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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18820/2519593X/pie.v38.i2.09>

e-ISSN 2519-593X

Perspectives in Education
2020 38(2): 138-154

PUBLISHED:

04 December 2020

JUXTAPOSING SOUTH AFRICAN AND NAMIBIAN TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND TEACHING PRACTICES TO DEVELOP SELF-REGULATED LEARNING: DO THEY PRACTISE WHAT THEY PREACH?

ABSTRACT

Teachers are expected to be self-directed and to instil in their learners the ability to self-regulate their own learning processes. There are however personal and contextual factors that promote or inhibit teachers' abilities to develop self-regulated learning skills. This study was conducted in two South African secondary township schools and in two Namibian rural secondary schools. Twenty-eight, conveniently and purposively selected teachers participated. This interpretive basic qualitative study was intended to provide food for thought about the perceptions of South African and Namibian teachers regarding the development of self-regulated learning skills, differences in their perceptions as well as consistencies and inconsistencies between their perceptions and their actual teaching practices. Data were collected via observations and semi-structured interviews. The results indicate a need for interventions to train practising teachers to be activators and facilitators of self-regulated learning (SRL) skills.

Keywords: development, Namibian, self-regulated learning, South Africa, teaching strategies

1. INTRODUCTION

The study was part of a bigger Faculty of Education Project in the Research Unit Self-Directed Learning at the North West University. The overarching aim of the bigger project was to contribute to promoting self-regulated learning (SRL) as a vital prerequisite for self-directed learning and academic achievement in schools. The project has four secondary aims: Firstly, to obtain qualitative data on teachers' perspectives on the value of SRL, to determine if teachers are aware of SRL and specifically if they are trained to use and implement SRL strategies. Secondly,



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to explore individual differences and nuances in factors that influence teachers' use of self-regulatory teaching to develop SRL skills in their learners. Thirdly to explore and juxtapose South African and Namibian teachers' perceptions of how they develop SRL skills and whether there are inconsistencies between teachers' perceptions and their actual classroom teaching. The last secondary aim is to compare Namibian and South African SRL teaching interventions in education contexts to facilitate similar interventions in South Africa and contribute to self-directed learning (SDL) scholarship. This study is only based on the third secondary aim of the project.

Namibia was chosen because two Namibian postgraduate students wanted to research SRL in the Namibian education context. The two countries were also chosen as their education systems are comparable in terms of their general features of schooling, curriculum, assessment and the teacher minimum qualifications at each school level. On learning pathways, both countries have similar groupings of subjects, such as technical, vocational, sciences, commercials, arts and humanities (Southern Africa Association for Educational Assessment, 2014).

The Namibian and South African education sectors are facing education crises and are struggling to provide quality education. These education crises are apparent, amongst others, through high dropout and failure rates in schools, poor infrastructure, lack of educational resources, teachers' inadequate pedagogical content knowledge, teacher and learner absenteeism and a lack of parental support (Miranda, Amadhila, Dengeinge & Shikongo, 2011; UNICEF, 2015; Milner, Chimuzu, Mulera, Chimombo, Kunje & Matala, 2008; National Development Plan 2030). Township and rural schools are particularly notorious for the abovementioned adversities. Consequently, these schools are underperforming and failing to equip learners with the required knowledge, skills and values to function effectively in the 21st century (Spaull, 2013). According to the UNICEF 2015 report, learners in many rural Namibian schools show learning deficiencies and academic backlogs that cannot be detected earlier, since the first national assessment in Namibian schools are only done in grade 10. From the results of the South African Annual National Assessments, it can be deduced that South African learners demonstrate similar learning deficiencies. Nkosi (2016) reported that approximately 90% of South African learners in Grades 3, 6 and 9 achieve less than 50% in the second annual national assessments in literacy, mathematics and science.

To manage the education crisis, the Namibian Government has embarked on Vision 2030, to improve the quality of the lives of the Namibian people through quality formal education (Malumo, 2012). Likewise, the South African National Government launched the National Development Plan (NDP) which aims, amongst others, to build the South African society through the improvement of the quality of public services which includes the education sector (National Development Plan 2030). Despite these efforts, the performance of many Namibian and South African schools remain substandard (Nkosi, 2016; Tjihenua, 2014) and self-regulated learning (SRL) is alarmingly absent in many Namibian and South African learners (Geduld, 2017; Iiyambo 2018).

