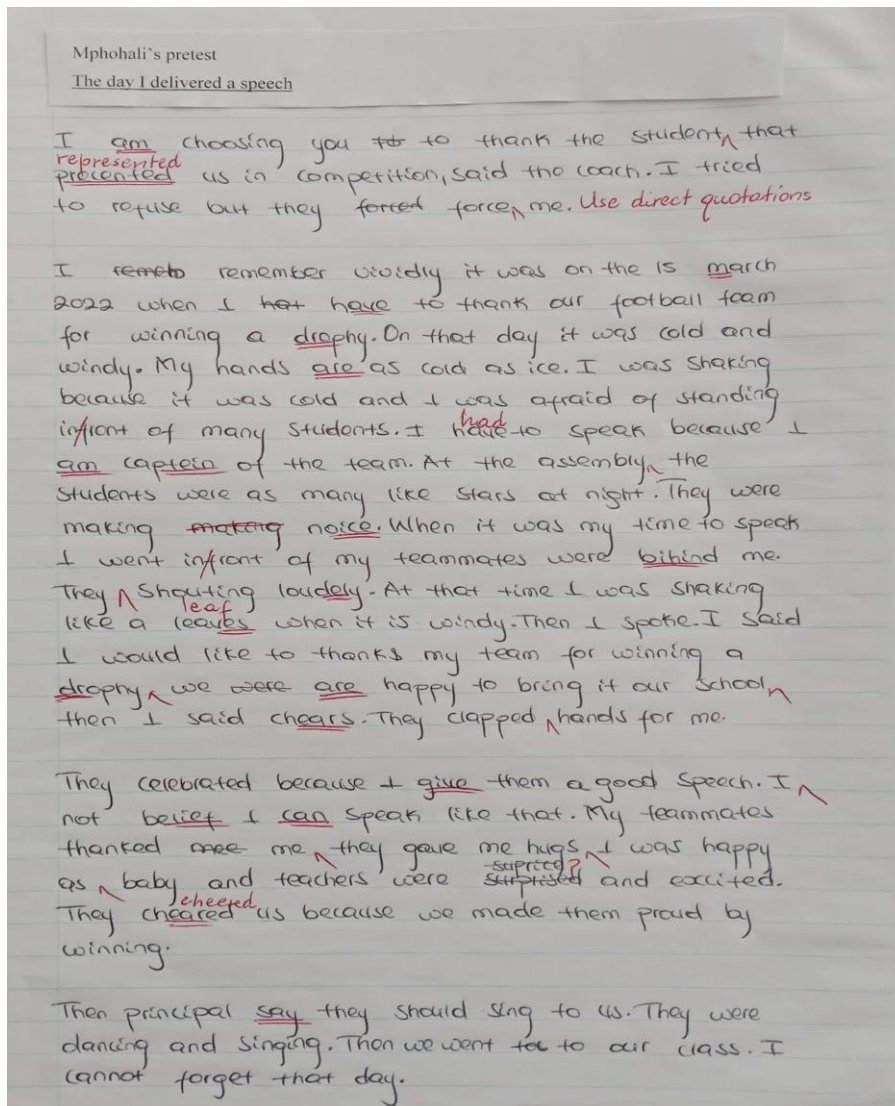
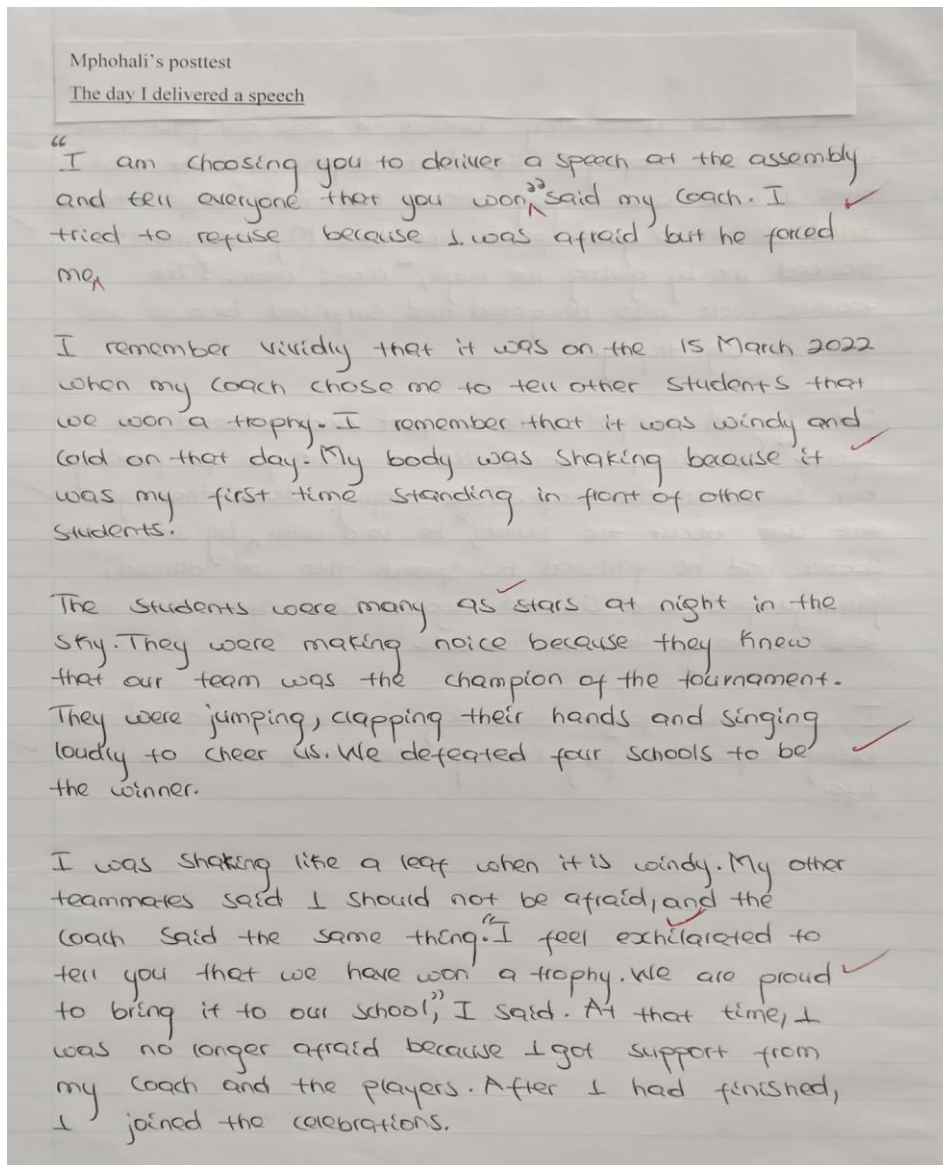


Figure 18: Mphohali's post-test



We were all celebrating because it was our first time to win the trophy. I lifted the trophy high. At that time I was also happy because I did not believe that I could deliver a good speech like that. My teammates thanked me by giving me hugs, "cheers, cheers!" The teachers were also delighted and surprised because we won a big trophy.

