

CHAPTER 6

AN APPROPRIATE METHODOLOGY

The most desirable method of a predominantly quantitative approach is explained and descriptive research identified as the best method for the purposes of this investigation. The design is thus predominantly quantitative, making use to a lesser extent of qualitative methods such as the interview with the control group. Definitions and important aspects to take into consideration are mentioned and the compilation of the questionnaire is discussed. Information on how to tackle the experiment is.

Reports of case studies are included because of the usefulness of having exemplars from other researchers when deciding on one's own instrumentation, although one does not of necessity use all these methods. The questionnaire compiled for the empirical study done in the North West Province is incorporated in the appendix.

6.1 Introduction

According to Singleton *et al.* (1988:67) research starts with the identification and selection of a problem. The hypotheses as outlined in the introduction to this study involve the problem of illiteracy and the phenomenon of the disappearance of the reader aged between 11-13 from libraries and factors playing a role in reader interest. Learners favour certain reading books because of a number of factors such as the sociolinguistic influences discussed in the previous chapters. The question asked at the outset have to be answered by way of recourse to the sociolinguistic perspective of the target readers in order to cast light on what is known about the reader and his/her profile.

To supplement the investigation, it seems to be feasible to also provide a brief overview of what can be gained from empirical research. Empirical investigation is described by Behr (1983:5) as that which is verifiable by observation. The practical or experimental

method employed deals with hypotheses that should be tested and observed which is why this particular study is characterised as an empirical investigation.

The present research was done to arrive at criteria to predict what the ideal book for the pertinent age group should look like. The idea has been to test the hypotheses and to arrive at new insights concerning readers and how to inject into books the missing substance which will act as the narrative hook to haul in the fish, viz. the reader (Creswell, 1994:48).

The aim has also been to investigate, by means of descriptive research, what the controllable influences on readers as learners are. Behr (1983:1) emphasises the need for researchers to supplement theoretical investigations by means of empirical research. He maintains that: “ there is consensus among educationalists that empirical research evidence is required in support of educational theory and practice”.

6.2 Review of the literature

6.2.1 Review of the literature

According to Dane (1990:61) the review of the literature is a process that continues throughout the research effort. A great deal of information exists about phenomena researched and a good literature review should comprise the following three goals, viz. obtaining scientific perspective, avoiding duplication and avoiding conceptual and procedural problems (Dane, 1990:62).

When deciding on the goals for the project one must decide on the relevant information for the project, information concerning theory and methods and data analyses. Published sources should be reviewed (among which the introductory textbook is often overlooked). It provides the researcher with information on references although at an introductory

level, but which are very useful. General content journals should be reviewed and annual reviews can be very informative. The researcher must be on the look out for key topics, consulting indexes, and guides such as ERIC as well as abstracts. Key authors should be investigated to locate the relevant information. Some authors specialise in certain fields and will most likely write prolifically on certain topics. Key articles will also provide the researcher with the necessary information and further references can be traced through citation indices (Dane, 1990:69-71).

The following salient aspects concerning the review of the literature are crucial:

1. Reviewing the literature offers the researcher the opportunity to avoid mistakes made by others, and contribute to a better understanding of the phenomena under investigation.
2. The existing research may relate to the topic you intend investigating and may help with interpretation of the data.
3. Make use of textbooks, journals and review books.
4. Consult abstracts to gain access to additional data relevant to the project at hand.
5. Consult key authors on the topic you intend studying.
6. Locate article related to your topic to ease the search.
7. Be meticulous when taking notes from sources.
8. The introduction to the research project should be organised from general to specific and later revised after interpretation of data (Dane, 1990:72).

In order to focus on the review of literature for this particular study it is feasible just to mention again the literature reviewed:

Compare the priority of the literature reviewed in this particular study.

The following databases were consulted for information:

Human Sciences Research Council (CSD) database;

Nexusview (Star search);

ERIC(journal articles); Internet: Aardvark search engine and EBSCOHost articles

These data were studied and journal articles, books related to the topic, and dissertations and theses investigated for information on the topic of discussion.