SRL is a prerequisite for academic success. SRL refers to the proactive, cyclical processes in which an individual is metacognitive, motivationally and behaviourally active in their own problem-solving processes to attain academic success and general functioning in life (Zimmerman, 1989).

The authors argue that if the teaching focus is redirected to the development of self-regulated learners, problems with high failure rates and dropout can be alleviated and lifelong learning will be enhanced. Our argument is supported by Eyre (2016), who states that the teaching focus should be geared to develop in learners not only methods of learning, but various thinking and reasoning skills, metacognitive and behavioural skills such as personal initiative, perseverance and adoptive skills, values and positive attitudes that could better prepare them for a rapidly changing world, as well as for social, informational and technological changes of the twenty-first century. The development of SRL skills is therefore especially relevant for the goals for the educational development plans of Namibia and South Africa. Moreover, the vital role of self-regulated learners in academic learning is globally confirmed (Bembenutty, 2011; Vandeveldel, Vandebussche & Van Keer, 2012).

However, we experience a tension between what teachers say and what they do. This tension is created by a mismatch between teachers' perceptions of how they develop SRL with their teaching and what they actually do in classes to develop SRL. Such a tension creates a disturbing sense that many teachers are out of touch with the realities of the roles they should play to develop self-regulated learners. For example, Geduld (2017) found that even though many teachers may support the development of the SRL skills discussed above, they lack practical knowledge of SRL and how to develop SRL skills. This lack of knowledge stems from several sources such as teacher education programmes that emphasise subject-area knowledge and mastery of pedagogical methods, and focus less on principles of learning, development and motivation (Peeters, De Backer, Reina, Kindekens, Buffel & Lombaerts, 2014). Moreover, some teachers view it as a time-consuming process amidst the pressures of inter alia, curriculum coverage (Simão, Duarte & Ferreira, 2008).

Against this background, the following research questions arise:

- What are Namibian and South African teachers' perceptions of how they develop SRL skills in their learners?
- What are the differences, if any, between Namibian and South African teachers' perceptions of how they develop SRL skills in their learners?
- What are the differences, if any, between the perceptions of Namibian and South African teachers' subsequent practices to develop SRL in their learners?

In the next section the theoretical conceptual framework in which the research questions were framed will be discussed.

2. THEORETICAL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

To conceptualise Namibian and South African teachers' supportive practices to develop SRL, this study drew on Zimmerman and Moylan's (2009) cyclical model of SRL that outlines the SRL skills self-regulated learners demonstrate. This model contributes to our understanding of what skills self-directed teachers should possess themselves in order to develop and foster SRL skills in their learners. We will furthermore draw on literature that highlighted various teaching strategies to develop SRL.

Zimmerman and Moylan's (2009) self-regulated learning model

Zimmerman and Moylan's (2009) self-regulated learning model integrates three phases. The fore thought phase comprises the actions self-regulated learners take before they engage with

a learning task. This phase consists of two intertwined main processes namely, task analysis and self-motivational beliefs (Zimmerman, 2013). For example, self-regulated learners know how to analyse tasks, set goals, plan and use different task strategies. Their goals assist them to sustain their motivation, develop intrinsic task value, interest and a mastery learning goal orientation. When they achieve their learning goals, they experience higher self-efficacy beliefs. This influences their motivation for future tasks (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011).

During the second phase, the performance phase, self-regulated learners demonstrate self-control and self-observation while performing a task. During the self-control process, they apply different cognitive and task strategies such as attention focusing, self-instruction, imagery, time management, environmental structuring and help-seeking (Panadero & Tapia, 2014). During the self-control process learners sustain their motivation by increasing their efforts, using own interest incentives and self-consequences. They furthermore self-observe their progress and apply metacognitive monitoring strategies such as self-questioning and self-recording of behaviour (Zimmerman & Moylan, 2009).