Our beloved principal came in front and delivered the speech. "Gentlemen, I would like to thank you for putting our school on the map. This trophy shows that you are care about the school," he said with a big smile. No sooner had he finished his speech then we danced, jump jumped and shouted again. Soon after that he told us to go to our classes.

I will never forget that day because I learned that being responsible pays. Working hard leads to success in life.

Figure 19: Reneiloe's pre-test

Reneiloe's pretest

The day I delivered a speech

The ^{renowned} late Dr. Nelson Nelson Mandela once said it always seemed impossible until it's done. I did not believe this.

It was on the 15 September 2022 when I had a good time. The sun was already rising outside. The rays of the sun were in the mountains. I was asked to deliver a speech to Grade seven students at my former school. The speech was about thanking them for completing their primary school level.

When I arrived at Future English Medium Primary School I could not believe my eyes when I saw many students and parents. They were buzzing like a beehive. The primary schools students were moving up and down, enjoying the atmosphere. I did not expect the invitation. When I was there I have never seen high school students invited to make speeches. My old school mates welcomed me. They told me that they knew I would be coming and I was surprised to hear that. I began to see how big the ceremony was and I had feelings of worry and fear.

The ceremony was held inside a tend that was big enough to accommodate many people. It was beautiful inside because it was well decorated. When the deputy principal asked me to sit in front among the guests, I fear and worry increased within me. There were many parents, people from the education office and primary school principals. After I had sat down the farewell ceremony started. I could not believe that I was the only high school student among primary students. I thought it was a dream.

The principal Mr Bulane was the first speaker and he asked us to deliver speeches thanking his students and told us to motivate them. After one primary school student had spoken it was my time to deliver my speech. I was afraid because it was a big ceremony I did something very important to me. I had written a few points on the small piece of paper so that if I became afraid I could not run out of ideas and make people love me. I also wanted to prove to my former school mates that I have grown and I was their big sister.

I began my speech by greeting the audience. I thanked the principal and his teachers for inviting me. I congratulated grade seven students for working hard to complete their primary school level. I said, now that you are going to high school a lot is expected from you. You should know that all the good things we are seeing in the world were achieved through hard work. I heard the audience agreeing with me. They joined their hands together for me. I was a relieved girl at the end. I was no longer worried. Mr Bulane thanked me for the good speech.

It was red letter day for me. I never thought I would make people feel grateful like that. I left a proud girl.

Figure 20: Reneiloe's post-test

Reneiloe's posttest

The day delivered a speech

The world renowned late Dr. Nelson Once said, "It always seems impossible until it's done." I thought that doing thing was not possible until I was given a big Challenge of addressing a gigantic audience

The sight that greeted me on 25 November 2022 left me with thrilling memories. I had hardly looked at the window when I saw the rays of the sun hitting the Curtains. Opening the door I saw the sun hitting the mountain summits. At that very moment, gladness was a song on my lips because I was looking to giving Grade seven students a Thanks-giving speech. A week before, madam Kemiso, my principal, had received a letter inviting me to deliver a farewell speech at my former primary school. Filled with exultation, I accepted the invite. My former teachers and schoolmates were very close to my heart and I could not turn them down.

Scarcely did I arrive at Future English Medium Primary school when I saw multitudes of people gathering next to the gate. Never had I seen the ground and its surrounding so jam-packed like that before. To my satisfaction, I perceived a fresh aroma of food that was so appetizing that I felt like taking massive bites. My old schoolmates came rushing to me to welcome. They were all wearing smiles please. I told them that I was ~~the~~ ~~guest~~. I was filled with great ecstasy to see them because it seemed as if it was a million years since we saw one another. I was wearing my stunning and picturesque high school uniform. To my amazement, they knew that I was invited. I thought that I ~~was~~ ^{was} going to surprise them. Everyone who knew seemed to expect a lot from me and that worried me. I did not anticipate that

The farewell was held at the school playground inside a beautifully decorated tent. There was a sweet scent of flowers. My former deputy principal, Ms Nthatisi asked me to sit in front amongst the most important guests. I began to worry even more. I could see that it was going to be an exceptional farewell because education officers, principals from other schools and the parents were there. As I sat among them they waved at me and I waved back. In a matter of seconds, the ceremony started and it was opened by the pastor, who wished us to make speeches that would change the lives of the outgoing class for the better. Without further ado, the proceedings for the day began. I was the ~~first~~ third speaker, the second speaker ^{was} after an internal student. In no time, I was called upon to say a few words. I began my speech by greeting and I said I was blissful to be to be invited to the event. At that time, I was struck by mortal fear but I did not show it. I kept on throwing a glance on my notes and that was what kept me going. Seeing the audience nodding in agreement encouraged me. I concluded my brilliant speech by saying, "We are expecting big things from you in the years to come. Remember that nothing great in the world was achieved without working hard. Thank you my listeners." I was full of confidence because I could see my speech was very important. Consider splitting this paragraph into two parts, it

^{is too long.}
Myriads of people gave me thunderous applause. I heard ceaseless screams from my old schoolmates. I waved at them. Gladness was the song on my lips because I managed to speak. I was now as free as a bird because I was no longer worried by speaking in front of hundreds of people. The master of ceremony, my former grade five teacher congratulated me for my beautiful speech.

Indeed it was a red letter day for me for many reasons. I never knew that I could be a great Speaker who makes people feel grateful like that. I felt influencial and I left with my head up.

Appendix B: Transcriptions of classroom exchanges

The meeting focused on analysing a story titled ‘The Day I Won a Competition’ in an educational setting. Speaker 1 who appears to be a teacher led the discussion by first engaging learners with questions about their personal experiences with school competitions, then guiding them through the story’s elements and vocabulary analysis. The session began with interactive discussion where learners shared their feelings about participating in competitions with responses ranging from excitement to fear. The teacher then introduced the story about a character named Mary who represented her school in a competition.

The class proceeded to identify and label the key elements of the story structure, including introduction, beginning, rising action, climax, falling action, climax, falling action and conclusion. Throughout the lesson, the teacher facilitated detailed vocabulary analysis, explaining terms such as “beaming,” “glowing,” “courageous,” and “enthralled.” The latter part of the session involved a collaborative reading session where different speakers took turns portions of the story, followed by further analysis and comprehensive questions.