6.2.2 Reviewing case studies

6.2.2.1 Case study 1: Baker: South Africa: Cape Town

Baker (1994:23-29) conducted reading response research in two South African schools in Cape Town. The schools involved were the Good Hope Seminary Primary School enrolling English speaking learners of all races. The other school was Walter Teka Higher Primary, a Department of Education and Training school for Xhosa speakers also using English as medium of instruction.

The target group included Grade 5, 6 and even Grade 7 learners. She focused on a small group and maintains that focusing on individual studies could be very insightful. Her method was to question the learners involved in a number of interviews and conversations. READ provided the reading books for the investigation. The number of pupils per school amounted to 48. The investigation was mainly launched from an interview method involving the asking of questions about preferences. Baker also mainly focused on the selectors of the books in her study, relying among others on the selectors of READ to advise her on suitable reading material to expose the children to. The Walter Teka selectors were assisted by READ whereas the Good Hope school could make use of books provided by Education Library Services.

Baker (1994:27) found that when books were selected by adult selectors, the focus was on books that would introduce the readers to a higher cultural life, excluding comics and

Enid Blyton books. The learners basically voiced their opinions on the books and could suggest changes to be made to the school's available books. Responses were compared and certain issues discussed such as the physical features of the books, the characters and settings of the books. She didn't include any statistical findings and percentages or questionnaires.

6.2.2.2 Case study 2 Thuli Radebe: South Africa: Kwazulu Natal

Radebe (1995:162-170) investigated 220 Grade 4 Black learners within the Pietermaritzburg area. He considered simple random sampling to be the best method of obtaining the data. He conducted a pre-test to test the instrument for validity and questions were posed in the form of an interview. The interview allowed him to ask many open-ended questions and questions were kept short and simple. He focused on three categories of questions:

- Category 1:** Factual background on the learners concerning names, age and family background.
- Category 2:** Questions on the physical features of the book as well as the concept of familiarity.
- Category 3:** This category was based on the content of the books discussing questions on setting and also ethnicity.

In deciding on the book samples, he focused on core genres viz.: adventure, animal stories, family stories, fantasy and realistic literature. He obtained the books from a local publisher and a local library at the University of Natal gathering samples over the years for a particular project of this nature. He included cartoons and also local and books published overseas. Radebe also made use of verbal summaries of books in his investigation. Information was entered on a coding sheet and transferred to tables for analysis. Results were entered into geographical areas such as urban townships, rural

area, farm schools and squatter camps. Structures of families were also meticulously investigated by referring to the closed type of questions on family structures, number of children in a family and occupations of parents. Findings were discussed under the headings of sociolinguistic variables such as age, attitude, setting and ethnicity. He then arrived at his conclusions.

6.2.2.3 Case study 3: Rood: response to pictures: South Africa

Rood (1995:48-70) discusses response to illustrations and divided her questionnaire into various groups that responded, viz. publishers, media specialists, members of committees for book rewards, artists, art critics, lecturers in art and illustrators. She included questions on background knowledge on whether the respondents were in fact familiar with illustrations and divided the response into categories rating from well-informed to poorly informed. Then she reflected on whether the respondents were well-informed about courses given on the particular topic on which they only had to answer only yes or know. Rood provides statistics that are very informative. Concerning her other category of questions, the respondents were only required to distinguish between three categories of agree, disagree and uncertain. Criteria included questions on the illustrations and on the value of pictures and educative training in illustrating as prerequisite for illustrators. The aesthetic value of the work of art is also put as a question in this category. Technical elements of the illustrations and also whether the illustrators needed to be educated were also discussed. The response was again kept to a yes, no or uncertain. She was able to provide statistics.