The self-reflection phase occurs last and influences the way learners approach future tasks. This phase is divided into the processes: self-judgement and self-reaction (Zimmerman & Moylan, 2009). Self-judgement involves the self-evaluation and casual attributions (Panadero *et al.*, 2014). In terms of self-evaluation, learners self-assess their performance using the assessment criteria set by teachers and engage new strategies for better results (Schunk, Pintrich & Meece, 2014). Successful completion of relevant and valued tasks results in greater self-satisfaction and motivation, whereas failure results in dissatisfaction, adaptive or defensive decisions regarding their own learning. Adaptive decisions direct learners to alternative goals and strategies, increased effort to improve and better help seeking strategies. Defensive decisions result in avoidance to perform the tasks again in order to protect their pride and self-image (Zimmerman, 2000).

In the next section some teaching strategies to develop SRL skills that might be useful for teachers will be discussed. Please note that the following strategies to develop SRL, skills as discussed below, are not comprehensive.

3. TEACHING STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP SRL SKILLS

The first level of learning SRL behavior and meta-cognitive competence occurs through observing a model such as a teacher or a competent peer (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996). The second level encompasses imitating the skills or behaviour observed from the teacher. During the third level the learner independently practises what was learnt. Finally, the self-regulation level is reached when the learner has internalised the knowledge and skills and can apply them autonomously in similar or new tasks. If teachers demonstrate or teach these SRL skills in Zimmerman and Moylan's (2009) model to learners on a continuous basis, learners will realize that they will only master the SRL skills if they constantly monitor their learning processes to recognize their mistakes as well as to make the necessary corrections and adjustments (Zimmerman, Bonner & Kovach, 1996). Besides demonstration and teaching of SRL skills, Schunk and Zimmerman (1996) advise teachers to provide guidance, feedback and social reinforcement when learners practise the modelled SRL skills to motivate learners' application of the modelled SRL skills.

Schunk and Zimmerman (1996) propose five types of modelling to teachers to develop SRL skills. Firstly, with disposition modelling, teachers display, during social interaction with

learners, their own attitudes and dispositions, values and practices of SRL skills. Secondly, teachers can use task and performance modelling that guides learners with the expected skills and behaviours required from them. Task and performance modelling ensues for example, when learners observe teachers' demonstrations of mathematical problems on writing boards, pronunciation in language or reading lessons or with steps and procedures followed with experiments. Thirdly, metacognitive monitoring is promoted through think-a-louds where teachers verbally explain their own thought processes while they solve a problem on the writing boards. With think-a-louds teachers demonstrate how they apply SRL skills such as planning, goalsetting, self-questioning, predicting outcomes and other metacognitive strategies to analyse and solve a problem. In the same vein Paris and Paris (2001) explain that with metacognitive modelling learners are taught how to activate their prior knowledge, to use imagery and elaboration. Fourthly, modelling as a scaffolding technique for struggling learners is advised. Lastly, learner-centred modelling is proposed to assist learners to learn certain concepts from the modelling of more expert peers.

Additional strategies to develop SRL are providing learners autonomy and control, independence and responsibility to enhance motivation to learn. This can be achieved by giving them homework for independent practise, choices regarding academic tasks and study partners, teaching explicit task strategies and offering guidance with complex, interesting real-life relevant tasks (Panadero *et al.*, 2014). Learners should be taught how to set specific goals for their academic work, highlighting important aspects, establishing clear assessment criteria before learners' start with the task, explaining how summative assessment will occur and facilitating self- and peer assessment. Simão *et al.* (2008) suggest the presenting opportunities to share information in pair-work and group work as well as providing adequate and timely feedback. Teachers should adopt teaching methods that will allow the learners to plan and organise their own learning as well as identify, select and apply learning strategies to learning objectives, to identify and express difficulties and be able to transfer knowledge from one context to another (Simão *et al.*, 2008). Zimmerman (2013) and Schunk *et al.* (2014) recommend a variety of interesting, novel learning tasks to keep learners motivated and focused on their learning, providing guidelines for task completion, frequent feedback and praise on comprehension and progress, facilitating task monitoring and providing regular assessments. The development of help-seeking skills is also proposed by Andrade and Bunker, (2011) while Schunk *et al.* (2014) report that the social and physical environments of classrooms influence learners' adoptions of SRL.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This "basic interpretive qualitative study" (Merriam, 2002:6) is located within an interpretivist philosophical orientation. The aim of a basic interpretive qualitative study is for researchers to discover and understand the worldviews, perceptions, experiences and meaning making of people involved regarding a situation or phenomenon. Data are usually collected through interviews, observations and document analysis and presented in thick, rich descriptions. The findings are presented in themes and using references to the theoretical frameworks that framed the study (Merriam, 2002:7). This approach is suitable for this study because we want to explore and interpret experiences around the phenomenon of SRL. We want to understand the Namibian and South African teachers' perceptions of how they develop SRL skills in their learners. We also want to explore whether their actual teaching behaviour in classrooms