Chapters

Introduction and initial discussion 00:00:00

The teacher engaged learners about their competition experiences and introduced the story about Mary’s competition experience. Learners shared emotional responses ranging from excitement to fear.

Story elements analysis 00:04:51

Detailed breakdown of story structure including introduction, beginning, rising action, climax, falling action, and conclusion. The teacher guided learners in labelling these elements.

Vocabulary analysis 00:10:26

Extensive discussion of key terms and phrases including “beaming,” “glowing,” “courageous,” “enthralled” and “exuberantly.” The teacher provided definitions and context for each term.

Story reading and comprehension 00:18:58

Multiple speakers participated in reading the story aloud, followed by analysis specific phrases and expressions used in the text.

Action items

learners to underline key phrases and write definitions in their notes

Learners to continue to analyse the story

Learners to review vocabulary terms discussed in class

Exchanges in a classroom interaction

Teacher: Okay. Now that we have read the whole story we will unpack the key words and some of the phrases. I will be asking you questions, but before I could do that I will first of all prepare or give you some clues regarding the words that we are going to define not forgetting the phrases and some expressions. Now let us look at the first sentence in paragraph one. The first sentence starts with an utterance that is used to show extreme happiness. Can you identify that utterance? Who can see what that utterance is?

Learner: Yay yippee

Teacher: Very good. Yay yippee. Actually, yay yippee is a formal exclamation that is used to express great excitement. Very good. When you are happy you can use yay yippee to express joy. Underline it and write it is used to show extreme happiness

Teacher: Okay the sentence also outlines how the crowd reacted after Mary, the winner of the first prize, at the competition was announced. Here is the question; which word tells us that the crowd praised the narrator for winning the competition?

Learner: Cheered.

Teacher: That is correct. Okay. Let us all underline the word 'cheered'. The word cheered means to shout for / to someone for doing something good. In this instance Mary was cheered by the audience by her listeners for winning the first prize in the competition. Cheered could be used in sports to cheer the players. It could also be used in music competitions to cheer other singers. Apart from that cheered could be used in beauty contests to cheer up the contestants. In the next sentence the audience continued to show appreciation towards Mary's achievement. What else did the audience do to express their appreciation? Let me go through that once again. In the next sentence the audience continued to show appreciation towards Mary's achievement. Mary was successful on that day. What else did the audience do to express their appreciation? What did they do?

Learner: They took Mary pictures.

Teacher: They took Mary pictures. Very good. They took Mary pictures. Everyone, can you underline 'people even took pictures.' Mary in turn expressed how happy she was. Listen to that. Mary in turn expressed how happy she was. Can you identify an expression that is similar in meaning to the word happiness? Sandiswa, go on.

Learner: Beaming from ear to ear.

Teacher: Beaming from ear to ear. It really is, carry on like this. It means to express happiness in a great way. Mary showed extreme happiness because she had defeated everyone in the competition. Underline the expression 'beaming from ear to ear.' Next to the expression, write showing happiness. Have you done that?

Learners: Yes, sir.

Teacher: Okay. We will have to leave it here; our time is almost over. We shall forge ahead in the next lesson.

00:00:01,500 --> 00:00:03,190 [speaker_0]
Good morning, class.

00:00:04,400 --> 00:00:04,410 [speaker_1]
Good morning, sir.

00:00:04,420 --> 00:00:05,260 [speaker_0]
How are you today?

00:00:05,440 --> 00:00:06,970 [speaker_1]
We are fine, sir.

00:00:07,500 --> 00:02:17,600 [speaker_0]
Okay. I'm fine. Time caught up with us in the last lesson. So can you please take out your copies? (papers rustling). Okay. Let us focus our attention on paragraph one. We stopped our discussion where Mary was beaming from ear to ear. We agreed that this expression means to show great happiness. Who can write that on the board? Here is a piece of chalk. Write the expression. I can see that you are ready. We are also practising spelling skills. Ok let us give him time. Is he correct?

00:02:17,620 --> 00:02:18,940 [speaker_1]
Yes, sir.

00:02:18,950 --> 00:02:42,280 [speaker_0]
He really is correct. Beaming from ear to ear. Yes. "The word beaming" is spelled correctly. Now who can demonstrate what Mary did when she learned that she was the winner?

00:02:43,540 --> 00:02:44,380 [speaker_1]
I can do that.

00:02:44,400 --> 00:02:57,590 [speaker_0]
You can come in front and demonstrate that. Yes. You can do whatever you think she did. Okay. Just a demonstration of what she did.

00:02:57,600 --> 00:03:00,590 [speaker_1]
(laughs) (students chattering)

00:03:00,590 --> 00:03:00,590 [speaker_0]
Yes.

00:03:00,590 --> 00:03:01,300 [speaker_1]
She was smiling.

00:03:01,320 --> 00:03:02,220 [speaker_0]
She was smiling.

00:03:02,290 --> 00:03:04,870 [speaker_1]
(laughing)

00:03:04,880 --> 00:03:05,960 [speaker_0]
Right, Thateho?

00:03:05,970 --> 00:03:07,340 [speaker_1]
Yes. She was smiling.

00:03:07,400 --> 00:03:09,240 [speaker_0]
See. He has proofed that Mary was happy.

00:03:09,520 --> 00:03:10,060 [speaker_1]
Yes, sir.

00:03:10,120 --> 00:05:14,420 [speaker_0]
That is it. That was a good demonstration. All right. Thank you. We'll now shift our attention to paragraph two. Second paragraph. We are still going to read the story in detail. We are reading sentence by sentence. We are unpacking the meaning of the words, phrases and some of the clauses. Looking at the first line in paragraph two, Mary was selected for a story telling competition. I will read what the teacher said: "It is being held next week. Keen to join in?" The teacher asked Mary if she would be interested in going to the competition. Can you describe how she felt about going to the competition?

00:05:14,820 --> 00:05:15,570 [speaker_1]
Her face was glowing with excitement.

00:05:15,620 --> 00:06:14,610 [speaker_0]

Good. Her face was glowing with excitement. Let us underline glowing with excitement. Have you all underlined that? This means that she showed interest to join the competition. She was happy in other words. So next to the phrase you can write happy. Alright. What were her friends hoping for from the competition?

00:06:14,610 --> 00:06:21,240 [speaker_1]
Her friends were hoping for her to get the first prize.

00:06:21,260 --> 00:07:23,780 [speaker_0]
Exactly. That is winning the first prize. Hmm. Good. Winning the first prize. They were hoping that Mary would walk away with the top award. Identify a phrase which shows that the narrator was looking forward to winning the prize.