6.2.2.4 Case study 4 McMahon et al.

McMahon *et al.* (1998:173-180) involved their own instruments in gathering the data in their empirical study on materials in the reading readiness and emergent classrooms. viz.

the Inventory of Literacy Indicators (ILI) and The Literacy Acquisition Perception Profile (LAPP).

The ILI involved a careful review on nine variables: library centre; listening centre; books and other materials; writing centre; signs, labels and directions; materials for recording language; written information on the current day; student work displays and centre area integration. They made use of a 6-point rating scale, the resources (quantity) rating from 0 (non-apparent) to 5 (abundant) and the environmental (quality) rating ranging from 0 (not present) to 5 (excellent). The LAPP concerned the validity procedure and a test and re-test reliability, validity and internal consistency. They generated a list of 38 possible factors to be included. They also involved the Lickert-scale rating from 1-5. They also made use of Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP -developed by DeFord) containing 28 statements on instructional aspects of the reading process. Respondents responded to TORP on a 5-point Lickert scale. They then studied the interrelations between the TORP, LAPP and ILI.

6.2.2.5 Auerbach and Paxton: America: Massachusetts, Boston

Auerbach and Paxton (1997:242) researched reader response of university students in Massachusetts as students came into course. The following questions were included as open-ended questions in their questionnaire:

“What do you think reading is?

What do you think is the biggest problem for someone learning a second language?

What are four specific pieces of advice you would give someone learning to read in a second language?

What do you do when you come to something you have a hard time with when you're reading?”

They also asked the following questions after having made use of comprehension passage represented to the students in order to determine strategy awareness and prior knowledge:

Describe how you read? Did you know anything of the subject before reading this? and Describe how you are reading (Auerbach & Paxton, 1998:242-243). They also made use of reading interviews during which the students had to explain what was going on inside their heads and what they could make out of the specific passages in question. Students also had to set up a reading inventory according to which they had to say how, what and for whom they were reading information. They also made use of a questionnaire that they tested with both first and second languages. Students were guided towards understanding their own strategies employed when reading and to start thinking about how and what they were reading by using text structure identification and semantic mapping in order to improve their understanding of the role of reading in their lives. The study was longitudinal and at the end of the semester students were given the opportunity to bring to class reading material of their own choice to read for the sake of pleasure only.

6.2.2.6 *Researcher triangulation: Publishers*

Hill (1997:57-81) didn't conduct a survey among children but gathered information from publishers who are in contact with what the readers prefer, for they have to sell their stock and must publish the books ordered and needed. From information gathered from her article, the following aspects could be observed and regarded as of vital importance to include in a survey. The information focused on was the preference for certain genres like thrillers, fables, adventure, and romance. Age of the learners is also regarded as of value and aspects involving predominant characters in the book should also be included in the questionnaire. Hill (1997:62) also focuses attention on gender and the preferences for boys and girls that are different. Illustrations, covers, font size and length are aspects to consider and should thus be built in to the framework of a questionnaire.

6.3 Design

The design deals with the preparation of a plan of action by means of which knowledge of the research problem is obtained. According to Chadwick *et al.* (1984:27) research design is important whether one is interested in knowledge for the sake of knowledge or whether one is interested for the sake of solving problems by acquired information. Whether the interest is thus pure or applied, research has little value if not properly designed. Singleton *et al.* (1988:85) state that the hypotheses form an integral part of research design, therefore employing an experimental method necessitates the mention of hypotheses once more before embarking on the instrumentation and procedures to be followed. Compare the following questions and central theoretical statement mentioned in chapter one:

Questions:

- 1 What is the profile of the learner as ESL reader in the senior secondary phase in a multicultural classroom, in other words, what is the complex set of variables one should take into consideration in the determination of this profile?
- 2 What should the profile or shape be of the reader/book which would appeal to this learner as reader?
- 3 What would the criteria be that one could derive for the writing of such readers, given the profiles developed?