support their perceptions of how they develop SRL skills in their learners. With this purpose, we followed the guidelines of Merriam (2002) for conducting an interpretive qualitative study.

The sample consisted of twenty-eight purposively selected participants from two South African and two Namibian schools. The fourteen qualified South African teachers are teaching different subjects in the school curriculum at two Quintile 2 township schools located in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Quintile 2 schools are representative of socio-economically middle- and lower-class communities with low levels of education living in high poverty and unemployment. The academic backgrounds of 11 teachers consist of four-year Bachelor's degrees in Education, two teachers have Honours degrees in Education and one participant holds a Master's degree in Education. All the participants have didactic and pedagogical training in education and undergo continuous professional development and training for curriculum implementation when it is offered by the school district in the region. The average teaching experience of participants is fifteen years.

The fourteen Namibian teachers are teaching within the Bukalo circuit in the Zambezi region in Namibia. Their schools are located in a rural area in similar socio-economic situations as the two South African Quintile 2 schools. School 1 seems to be more resourced than School 2 in terms of infrastructure, services and human resources. The participants' professional qualifications range from: eight teachers with a four-year qualification in Education, three participants with Bachelor's degrees in Education and three participants holding Higher Diplomas in Education. Similar to their South African counterparts, they had didactic and pedagogical training in education and undergo continuous professional development and training for curriculum implementation. The average teaching experience of participants is eight years.

The university at which we are based granted ethical approval for this study. The education departments of both countries and the principals of the four schools also granted permission to conduct this study. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, honesty, objectivity, confidentiality, anonymity, respect for the participants, protection from harm and the right to withdraw, were adhered to in this study (Maree, 2016).

Reliability was assured by applying similar procedures and a systematic approach to data collection consistent with the theoretical framework of SRL and the research aims. The first data set were collected via semi-structured interviews based on Zimmerman and Moylan's (2009) cyclical model for SRL. The broad questions in the semi-structured interviews explored how they develop SRL skills with their teaching. Examples of the main interview questions were: "What do you know about the concept of SRL?". "Which specific actions do you take to develop SRL skills in your learners?" "Please explain what you do to help your learners cope when they have to prepare for assignments and examinations." "What do you do when your learners experience problems with reading or writing or understanding new content you teach?" "Do you believe your learners can take responsibility for their own learning?" "Please explain what you do to help your learners make their own decisions on where, when, how and with whom to study."

At the start of the interviews an explanation of the concept SRL was given when a participant did not have any knowledge of the concept. Characteristics of self-regulated learners were explained to ensure that all participants understand what SRL entails. Follow up questions were asked to explore which specific actions participants take to teach their learners specific

SRL skills to: plan, to set goals, to use different learning strategies, to reflect on their work and to evaluate their understanding and progress.

After the interviews, one lesson of each participant was observed. The semi-structured interviews and lesson observation schedule were based on Zimmerman and Moylan's (2009) cyclical model for SRL.

The data from the semi-structured interviews were analysed utilising content analysis and a thematic approach (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). We started with the *a priori* and open coding process (Saldaña, 2015). Categories or responses referring to SRL knowledge and skills development were identified and placed under predetermined themes, namely the forethought, volition and self-reflection phases of Zimmerman and Moylan's (2009) model. The verbatim quotes, printed in italics, present the descriptions of the participants' experiences about the development of SRL skills. Reference codes were placed after the verbatim quotations to indicate the relevant country, participant and the school: SAP1S1 means South African Participant 1 from School 1 whereas NAMP2S2 means Namibian Participant 2 from School 2.