00:07:24,820 --> 00:07:26,550 [speaker_1]
Excited and determined.

00:07:27,100 --> 00:07:49,860 [speaker_0]
Excited and determined. Well put. Mary showed that she was looking forward to winning the prize because she was happy and eager to know which prizes would be given to the winners. How would you feel if you were announced as the winner?

00:07:51,280 --> 00:07:52,420 [speaker_1]
Happy.

00:07:52,440 --> 00:07:53,550 [speaker_0]
Happy.

00:07:53,640 --> 00:07:54,000 [speaker_1]
Satisfied.

00:07:54,040 --> 00:07:57,420 [speaker_0]
Satisfied. Satisfied. Very good.

00:07:58,420 --> 00:07:58,430 [speaker_1]
Proud.

00:07:58,440 --> 00:07:58,880 [speaker_0]
Come again?

00:07:59,520 --> 00:08:00,500 [speaker_1]
Proud.

00:08:03,900 --> 00:09:10,860 [speaker_0]

Proud. Good answers. Happy, satisfied, proud. Good answers, indeed. Winning a competition for your school would fill you with good and happy memories. It would make you feel proud and your school would be well-known.

00:09:10,920 --> 00:09:12,210 [speaker_1]

Yes, sir.

00:09:12,260 --> 00:09:31,820 [speaker_0]

Okay. Okay we are now going to divide some words into syllables so that you can spell them correctly. A syllable is a unit of pronunciation. It is just a unit of pronunciation. Okay. I am going to write such words on the board. The first one is glowing. Can you identify glowing from the text? Have you located it? glow-ing. Excitement. Can you all see excitement?

00:09:31,860 --> 00:09:33,500 [speaker_1]

Yes, sir.

00:09:33,520 --> 00:10:45,580 [speaker_0]

Alright. Determined. We also have satisfied. So like I said, we're going to divide these words into syllables. In the word, uh, glowing, we have two syllables. -Glow and then -ing. The first one and then the second one. Words could be broken down. If you practise this skill, you will definitely be a good speller. Our second word which is excitement and it has -ex. What else do we have?

00:10:45,640 --> 00:10:46,360 [speaker_1]

-cite.

00:10:46,380 --> 00:10:49,580 [speaker_0]

-cite. Very good. -cite. And then?

00:10:49,640 --> 00:10:50,470 [speaker_1]

-ment.

00:10:50,470 --> 00:11:11,220 [speaker_0]

-ment. So these are the three units. Three units. Three parts, three syllables. The next word is determined. Determined. How many syllables are there in the word, uh, determined?

00:11:11,240 --> 00:11:12,319 [speaker_1]

Two.

00:11:12,329 --> 00:11:12,329 [speaker_0]

Two?

00:11:12,500 --> 00:11:13,750 [speaker_1]
Three.

00:11:13,819 --> 00:11:16,280 [speaker_0]
Give those three syllables.

00:11:16,819 --> 00:11:18,230 [speaker_1]
(coughing)

00:11:18,260 --> 00:11:21,160 [speaker_0]
How many syllables?

00:11:23,740 --> 00:11:25,600 [speaker_1]
Two.

00:11:25,760 --> 00:11:25,770 [speaker_0]
How many?

00:11:25,780 --> 00:11:25,810 [speaker_1]
Three.

00:11:25,810 --> 00:11:27,290 [speaker_0]
How many parts do we have?

00:11:29,180 --> 00:11:29,329 [speaker_1]
Three.

00:11:29,329 --> 00:11:30,380 [speaker_0]
Louder.

00:11:30,900 --> 00:11:34,200 [speaker_1]
Three.

00:11:34,420 --> 00:11:39,750 [speaker_0]
Three. Good. Three.

00:11:39,750 --> 00:11:40,090 [speaker_2]
Three.

00:11:40,090 --> 00:11:40,090 [speaker_0]
De-

00:11:40,090 --> 00:11:40,350 [speaker_3]
ter-

00:11:40,350 --> 00:11:49,880 [speaker_0]
... -mined. Determined. Determined. Three syllables. The next word is satisfied. How many syllables does it have?

00:11:50,100 --> 00:11:52,120 [speaker_2]
Satisfied.

00:11:52,140 --> 00:11:52,700 [speaker_0]
Yes.

00:11:54,060 --> 00:11:54,569 [speaker_2]
Sati-

00:11:54,569 --> 00:11:54,569 [speaker_0]
Satis-

00:11:55,620 --> 00:11:57,080 [speaker_2]
... -fied.

00:11:57,120 --> 00:13:02,760 [speaker_0]
-fied. Three syllables. When you are dividing these words into syllables that is where you need to use stress. That is the pitch of your voice should vary. Glowing, there is too much stress on –glow. –ing, the voice is falling here. In the word excitement, the stress is on –cite, in –ex the voice is not too high. In –ment the stress is low. Do you see that?

00:13:02,819 --> 00:13:03,660 [speaker_1]
Yes, sir.

00:13:03,699 --> 00:14:31,480 [speaker_0]
Okay. So this technique will help you to be good spellers. Now, let's shift our attention to paragraph three. And I will read the first three sentences. "After school, I made a beeline back home. Before my mother could utter a word, I told her about the competition. She spread the news to my father and both of them were delighted." What does "I made a beeline home" mean? Base yourself on what we have just read, you will arrive at the correct answer. What does "I made a beeline home" mean?

00:14:33,859 --> 00:14:36,480 [speaker_1]
She rushed home straight away.

00:14:39,900 --> 00:14:48,209 [speaker_0]

She rushed home straight away.

00:14:48,220 --> 00:14:48,349 [speaker_4]

She rushed home straight away.

00:14:48,349 --> 00:15:30,260 [speaker_0]

She rushed home straightaway. It is so. She had to tell her parents about the selection. Okay. Who was the first person to know about her selection for the competition and how did her parents feel?

00:15:30,939 --> 00:15:36,170 [speaker_2]

Her mother. They were both delighted.

00:15:36,180 --> 00:16:15,199 [speaker_0]

Wonderful. Both parents were excited to hear that their daughter was going to take part in the competition. All right. We have also read that Mary prepared herself for the competition and her parents had shown support to her. Now, can you show how she prepared for the competition?

00:16:15,939 --> 00:16:20,960 [speaker_2]

She juggled her studies and rehearsals.

00:16:22,460 --> 00:17:35,320 [speaker_0]

Good answer. Mary allocated enough time to her studies and she would drill her presentation skills. She gave herself enough time to prepare for the competition. Can we all underline how she prepared herself? Underline I juggled my studies and rehearsals. Let us read how the narrator of the story reacted when she was about to read her story. I hope you are all there.