Central theoretical statement

It is postulated that, having obtained an accurate profile of the ESL learner as reader in the multicultural classroom, and having thus taken cognisance of the apposite cultural and other variables constituting such a profile, it would be possible to compose a profile for the kind of book/reader that would appeal to such learners as readers, and at the same time to derive from this profile a set of criteria to be used as guidelines in the writing of such readers.

Having considered the critical issues once more, further knowledge should be gained on design of the approach.

Chadwick *et al.* (1984:33) identify two types of designs, viz. qualitative and quantitative designs. Creswell (1994:4) maintains that the qualitative approach has its roots in the constructivist or naturalistic approach, which is an interpretative and postmodern perspective. Proponents of the qualitative approach were Comte, Durkheim, Mill, Durkheim and Locke. The quantitative approach is the more traditional approach that is the positivist, experimental or empiricist design that had its origins in a counter movement to the positivist tradition with proponents such as Kant, Weber and Dilthey.

Compare the characteristics of the quantitative approach.

1. Reality is regarded as objective and singular, apart from the researcher.
2. The relationship of the researcher is independent from that being researched.
3. It is a "value-free" study that is "unbiased".
4. It is a formal study making use of formal language and based on a set of definitions
5. It involves a deductive process of research based on cause and effect which is context free and incorporates generalisations leading to prediction, explanation and understanding.

The following are characteristics of the qualitative research design:

1. Reality is subjective and involves multiplicity as seen by participants involved in the study.
2. The researcher interacts with that being investigated.
3. It is value-laden and biased.

4. It is more informal and has a personal touch supporting inductive reasoning with a shaping of factors and an emerging design.
5. It has patterns and theories that are developed for understanding and is an accurate method through verification (Creswell, 1994: 5).

The *Conceptual Dictionary* (1994:161) defines qualitative and quantitative as follows: "Qualitative research focuses on the meaning of data, as opposed to quantitative analysis which is concerned with measurement". Chadwick *et al.* (1984:32-33) maintain that neither the qualitative nor the quantitative method is good in itself and that researchers should choose methods appropriate to the needs of the topic under investigation.

This particular study will thus be predominantly a quantitative study, as both meaning and statistics (collection and analysis of numerical data), are involved in this analysis with as little interference from the part of the researcher in order to avoid biased response by allowing learners to make own decisions when subjected to the questionnaires supplemented by a qualitative method in interviews. Creswell (1994:81) maintains that in a quantitative study objectives need to be grounded in a theoretical system of knowledge. Explanation of questions and hypotheses needs to be done as part of a quantitative study. As opposed to a qualitative study in which the theoretical outline is not as clear as in the quantitative study. The quantitative approach is also more geared towards testing the theory than to verify it. Data are collected to be tested and the theory must become a framework for the study (Creswell, 1994:87).

Creswell (1994:89) identifies the following disadvantages of the quantitative approach;

1. It is difficult to separate theory from components of the research process.
2. It is difficult for the researcher to isolate his research from the scholarly review.
3. The writer may include more information on a theoretical rationale after the hypotheses and leave out the use of the theory.

4. The quantitative approach in this study in chapter one starts with the rationale, theoretical outline, followed by hypotheses and then includes the use of the theory in this study which makes this study a dominantly quantitative study.

Creswell (1994:176) also mentions the fact that despite the attempt of purists to focus solely on a single method, thus either the qualitative or quantitative method of analysis, methods are also supplemented and triangulation or mixing of methods will result in a multi-dimensional perspective. The advantage of using both the methods or using a dominant method supplemented by the other is that understanding is bettered, and it is thus allowed to follow what is actually done in this study a dominant-less dominant design where a quantitative approach is based on testing theory with a small qualitative interview component in data collection phase. A limited number of informants are subjected to the instrument and a quantitative survey may also be employed, a method to combine approaches to neutralise bias.

The aim in this design is therefore also the testing of the hypotheses, operationalising variables as discussed in Chapter 2 and use is made of the quantitative survey as well as the qualitative interviews with the control group as instruments.