We recorded the presence or absence of pre-coded SRL skills on the observation schedule for the lesson observations. This was supplemented by field notes of the teaching and learning environment as well as the social interaction patterns of the participants and learners. SRL was observed as an event (Winne & Perry, 2000), meaning that a participant developing SRL skills was ticked off in the observation schedule when it occurred. The data from the lesson observations are presented in narrative text.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Our discussion will start with the interview data. We created seven themes and nine sub-themes that illustrate how participants perceive themselves to develop the SRL skills, differences between participants from the two countries and how their perceptions are supported by their actual teaching practices, or not. Themes created can be referenced to the theoretical frameworks that framed the study (Merriam, 2002:7).

5.1 Participants' perceptions of SRL skills developed in the forethought phase

This theme relates to the SRL skills illustrated in the main processes task analysis and self-motivational beliefs of Zimmerman and Moylan's (2009) SRL model.

Task analysis, goal setting and planning

South African participants had inadequate responses of how they developed task analysis and planning skills, which allows the assumption that these SRL skills were neglected in most of the participants' teaching behaviour. They explained however that they develop intrinsic and mostly extrinsic motivation, as well as positive outcome expectations by teaching learners to set proximal and distant goals (Zimmerman & Moylan, 2009).

In the Namibian education context, goal setting or academic performance target setting as they refer to it, self-evaluation and reflection on attainment of academic goals is compulsory in each subject. It was therefore notable that the strategies the Namibian participants use are supported by literature (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011; Simão *et al.*, 2008). They could elaborate on how they scaffold and guide learners who lack goal setting skills. They furthermore assist learners with personalised timetables and ensure that learners clearly understand the requirements and assessment criteria of tests and

examinations beforehand to enable goal setting and planning. The following statement reflects their outlook:

...Before the exam, I ask learners what mark you want to get and what they obtained, then they target for next term. Then from there they will plan their goals and objectives, and what they want to be in future (NAMP5S2).

Development of motivational beliefs

Participants from both countries perceived their teaching behaviour to be supportive for nurturing of motivational beliefs that include self-efficacy, task interest, positive outcome expectations and proficiency in goal orientations to develop learners' SRL. South African participants indicated that they develop self-efficacy beliefs through positive feedback about learners' capabilities and progress. Namibian participants (NAMP5S2), (NAMP7S1) and (NAMP4S2) revealed that they use a variety of interesting, novel learning tasks to keep learners motivated and focused on their learning (Zimmerman, 2013; Schunk *et al.*, 2014). NAMP7S1 explained: *"I design activities that raise the learners' interests, motivate them, and encourage them"*. Another participant, (NAMP4S2) believes that a confident, well-prepared teacher motivates learners. Another South African participant echoed this sentiment: *"I work hard to get the learners motivated. I tell them to persist in difficult times. I have expectations for their success. I support my learners academically and emotionally"* (SAP1S2).

5.2 Participants' perceptions of SRL skills developed in the volitional phase

Development of task strategies

The following response indicates most of the Namibian participants' perceptions of task strategies while learners are performing tasks. One participant explained:

I will ask learners to read the words and ask him or her to pronounce the words correctly and when they fail, I will ask another learner to give or read that one (NAMP4S1).

Typical of the Namibian participants another one added: *"I mostly I tell them to study with a paper and a pen beside them so that they read first and thereafter transfer the knowledge they gained on the paper"* (NAMP3S2). Similar task strategies that signify behaviouristic learning through repetition and drilling were also mentioned by other Namibian participants.

Five South African participants (SAP3S2, SAP4S2, SAP5S2, SAP7S2, SAP9S1) mentioned they develop SRL task strategies through modelling metacognitive questioning, writing of summaries, activating of prior knowledge, imagery, elaboration and step-by-step explanations. SAP9S1 elaborated:

I give my learners time to think about what they do not understand. When I explain content to them I make sure I the way I structure it on the writing board will help them to understand. I bought different colours of chalk to highlight and underline the important aspects. Sometimes I circle key words. I showed them and let them practice how to take their own notes.