00:17:35,340 --> 00:17:35,929 [speaker_1]

Yes, sir.

00:17:35,980 --> 00:18:24,303 [speaker_0]

Okay. In the blink of an eye, it was the day of the competition. I was standing behind the curtain on the stage with my heart thumping so wildly that I could hear it throbbing in my ears. Would my friends and teachers be there? The curtain opened gradually. I scanned the crowd and spotted my teachers and friends cheering at me at the top of their lungs. "Go, Mary, go." How did Mary feel when she was about to read her story? Yes, Thope. louder,

00:18:25,783 --> 00:18:25,833 [speaker_2]

Yes.

00:18:25,833 --> 00:18:28,723 [speaker_0]

Yes, raise your hand up.

00:18:31,614 --> 00:18:50,664 [speaker_2]

She was very nervous.

00:18:55,793 --> 00:18:57,654 [speaker_2]

Her heart was thumping so wildly that she could even hear it throbbing in her ears.

00:18:57,654 --> 00:19:10,563 [speaker_0]

Very good answer. Her heart was thumping so wildly that she could even hear it throbbing in her ears. Okay. Selina?

00:19:11,164 --> 00:19:15,283 [speaker_2]

Uh, I was going to say she was nervous because she wondered whether her friends and teachers were there.

00:19:16,684 --> 00:20:15,884 [speaker_0]

Exactly. She was nervous. She wondered whether her friends and teachers were there. That is it. She was nervous. Very good answers. Okay, but what was the conflict or problem here? What was the main challenge?

00:20:15,964 --> 00:20:24,884 [speaker_2]

She wondered if her friends and teachers would be there to support her.

00:20:24,894 --> 00:20:48,624 [speaker_0]

All right. It is. Reneiloe is also ready to give us the answer. Louder, Reneiloe.

00:20:49,484 --> 00:21:03,704 [speaker_2]

Sir, I think it is reading the story in front of the audience while she could not notice her friends and teachers.

00:21:03,803 --> 00:22:20,444 [speaker_0]

Very good. That is right. You are getting better every day. You should include conflict or problem in every composition to create suspense. Suspense will keep the reader engaged and it would definitely drive your story forward. Do not write your stories in a very predictable way. You should make some twists and turns. Okay. What do you think would have happened if she saw her teachers and friends earlier?

00:22:20,464 --> 00:22:24,614 [speaker_2]

She might... She might have not been afraid.

00:22:24,664 --> 00:22:39,204 [speaker_0]

She might have not been afraid. That is correct. She might have not been, uh, afraid. She might have not experienced any stage fright. Do you know what stage fright is?

00:22:39,224 --> 00:22:39,984 [speaker_2]
Yes, sir.

00:22:40,043 --> 00:22:51,103 [speaker_0]
Okay. Yes, she might have not been afraid. What exactly did she need from them?

00:22:51,624 --> 00:22:53,274 [speaker_2]
She needed their support so that she could make it.

00:22:53,274 --> 00:22:59,004 [speaker_0]
What exactly did she need from them? Mbali.

00:22:59,083 --> 00:23:06,214 [speaker_2]
She needed their support so- so that she could make it.

00:23:06,244 --> 00:23:42,124 [speaker_0]
That is the best answer. She needed their support so that she could make it. Why was it necessary for her to be composed? Look at the next paragraph. Why was it necessary for her to be composed? Not to panic in other words. Why was it important for her not to panic?

00:23:42,844 --> 00:23:46,444 [speaker_2]
To read the story well.

00:23:46,783 --> 00:24:45,256 [speaker_0]
To read the story well. You are correct. She had to show no signs of panicking so that she could do her level best. Mary displayed certain qualities which made her to read her story well. Let me repeat that. Mary displayed certain qualities which made her to read her story well. Can you mention these two qualities?

00:24:45,656 --> 00:24:46,995 [speaker_1]
She is brave ... courageous.

00:24:47,056 --> 00:25:25,116 [speaker_0]
Okay. She's brave. Yes, Lina?

00:25:25,124 --> 00:25:31,143 [speaker_2]
The girl is confident.

00:25:31,147 --> 00:25:40,165 [speaker_0]

Very well put. She is courageous. She's not only self-driven, but also passionate about what she's doing. She is very inspirational. Remember that we have already discussed the meanings of these words? Do you still remember the meaning of courageous?

00:25:49,386 --> 00:25:58,596 [speaker_1]

Yes, sir.

00:25:25,606 --> 00:26:12,696 [speaker_0]

When people give you support, you can go all the way. Mary read the story confidently and passionately because of that. She read the story confidently because she was given enough support. So now I will ask you to write these answers on the board. Who can write she is courageous or brave? Here is a piece of chalk. Ok another person? Write she is confident. Taking turns, write the answers on the board.

00:26:12,796 --> 00:26:14,056 [speaker_1]

Yes sir.

00:26:14,066 --> 00:26:42,876 [speaker_0]

Okay. Another person write she is confident. Okay. She's brave. Another learner, she is confident.

00:26:49,356 --> 00:26:52,056 [speaker_1]

She's confident.

00:26:53,356 --> 00:26:54,936 [speaker_0]

She is confident. Who said she's confidence?

00:26:57,336 --> 00:26:57,576 [speaker_1]

Her.

00:26:57,596 --> 00:27:03,966 [speaker_0]

Who said that? She is confident.

00:27:03,966 --> 00:27:04,106 [speaker_1]

(laughs)

00:27:04,106 --> 00:27:19,556 [speaker_0]

Do not say that again. Okay. Now let us look at the answers that they have written. Are they correct?

00:27:19,576 --> 00:27:20,456 [speaker_1]

Yes, sir.

00:27:20,476 --> 00:28:17,336 [speaker_0]

They are absolutely correct. She is, uh, brave. Remember that if you do not want to use the word brave you can go for courageous. They are closely related. Mary is self-driven. Now, let us read the climax of the story, that is, paragraph 5 line 9-12. You have all labelled your paragraphs. Can you identify or see the climax? Are you all there?

00:28:17,916 --> 00:28:18,516 [speaker_1]

Yes, sir.

00:28:18,596 --> 00:30:53,540 [speaker_0]

Okay. I will read this aloud, uh, quickly. "... After much discussion, I would like to congratulate ... Mary for getting the first place!" One of the judges announced exuberantly. Was I hearing it wrongly? I was actually the winner! I pinched myself to see if it was real. "Ouch! Oh! It is real!" I chirped gaily. This is the climax of our story. Remember that we said climax is the peak of the story. It is the highest point. Why is it important to quote the actual words of the speaker? Remember we talked about this in the past when we were reading articles. Why is it important to use direct quotes or direct speech?