The design of this predominantly quantitative design is also partly deductive and theoretically anchored - a study that does not expect a theory to emerge, but rather a testing of the hypothesis that sociolinguistic factors affect reading habits. The theory is therefore supplied at the very beginning of this study. The basic EYES approach, incorporating the sociolinguist variables, will thus be tested by means of the instrument the questionnaire and the qualitative interview. The confirmation of the theory will thus remain incomplete until the test.

6.4 Subjects - study population

... it is not necessary to question every person in a large population to arrive at accurate estimates of the results that would be obtained if it were possible

to interview everyone ... scientific sampling makes it possible for the researcher to describe a population or to test a hypotheses on a relatively few research subjects and yet generalize the findings to the larger population (Chadwick *et al.*, 1984:52).

Chadwick *et al.* (1984:53) also distinguish between universe and population. The term **universe** is used to refer to the total number of participants the researcher wishes to investigate. **Population** is used synonymously with universe, but is also used to refer to a smaller identified portion or sample of possible respondents. A sample universe refers to the individual participating and makes up the population together with all the other units. The term parameter is used to refer to a characteristic of a population.

The population in this study will be randomly selected within the particular schools and stratified sampling as mentioned by Chadwick *et al.* (1984:59) for selection of members in subgroups to be included in the sample. All cultural groups will then basically be divided into strata and represented in the samples.

Readers need to know about the number of subjects that will be participating in the particular study. Random sampling ensures that each individual has an equal opportunity to be selected from the population, and that the sample will be representative of the population. The following aspects are also of important when describing and deciding on the subjects:

- ◆ ascertain to which populations these subjects belong;
- ◆ are the participants selected randomly;
- ◆ determine the number participating in experimental and control group;
- ◆ determine how variants must be measured;
- ◆ determine whether there is evidence of an experimental design;
- ◆ decide what the instruments used in this particular study are;
- ◆ keep an eye on validity and
- ◆ decide whether a pilot study will be undertaken (Creswell, 1994:127).

6.5 Instrumentation

6.5.1 Surveys

Conducting research on reading interests in the classroom necessitates a specific method of empirical research of which the descriptive method that is defined by Sidhu (1984:107) is the most appropriate. It is described as:

that method of investigation which attempts to describe and interpret what exists at present in the form of conditions, practices, processes, trends, effects, attitudes, beliefs etc. It is concerned with the phenomena that are typical of the normal conditions. It investigates into the conditions or relationships that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs, points of view or attitudes that are held, processes that are going on, influences that are being felt and trends that are developing.

A survey indicates the gathering of evidence concerning the current conditions, whereas normative involves the typical or normal conditions (Sidhu, 1984:107). Thomas and Nelson distinguish between the normative survey and the questionnaire. In accordance with their opinion, the difference between the two lies in the way data are collected. The researcher selects the most appropriate way to measure desired performances. In the normative survey method rigid standardised collection of data is extremely important. Normative survey studies can be compared with historical studies in that they are concerned with causative factors, but they rather focus on the status of given phenomenon. According to Thomas and Nelson (1990:263), descriptive research also comprises certain case studies and cross-sectional, development and longitudinal studies. The concepts of normative and survey are often combined to form a normative survey approach.

Sidhu (1984:108-109) characterizes the normative survey method in terms of thirteen characteristics:

1. It is primary cross-sectional;
2. It focuses on data from a substantial number of cases;
3. It is concerned with generalised statistics from a representative sample;
4. It defines specific problems, has predetermined objectives, requires skilful planning, analysis and interpretation of the findings;
5. It endeavours to find useful solutions to local problems;
6. It ranges from frequency counts to studies of relationships among events;
7. It can include studies defining elements or studies determining amounts of constituents;
8. Descriptions may be expressed through mathematical symbols or they may be verbal;
9. Topics for educational surveys may be behavioural, physical, for example, the classroom, or discuss learner attitudes;
10. Descriptive research can represent current conditions within a field or serve as acquainted stages of research on the brink of a new era;
11. It may supply pertinent information to forward-looking people;
12. It concentrates on revealing the facts and apparent causes;
13. The focus is on the natural setting that makes it more realistic and attractive than other methods.