Development of self-observation and metacognitive monitoring

Most Namibian and South African participants struggled to explain what they do to develop self-observation of learning that can be achieved through metacognitive monitoring and

self-recording (Panadero *et al.*, 2014). Participants had ill-conceived the consolidation of content through homework and activities with the SRL skill of self-observation during the learning process: *"I always encourage them to ask questions or do more activities or check their textbook so that they can do extra activities in relation to the topic we have covered"* (NAMP2S2). Likewise, a few South African participants refer to their own use of higher order questioning. SAP8S1 explained how she develops these skills: *"I let learners go back if they make mistakes. They must figure out what is wrong then they must cross out wrong answers and write the correct answers above the crossed-out answers"*. A possible reason for the misinterpretation might be that participants themselves never focus on the development of self-observation and metacognitive monitoring in their daily teaching, therefore it is not a SRL skill they develop in learners.

Participants from both countries mentioned questioning as a strategy to guarantee attention focusing and comprehension monitoring (Paris & Paris, 2001). Questioning on different cognitive levels helps learners to return to the main idea of learning and to check their progress. Although questioning enforces a sense of teacher control, it can, on the other hand, help learners to monitor and self-regulate their behaviour in order to apply themselves to learning and to pass examinations (Zimmerman, 2013).

Development of time management skills

South African participants associated the importance of time management with summative examinations and not with everyday planning of study time and leisure time. This is how SAP9S1 explained:

I tell them they only have three hours in the exam. The same content I test now can be asked differently in the examination. They must be well prepared to finish their papers in time.

Whereas Namibian participants seemed more conscious of time management. This is how the participant NAMP4S1 explained:

I ask them to have a plan on the piece of a paper whereby they will indicate the time frame let me say from this time to this time what should I do.

Creating conducive learning environments

A major difference between the South African and Namibian participants was that most of the South African participants identified the use of the social and physical environment of classrooms to create conducive settings for learning, as well as teacher expectations for success as important factors. Only a few Namibian participants referred to the arrangement of desks to promote cooperative learning and the importance of discipline and class rule to help establish a conducive learning environment.

Developing help-seeking skills

Regarding the development of help-seeking skills, Namibian participants used similar strategies to their South African counterparts that are supported by Andrade *et al.* (2011). SAP9S1 said: *"I let them go to the library to find information to work on the internet to produce good projects"*. Another participant explained: *"We write letter to parents or guardians to help by their child to complete homework at home"* (NAMP5S). Responses indicated that the Namibian participants experienced more challenges consequential of the location of the

rural schools, the socio-economic circumstances of the school communities and the shortage of libraries and laboratories at rural schools (Miranda *et al.*, 2011). NAMP3S2 clarified: "Our school is surrounded by bars ... a lot of music even during study time". NAMP7S2 shared the same sentiment: "Some schools are located far away from towns. Some are located nearby taverns and that and poverty affects learners. Learners are come from a society where they experience a lot of things which does not encourage education".

Moreover, the inabilities of parents to act as help seeking sources and additional academic help for learners is problematic, since fifty-four per cent of Namibian adults older than 20 years in rural areas have low literacy and education levels (UNICEF, 2015). South African teachers also taught help seeking skills explicitly such as where and how to find resources (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996; Paris & Paris, 2001). Cooperative learning is not mentioned as an SRL skill (Zimmerman & Moylan, 2009), however eleven Namibian participants included group work as a strategy to develop help seeking skills. One participant elucidated: "So that they can easily interact with each other, exchange the good and bad about their learning and I am quite sure that this can be a motivating factor" (NAMP2S2). In the Namibian education context, the learner-centred approach requires teachers to use cooperative learning as a teaching strategy, which explains participants' perceptions in this regard.