00:30:56,060 --> 00:30:58,440 [speaker_2]

To make the story believable.

00:30:58,520 --> 00:31:02,069 [speaker_0]

To make the story believable. Okay. Another person.

00:31:02,069 --> 00:31:02,899 [speaker_5]

(speaks foreign language)

00:31:02,940 --> 00:31:03,380 [speaker_0]

Anita.

00:31:04,160 --> 00:31:07,420 [speaker_2]

It brings creativity to the story.

00:31:07,490 --> 00:31:22,170 [speaker_0]

It brings creativity to the story. Direct speech brings creativity to the story. Okay. There's one more hand. Thateho.

00:31:22,219 --> 00:31:24,300 [speaker_2]

It makes one story lively.

00:31:24,340 --> 00:31:44,140 [speaker_0]

It makes one's story lively. These are very good answers. Let us give them a round of applause.

00:31:44,360 --> 00:31:45,660 [speaker_1]
(applause)

00:31:46,560 --> 00:32:16,940 [speaker_0]
Alright. Thank you. Yes. We are giving them a round of applause to encourage them so that they could, uh, keep up their performance. What effect do ellipses create in narrative writing? Those three dots. Can you identify them? That is towards the end of the paragraph. Are you all there?

00:32:19,720 --> 00:32:20,080 [speaker_1]
Yes, sir.

00:32:20,090 --> 00:32:20,090 [speaker_2]
Yes.

00:32:20,090 --> 00:32:26,820 [speaker_0]
Yes. Towards, uh, the end of the paragraph. Are you all there?

00:32:27,380 --> 00:32:27,840 [speaker_1]
Yes.

00:32:27,900 --> 00:32:48,740 [speaker_0]
Okay. What effect do they create in narrative writing? We have talked about ellipses when we were doing punctuation. Remember that. What effect do they create? Mlungisi.

00:32:49,480 --> 00:32:52,080 [speaker_2]
They keep readers guessing.

00:32:54,040 --> 00:33:47,900 [speaker_0]
To keep readers guessing. That is a very good observation. Ellipses are useful because they leave the reader in suspense and show how one feels. From what you have just read, what effect is created by 'exuberantly,' which for example, would not be achieved by 'happily'? This type of question appears often in paper two passage two. Are you all there?

00:33:47,920 --> 00:33:48,400 [speaker_1]
Yes sir.

00:33:48,410 --> 00:33:52,249 [speaker_0]
Can you all identify exuberantly?

00:33:52,249 --> 00:33:52,249 [speaker_1]

Yes.

00:33:52,260 --> 00:33:55,390 [speaker_0]
Alright. What is the answer?

00:33:56,100 --> 00:33:56,300 [speaker_5]
Uh-

00:33:56,340 --> 00:34:01,760 [speaker_0]
Okay. Thateho.

00:34:01,770 --> 00:34:06,370 [speaker_1]
Exuberantly shows that judge was too excited.

00:34:06,380 --> 00:34:08,380 [speaker_0]
Louder.

00:34:08,420 --> 00:34:13,199 [speaker_1]
Exuberantly may show that adjudicator was too excited.

00:34:14,460 --> 00:35:08,070 [speaker_0]
That is great. Right. Let us move on. The narrator asked herself if it was true that she was the winner. And this is called internal monologue, or inner voice. Internal monologue is character's thoughts or feelings. Why is it important to have internal monologue in a narrative story? Remember we also did this when we were reading passage two. We came across internal monologue. Why is it important to have internal monologue?

00:35:08,070 --> 00:35:13,940 [speaker_1]
Internal monologue-

00:35:16,280 --> 00:35:30,300 [speaker_0]
Okay, louder.

00:35:30,310 --> 00:35:41,430 [speaker_1]
... allows the narrator to express his/her thoughts.

00:35:41,430 --> 00:37:15,460 [speaker_0]
Excellent. It helps readers to have a better understanding of how the character feels, making it easy to connect with the rest of the story. Why did the narrator use interjections and exclamation marks?

00:37:20,430 --> 00:37:24,470 [speaker_1]
To express her emotions or feelings.

00:37:40,430 --> 00:37:50,480 [speaker_0]

Good thinking. Keep up the good work. Correct use of punctuation will enliven your piece of writing and earn you good marks. Now using your own words and following the same sentence structure write some of sentences in the story on the chalkboard. Because of time this will happen in the next lesson.

Appendix C: Transcriptions of focus group discussions

[00:08] Thank you for coming to today's discussion. The purpose of this focus group discussion is to obtain more information about Reading to Learn.

[00:22] I am going to ask you a number of questions regarding feelings about reading to learn. That is an approach that was used to teach narrative writing after we had written the first test.

[00:37] Having responded to the closed-ended questions by indicating your responses, we are now going to discuss reasons behind your choices.

[00:52] Your views will only be used for the purposes of this research, and your names will not be attached to the responses that you. Confidentiality is guaranteed.

[01:06] Therefore feel free to raise your comments in detail by taking turns and giving each speaker time to respond. There is no single answer. So raise more comments and all your responses are equal.

[01:25] Therefore, we will now get to our first question. In what ways does RTL improve your ability to write grammar and mechanics?

[01:45] When I write, I am able to use correct tense and conjunctions because of the copies that we discussed and the sentences we wrote on the board.

[01:55] The new approach has taught me to see the difference between the forms of tenses.

[02:05] Okay, grammar includes verbs, adjectives, conjunctions among other parts of speech. While mechanics consist of spelling, capitalization and punctuation.

[02:22] In what ways does RtL help you to improve in this aspect?

[02:30] I'm no longer writing incomplete sentences and using wrong tense or verb forms, and that makes me write better.

[02:38] For me, I am no longer committing many mistakes in spelling and punctuation. I know how to express myself.

[02:43] Can I add more on that, sir?

[02:47] Yes, please go ahead.

[02:51] I now know how to spell even the difficult words and use different punctuations. And I have passed, sir. [02:59] Alright, in what way does RTL help you to use appropriate narrative writing structure?

[03:25] I am able to write all the stages of a story in order without any problem.

[03:36] I am able to include all the stages. Yes, I have learned how to write stages like complication and resolution.

[03:44] The new way of teaching has taught me how to write an introduction, plot and setting appropriately.

[03:51] Is there any other view?

[03:58] Yes sir. I have learned how to write the rising action, the plot, climax, and falling action, and that makes my work easy and clear.

[04:06] So you are agreeing that RTL helps you to write appropriate narrative structure?

[04:09] Yes sir.

[04:13] Okay, let's move to the next question.