Sidhu (1984:117-118) proposes a number of tests that can be classified as survey testing. These embrace types of intelligence tests, educational achievement tests, aptitude tests and tests focusing on personality. Tests centring on aspects of personality comprise personal achievement questionnaires, attitude surveys (political and social aspects), interest inventories and environmental facts relating to personality, for example socio-economic factors.

6.5.2 The questionnaire and interview

A popular method of testing attitudes and preferences is the questionnaire. Sidhu (1984:131) defines the questionnaire as:

A form prepared to and distributed to secure responses to certain questions. It is a device for securing answers to questions by using a form which the respondent fills in by himself. It is a systematic compilation of questions that are submitted to a sampling of population from which information is desired. It is that form of inquiry which contains a systematically compiled and organised series of questions that are to be sent to the population samples.

Thomas and Nelson (1990:263) assert that although questionnaires are valuable tools of testing preferences, it should be noted that results of this type of testing only reflect what people like or dislike. Certain information can, however, only be obtained through questionnaires despite the fact that they have their own limitations.

Sidhu (1984:131) maintains that questionnaires are a flexible tool in collecting qualitative and quantitative data. Researchers should be careful of vaguely worded questions, poor organisation and a too lengthy list of questions. Scanty questionnaires that are not thoroughly prepared have also earned questionnaires a bad reputation in the past. They have been labelled the voice of expediency, not of scientific value and pooling of ignorance (Sidhu, 1984:139). They also have been criticised as the lazy man's way of obtaining information and gross mass-production, inevitably leading to a handicapping of interpretative opportunities. It is therefore also imperative to keep the Delphi-method in mind. According to this method questionnaires must be supported by face-to face interviews (Thomas & Nelson, 1990:276). Despite the numerous points of criticism, the advantages of the practical implications cause it to be an undeniably attractive research method. The potential of the questionnaire is significant if properly used. Walker (1985:91) also points out the advantages of using a questionnaire. It is easier to deal with the administration, presents a stable stimulus to a large number of participants

simultaneously and provides the researcher with accumulated data immediately accessible.

Sidhu, educational gold medallist (1984:133-134), asserts that a good questionnaire must be significant so as to elicit a strong response, seek data that cannot be obtained from books, be brief and to the point, include crucial and relevant information, be neat and attractive as well as clear, should deal with a single unambiguous question at a time, range from the general to the specific, avoid biased responses, be arranged in categories, avoid descriptive adjectives, avoid double negative, carry adequate alternatives, be easy to tabulate, summarise and interpret.

Questions should also be based upon hypotheses and be able to elicit valid and reliable answers. Be careful of double-barrelled/ambiguous questions and do respect anonymity. Respondents should be chosen carefully. The questionnaire should be accompanied by a cover letter and follow-ups will add to the success of the study.

Sax (1979:248) proposes four types of measurement scales when setting up multiple-choice questions for the questionnaire, namely

- ◆ the ordinal;
- ◆ nominal;
- ◆ interval, and
- ◆ ratio scales.

The ordinal scale involves all characteristics of the nominal scale but in addition they also deal with ranking from the highest to the lowest. Grading systems that rank learners in class from highest to lowest on a specific trait are examples of ordinal scales. An interval scale is for example a thermometer where the difference between 80 and 90 degrees will be the same as the difference between 40 and 50 degrees.

A popular scale used is the Lickert scale where ordinal measurement is used. Lickert's method involves a five point scale, for example,

- ◆ strongly approve,
- ◆ approve,
- ◆ undecided,
- ◆ disapprove, and
- ◆ strongly disapprove.