5.3 Participants' perceptions of SRL skills developed in the self-reflection phase

Opportunities for self-reflection and autonomy

Homework is commonly perceived, mostly by South African and by a few Namibian participants, as the most suitable strategy to educate learners to take responsibility for their own learning. Homework offers the opportunity for guided practise and independent practise of strategies that can ultimately reinforce autonomy and SRL (Paris & Paris, 2001). However, the question arises how do learners of the two South African township schools complete their homework without books? The spirit in which some participants give homework is however questionable for the development of SRL. For example, SAP8S2 stated:

You just give your lesson, explain what they must do, then give their homework. They must learn to work on their own and be accountable for their wrongdoings if they did not do the homework.

Formative assessments

Namibian participants mostly embedded self-evaluation and formative assessment by frequently setting small tests. Likewise, South African participants (SAP1S1, SAP1S2, SAP4S2 and SAP8S1) used small tests to allow opportunities for self- and peer assessment. These practices, described by the participants, enable learners to gauge their progress, to learn from feedback and mistakes and to take responsibility for their own learning. Such use of self-evaluation also reduces anxiety, since errors are seen as opportunities to improve. It also gives learners the opportunity to reflect and to judge their own understanding in relation to the qualities they themselves, the teacher and peers, identify as good quality work. Namibian participants revealed that they develop SRL through showing learners how to make honest and realistic attributions about their successes and failures (Schunk *et al.*, 2014). Participant (NAMP1S2) gave this example:

Through assessment, we help them and also when they are given progress reports they will obviously see, they did not do well and then you tell them: This is Ok, I want you to aim higher and I want you to study hard, you did this or you obtain this symbol because you did not study or worked hard toward it.

5.4 Motivation through teacher modelling

Some Namibian participants exemplify disposition modelling (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996) which is beneficial for the development of SRL. Participants revealed that they inform learners about their expectations for their success. They also explained that they show their love for teaching and education by reflecting on and adapting their own teaching strategies (NAMP6S1) and teaching aids (NAMP2S1) to improve learners' performance. NAMP2S1 explained: *"I normally look at my teaching material, what are the teaching aids that will make my learners know or understand my lesson?"*

Participants from both countries, for example NAMP5S2, said they use task and performance modelling to develop SRL (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996). They claimed that they put effort in with additional after school classes, re-teaching, doing and demonstrations to improve learners' performance. For example, NAMP6S1 clarified:

I do remedial teaching where you identify learners who are having difficulty not understanding the topic. After the others knock off I stay even 30 minutes with them just to go through that topic.

In the following themes we will discuss our observations of whether participants' actual teaching behaviour in classrooms are aligned with their perceptions of how they develop SRL skills. Three themes were created, namely: Tension between perceptions and classroom reality, Sporadic facilitation of SRL skills and Practising what they preach.

Tension between perceptions and classroom reality

This theme encapsulates the observations where a disjuncture between perceptions and subsequent practice in classrooms were found. Poor alignment between perceptions and teaching behaviour to develop SRL skills was observed in seven South African and six Namibian participants' teaching. These participants (SAP82, SAP6S2, SAP7S1 and SAP5S1) perceived their teaching behaviour as one promoting SRL, however the observations of their lessons proved otherwise.

For example, SAP7S1 stated: *"I always encourage my learners to take responsibility for their learning and to learn from one another"*. However, in this participant's class, learners were sitting passively and were not encouraged to participate. He used his whole lesson to revise concepts such as liability, profit, assets, etc., learners had been taught the previous week (Geduld, 2017). Another example comes from SAP8S2 who claimed: *"I teach my learners to concentrate when I teach. I teach them to use their time wisely, to ask deep questions, to learn from each other in group work"*. Yet, observation of the lesson revealed that SAP8S2 used most of the teaching time to control homework and to sign books while the rest of the class were doing an activity from the textbook.

The Namibian participants gave some attention to the physical environment to ensure conducive classrooms for learning. In contrast, their South African counterparts' classrooms lacked subject posters, teaching aides and displays of learners' work. Participants from both countries used the transmission approach, individual activities for learners and relied

on textbooks, even though three to four learners were sharing textbooks. Although most of the participants tried to be enthusiastic and seemed to have good subject knowledge, poor teacher-learner interactions were observed. Besides a few South African participants who gave what seemed to be unplanned homework, no opportunity was given for learners to take responsibility for their learning. Given the nature of transmission teaching, many participants in this theme used questioning to activate prior knowledge and to monitor learners' progress. However many times SAP5S2 was observed asking questions and not directing it to any specific learner. South African participants used more prompting questions to monitor the learners' comprehension, however none of the participants intervened when wrong answers were given and misunderstandings of the content was obvious.