[04:18] In what ways does Reading to Learn approach learning activities engage you? In other words, in what ways does it draw or attract your attention?

[04:25] RTL makes me to engage because before we could read the composition after you explained it to us and that made me to understand it and write mine well.

[04:35] I like the activities we are doing because they make me to concentrate and come up with ideas which I use when I write the work.

[04:56] Alright, what is your opinion about the questions which you were asked frequently when reading the model text?

[05:03] I believe that what engaged me was the fact that most of the time we were asked questions after the explanation and I was able to express myself.

[05:20] I also agree that the questions made us to pay attention.

[05:27] How does RtL or the new way of teaching make you to collaborate or work together with your peers and present your ideas better?

[05:36] I can say RTL makes us work in groups, share ideas and work properly as we can correct one another.

[05:53] The new way of teaching makes us to collaborate. For example, when we write sentences and compositions together. We get good marks because we share different ideas and write the correctly.

[06:07] Alright, ... you also wanted to say something.

[06:11] Sir, they have said what I wanted to say, sir.

[06:20] Please say that.

[06:26] RTL enables us to collaborate by discussing in class when writing sentences and you correct us when we make mistakes.

[06:35] Okay, we will now hear from Your hand is up.

[06:43] RtL made us learn from each other because we were mixed and able to write better and more easily.

[06:51] Okay learners. Then as our next question is how does learning vocabulary through RTL help you to express yourself effectively?

[07:10] RTL helps me to know vocabulary. The fact that we are underling and defining the words in the composition when we read and write on the board helps me to express myself well when I write. That is what I can say sir.

[07:23] I also know synonyms for many words because you are helping us to come up with the correct words and that makes me to get ticks in my composition.

[07:37] I also share the same opinion, sir. It makes us write better.

[07:41] Okay, ... do you have the comment.

[07:47] I learned a lot of vocabulary when we were discussing and I use it to express my ideas when I write a composition.

[07:52] And again, vocabulary makes us understand better.

[08:01] Alright, let us now concentrate our attention to another question. How does RtL stimulate you with the motivation to write narrative essay?

[08:13] My feeling is that it makes me feel motivated because you guide us step by step to answer until we finish our work.

[08:31] The fact that we read a lot makes me familiar with many words, phrases and ways of forming sentences. So I feel motivated to write them.

[08:42] Okay, keep commenting. How useful were the sentence trips in motivating or encouraging you to write?

[08:58] Cutting words and rearranging them to form sentences motivated me. I like this activity because it allows me to express myself when I write.

[09:14] We were motivated to form sentences with the cut words. It was nice.

[09:21] I like the exercises we did. Some were challenging, but I enjoyed them because you give us motivation. We got them correct since you guided us and encouraged us to do better.

[09:29] Well, here is another question. Why does RTL instill or develop your narrative writing confidence in the way it does? I mean, why does it have the ability to increase your confidence in writing?

[09:50] Before we taught with RTL, I did not have the confidence to write, but now I have it because I know how I should write a story because you are helping us to get to the correct answer when we need help.

[10:06] Why do you think Reading to Learn or the new way of teaching and learning has developed your confidence in comparison to the previous approach or way of teaching?

[10:20] Since you taught us in the new way, I have learned how to write sentences without making a lot of mistakes. Yes, I have confidence now and my feedback shows I am making few mistakes.

[10:33] The new approach helps me to write things which I have seen in the past well, I am confident now. I can also spell words better because we practice pronunciation a lot. That is how Reading to Learn helped me.

[10:45] I can say I am no longer afraid of writing.

[10:58] And me too.

[11:05] Okay, ladies and gentlemen, let us proceed to one more question. Why does the Reading to Learn approach offer you equal learning opportunities in narrative writing?

[11:17] RtL gives us equal learning opportunities so that we can be on the same level of understanding and knowledge when we write compositions.

[11:25] Please sir, the question again. I beg your pardon. I mean I do not get it well.

[11:36] Okay, let me put it in another way. In short, I want you to explain why RTL makes you learn in the same way, unlike in the past when this was not the case as you would do things individually, for example.

[11:57] Okay, sir. I get it now. Sir, wants to know why we are doing well now.

[12:11] Exactly. And thank you for making it clear. So what is your opinion?

[12:26] In the past few students were getting better marks, so with this new way of teaching you want us to do well when we write compositions because we are doing things together like reading the same essays and sharing ideas.

[12:37] I think with RtL you want us to be equal because you want us all pass and you do not want anyone to be left behind.

[12:45] That is true. Our performance has improved.

[12:52] Alright, this brings us to the end of the discussion.

[12:59] Thank you for your contribution.

Appendix D: Interview transcript with the teacher

Summary

Detailed Research Interview Summary with Quotes

Introduction and Assurance of Confidentiality

The interviewer begins by assuring the participant of confidentiality and anonymity **00:38**, saying, *"the information gathered will be kept confidential and will be used for research purposes only."* This assurance is reiterated to encourage the participant to share their thoughts and opinions freely **00:52**, with the interviewer noting, *"Your anonymity will be upheld and protected by not disclosing your name. So please feel free to share your thoughts and opinions."*

Discussion on Learners and Reading Impact

The conversation then shifts to the participant's impression of learners and the impact of reading on their writing performance **01:09**. The participant notes that learners begin to relate real-life experiences to the text, tapping into their consciousness and reality **02:09**, and that this process allows learners to express their experiences in writing through collaborative learning activities **02:34**.

Collaborative Learning and Writing Performance

The participant highlights the importance of collective and competitive learning in improving learners' writing performance **02:52**, stating that learners *"enjoy collectively and competitiveness in text exposed to them and they experiment progressively in groups and individually."* This approach is seen as beneficial for improving writing skills and fostering a sense of community among learners.

Interconnectedness of Reading and Writing

The discussion also touches on the interconnectedness of reading and writing as language skills **03:36**, with the participant emphasizing that *"reading and writing are intertwined through human language skills, it is observable that the approach in both is indispensable."*

Effectiveness of RTL Approach

The participant is asked about the effectiveness of the RTL (Reading to Learn) approach in reducing learning inequalities in the classroom **04:19**. The response indicates that *"no learner feels left out in any learning process"* **04:30**, and that learning from the same material ensures equality **04:48**, with the participant noting that learners *"feel the same and so they should in a normal educational setting or environment."*

Key Takeaways

The discussion highlights several key points, including:

- The importance of relating real-life experiences to text in learning 02:09.
- The role of collaborative learning activities in expressing experiences in writing 02:34.
- The benefits of collective and competitive learning for writing performance 02:52.
- The interconnectedness of reading and writing as language skills 03:36.
- The effectiveness of the RTL approach in reducing learning inequalities 04:19.
- The importance of ensuring no learner feels left out and promoting equality in learning 04:30.
- The need for a responsive approach to address learners with limited access to educational resources 05:10.