These constructions of the Lickert type of scale involve assigning points to each category. This type of setting up questions will entail the development of correlates that are internally consistent, for example, items testing specific attitudes will all rate the question the same. Lickert scales prefer items to be randomised and can include the following types of multiple choice questions:

- ◆ non-disguised structures,
- ◆ non-disguised-non-structured, and
- ◆ disguised non-structured type of questions.

The essay is the least structured type of response and is regarded as the least reliable type of testing (Sax, 1979:257).

Once the researcher is satisfied with the questionnaire, the respondents are exposed to the test and analysis should immediately follow. Presentation of results in tabular form, in totals and percentages, is necessary. Frequency tables can be set up in case of short answers. In case of open-ended and longer questions, narrative data should be converted into shorter notes and then cumulated into the various categories. The larger the sample response, the more reliable and valid the tests.

6.6 Procedure

Procedures for a plan of action are proposed in terms of certain steps to take in preparing the procedures. Thomas and Nelson (1990:264) propose the following steps in survey research:

1. Determining the objectives
2. Delimiting the sample of respondents
3. Constructing a pilot study
4. Conducting a pilot study
5. Writing a cover letter
6. Sending the questionnaire
7. Sending out the follow-ups
8. Analysing the results
9. Preparing the research report

The following questions are of relevance when deciding on the objectives:

1. What information is needed?
2. How will the response be analysed?
3. Will they be a mere description of responses or will they be compared with another group's responses?
4. What will the variables be?
5. What will the questions asked be?

After having considered these specific outcomes the samples must be delimited.

The second step is the delimitation of the samples. The investigator must pose the questions to the appropriate population. The representatives of the sample are also vital to the success of the study. Thomas and Nelson (1990:264) claim that samples should reflect the proportion of students at different class levels. The samples should also be based on the selected variables for the study. The choice of samples will also affect the generalisability of the samples. The researcher should be careful of defining the population too narrowly. A larger sample size will be more useful if generalisability is desired. Sample size is important when considering time and cost as well as for adequacy in representing the required population. A larger sample will also influence the cost.

6.7 Validity

Burke Johnson (1997:287-291) discusses twelve strategies to be used when promoting validity in qualitative research. The first strategy involved the researcher as detective in which he has to establish the true cause of certain behaviour beyond reasonable doubt. This strategy involves: description of behaviour and keeping field work notes using low inference descriptors such as verbatims also known as direct quotations. The detective can make use of source triangulation and use multiple sources to understand the phenomenon as well as methods triangulation where the researcher uses various methods to arrive at an understanding of what he is investigating. The researcher can also involve peer review of other researchers, negative case sampling in which the researcher is also involving studies opposing his viewpoint. He may also show reflexivity and examine critically his own viewpoints. After having studied all the evidence he will resort to pattern matching in which he will try and determine the position of his findings in the actual pattern of the topic. He also warns against researcher bias in which the researcher is constantly trying to prove his own assumptions because of the open nature of qualitative research as an exploratory method. Here the researcher should exercise reflexivity in order to question his own involvement. The researcher must also ensure that

he operates descriptive research, in terms of interpretative validity, descriptive validity and theoretical validity, in order to arrive at external validity.

Descriptive validity in qualitative research refers to the factual accuracy of the account done by the researchers. The crucial question to answer is whether that which is reported really takes place. It refers to the accuracy in reporting about what really happened. Investigator triangulation is also a means to ensure validity when the researcher is involving other researchers in his project too.

Interpretative validity refers to the window into the minds of the subjects under discussion. It involves the participants' meaning attached to **what** is studied. Whereas descriptive validity refers to describing the participants' inner worlds, interpretative validity has to do with the accuracy in representing the participants' inner world of comprehension of what is studied. Participant feedback is one of the most salient strategies of interpretative validity.