Appendix E: Principal's Letter

High School
P. O. Box 7175
Mafeteng

2nd August 2022

The Principal
High School
P.O. Box 7175
Mafeteng

Dear Madam

Request for permission to conduct research at High School

I wish to seek permission to conduct research at your school. I am a registered student at the National University of Lesotho for Masters of Arts in Education.

The study is about implementing Reading to Learn approach for effective writing of a narrative essay using experimental comparative action research. The study will entail one grade eleven learners' tests, classroom observations, document analysis, closed-ended questionnaires, focus group discussions with the learners and a semi-structured interview with one English Language teacher.

The researcher hopes that the intervention will provide the learners with equitable learning opportunities, increase their engagement and stimulate their interest in writing. In addition, it envisaged that the study will bring to attention strategies that teachers can employ to better scaffold learners' narrative writing skills and integrate reading and writing. There are no potential risks involved in this study as ethical principles will be adhered to.

I would greatly appreciate your consideration.

Yours faithfully

.....

Twala Twala

Appendix F: Teacher's Letter

High School
P. O. Box 7175
Mafeteng

8 August 2022

English Teacher
High School
P. O. Box 7175
Mafeteng

Dear prospective participant: English teacher

Invitation for participation in the study at

I hereby cordially invite you to participate in the research study that will be conducted at the aforementioned school. I am a registered student at the National University of Lesotho for Masters of Arts in Education.

The study is about implementing Reading to Learn approach for effective writing of a narrative essay using experimental comparative action research. The processes involved in this study include grade eleven learners' tests, classroom observations, document analysis, focus group discussions with the learners and a semi-structured interview with you. You will be invited to some lessons to observe how the intervention is impacting on learners. Further, you will be apprised of the processes involved during the course of this study.

For ethical purposes your participation in this study is voluntary. Your confidentiality and anonymity are protected: your personal information such as names will not be revealed, but you will be identified by pseudonyms in all published documents and the data generated will only be used for research purposes.

Your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully
.....
Twala Twala

Appendix G: Learner's Letter

Grade 11 Learners
High School
P. O. Box 7175
Mafeteng

Dear prospective participant: learner

Invitation for participation in the study

Please accept my request to participate in the study that will be conducted at school as part of fulfilling the requirements of my degree.

The study is about implementing Reading to Learn (RtL) approach for effective writing of a narrative essay using experimental comparative action research. To gather the information, the study will entail learners' tests, classroom observations, document analysis, closed-ended questionnaires and focus group discussions with the learners.

For ethical purposes, your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Your confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed: your personal information such as names will not be revealed, but you will be identified by pseudonyms and the data generated will only be used to aid the research. You will be notified accordingly of other processes involved during the course of this study.

I therefore humbly request you to participate in all activities to help me achieve the objectives of this study. If you would agree on you may sign the form set out below.

Yours faithfully
.....
Twala Twala

Declaration of consent

I give my consent to participate in the study. The topic under study is entitled: **Reading to Learn (RtL) for effective writing of a narrative essay: an experimental comparative action research at High School in Mafeteng District.** Having read and understood the contents of the study I agree to take part as requested by the researcher. I have received and signed a copy of this consent agreement form.

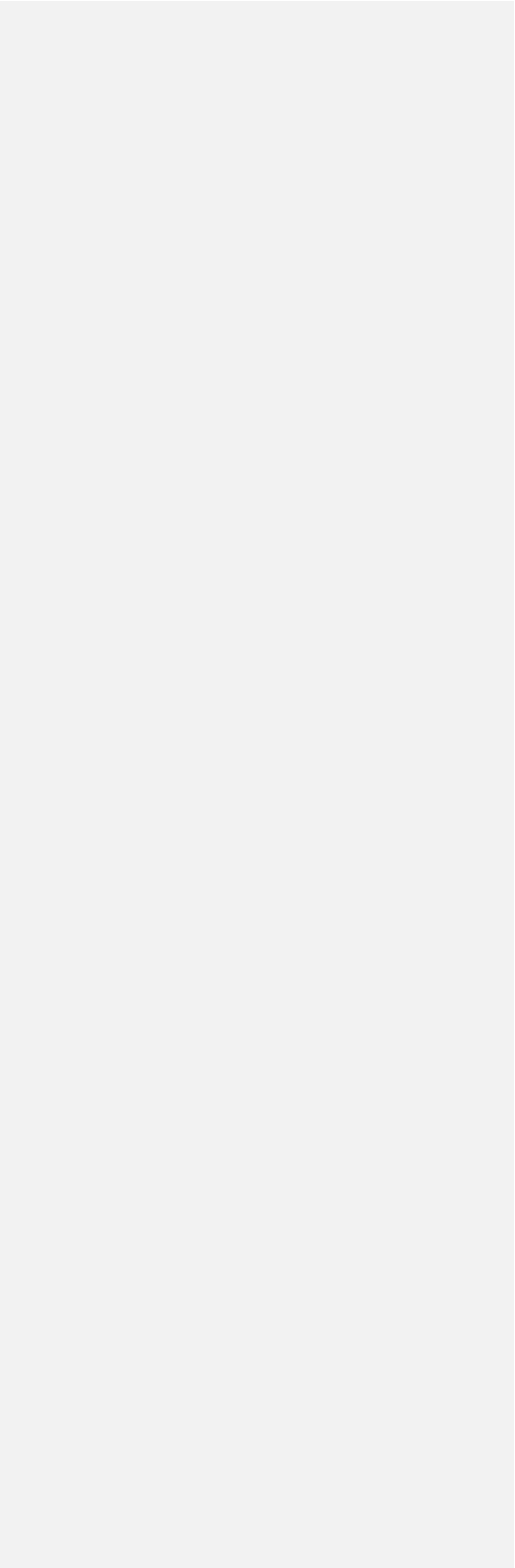
Name of participant Date Signature

Appendix H: Observation Sheet

Structured classroom observation sheet

Learners' observed behaviours						
Learners	Learners engage actively in reading	Learners engage in writing activities	Responding effectively in teacher-learner exchange	Take ownership of their learning	Asking and responding to questions	Learners collaborate in group activities
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Appendix I: Turnitin results

Twala Twala READING TO LEARN FOR EFFECTIVE WRITING OF A NARRATIVE ESSAY3 (1).docx

Practice Assignment
Postgraduate Studies 2024_25
National University of Lesotho

Document Details

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