Theoretical validity is the third type and deals with the degree to which the theoretical explanation is developed from a research study and the way it fits the data, so that it is credible and defensible. Theory refers to the way a phenomenon operates and why it is regarded as such. Theory development explains the phenomenon. Theoretical validity is promoted by extended fieldwork. It ensures that the participants' patterns of research involvement are stable and theory triangulation can cast light on the phenomenon being studied. Theory triangulation involves other theories in order to provide insights. The successful researcher will make a list of rival explanations for certain behaviour and sceptically think about possible causes to explain behaviour. The researcher will also make use of methods triangulation that includes a variety of methods to assist him in his project for example, questionnaire, interviews and observations. The concept that the whole is always better than the parts must always motivate him to know even more about his subject. In order to externalise qualitative research, the researcher will generalise and

the nearer the circumstances and the more corresponding the issues' at stake, the better chance the generalisation will have of being valid. Burke Johnson (1997:290) asserts that:

The more similar the people and circumstances in a particular research study are to the ones that you want to generalize to, the more defensible your generalizations will be and the more readily you should make such a generalization.

This phenomenon is also referred to as replication logic, commonly used by experimental researchers when generalising beyond their people in their studies. The more times the finding is shown to be valid with different sets of people, the more confidence we can place in the conclusion about the findings. Proximal similarity will also come into play with replication logic when the degree of similarity between the people and the original research generalised about correspond.

The following kinds of information are of relevance to the researcher; the number and kinds of people studied, how they were selected knowing that random selection is the best way, contextual information, the nature of the participants' relations with the subjects under discussion, information about respondents, method of data collection, and data analysis techniques.

The method simplified

Not much is evident from reader response tests and methods applied in the South African context on children's literature, a fact that may probably be ascribed to the tendency to regard children's literature as inferior or less important, overlooking the fact that learners have to make a start somewhere and that childhood exposure is of the utmost importance for the seed of growing towards avid and capable readers are sown during the childhood years.

It can also be gathered that in this study triangulation is the answer to render a complete investigation relying not solely on own insight and methods, but adopting ways of seasoned researchers.

The Delphi method, in which the questionnaire is supplemented by interviews (which will then of necessity include also observations on the participants' background and reading behaviour) will be used to ascertain internal validity, theoretical validity and external validity involving adding replication logic when drawing generalisations, which is also referred to as the LAPP. When setting up the questionnaire the ordinal scale according to which the concepts most popular and least popular will feature will be used. For achieving a more definite choice, **yes** and **no** questions will be employed for most of the closed questions. The choices will be kept as simple as possible in order to meet the level of development and to simplify the process of exercising a choice.

Apart from incorporating all the hints mentioned and researched so far such as to keep to a reasonable length with questions not too complicated to answer, methods and researchers triangulation point out that when the access to reading books available poses a problem the practical approach is to make use of summaries of stories such as Thuli Radebe (1995:162-170) did and even to make use of extracts to expose the readers to the actual experience of meeting the reading books as they are sold on the market. Because of financial constraints, only Mohadin and Potchefstroom Primary will be subjected to response to extracts as samples of reading books. Categories for the questionnaire are also derived from methods triangulation such as mentioned above. The books involved are books written by popular authors and books recommended by librarians of new literate-readers which are reading books aimed at multicultural schools. The books are representative of various types of books and the questionnaire will then also test whether cultural orientation is of crucial importance.

Subjects decided on in this study

The target group's sociolinguistic variables have been discussed in detail in Chapter 2. These influential factors will also be taken into account when setting up the questionnaire and compile the questions for the interviews. The factors influencing response discussed in Chapter 4 will also exert an influence on the compilation of the instrumentation. The target group involves the learners aged between eleven and fourteen, belonging to the formal operational stage of whom some already show signs of adolescence.

The bigger the sample size the more reliable the evidence and therefore a number of approximately 200 learners in the North West district are involved. Random selection of participants within schools was done, and the schools involved are the following:

SCHOOL	RACE	NUMBER
1. Potchefstroom Primary	Black	40
2. Central Primary	White/Black	40
3. Promosa	Coloured	40
4. Mooirivier	White	80
5. Mohadin	Indian	40

See Appendix for the letter to the Department of Education.