Most participants did not state the lesson objectives to support learners' goal setting, planning and focus on targeted skills and knowledge the various lessons aimed at. In comparison with the South African participants, the Namibian participants, contradictory to the interview data, did little to build learners' self-motivational skills.

The application or explanation of task strategies and awareness of time management skills, although mentioned in the interviews, were seldomly observed. Namibian participants mainly wrote summarised notes on the chalkboard to help learners process information. South African participants used teaching time to revise concepts (SAP5S1) and allowed learners to underline in their books while the participant was reading definitions from the book (SAP2S2). SAP1S1 and SAP8S2 used most of the teaching time to control homework and to sign books while the rest of the class were doing an activity from the textbook to keep them busy. Even though there were many opportunities to develop SRL skills such as reflection and self-evaluation, participants in this category unfortunately did not capitalise on these opportunities to develop the metacognitive and SRL skills. A few participants utilised homework activities to develop responsibility for learning and activate learners' prior knowledge.

Sporadic facilitation of SRL skills

The development of SRL skills was often observable in eight Namibian participants' teaching (NAMP1S1, NAMP2S1, NAMP7S1, NAMP1S2, NAMP2S2, NAMP3S2, NAMP4S2 and NAMP7S2). However, these participants overlooked many opportunities to develop SRL skills. It was noted that even though NAMP2S2 found it difficult to describe the teaching strategies he uses to develop SRL skills, his teaching behaviour in class displayed that he uses many metacognitive modelling, scaffolding and task and performance modelling (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996) to develop SRL skills.

In general, the participants were energetic and seemed to have a good rapport with their learners. Their classrooms displayed efforts of environmental structuring that created a conducive atmosphere for learning (NAMP1S2, NAMP4S2, NAMP5S2). The use of technology and learner-centred teaching methods such as cooperative learning, which was mentioned in the interview, was often observed (NAMP5S2): *"I use group work, I divide learners into groups and give them topics or questions to discuss...they can share ideas, put their discussion on paper and then to present them"*. Participants ensured each learner has a specific responsibility in the groups. They facilitated group and pair discussions that gave learners freedom to make decisions, to learn from their mistakes and to take responsibility of own learning (NAMP1S1, NAMP5S2). Encouragement, positive verbal feedback and praise were often observed to enhance motivational and self-efficacy beliefs (NAMP7S1, NAMP5S2) (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996). Participants often used higher order questioning and

step-by-step explanations and examples as prompt interventions when miscomprehension and struggling learners were noticed (NAMP1S1, NAMP2S1, NAMP4S2). Participants (NAMP1S2, NAMP2S2) taught SRL skills indirectly by explaining, thinking aloud, asking self-questions and by clarifying expectations and the criteria for good work (Panadero *et al.*, 2014). When learners gave feedback after group and individual activities, a few participants utilised the opportunity to facilitate learner self-evaluation and reflection on their understanding and progress (NAMP2S1, NAMP7S1).

The modeling of a limited variety of task strategies such as note taking, highlighting of important concepts, rereading and paraphrasing for comprehension and use of dictionaries were observed (NAMP2S2). A few participants successfully linked learners' prior knowledge with new content (NAMP7S1). It was however noticeable that many participants do not allow enough time for learners to think about answers and gave the answers themselves if learners could not answer immediately (NAMP1S1, NAMP4S2). In general these participants explained the relevance of their subject content to learners' real lives (Sikwanga, 2018). Only two participants were observed stating the goals of the lessons and continuously reminding learners about the competencies they should attain. The same two participants drew learners' attention to time management and gave them help-seeking guidance. Homework activities as a strategy for developing agency and individual practice was often observed (NAMP3S2, NAMP4S2, NAMP7S1).

Practising what they preach

We found consistencies between seven South African participants' perceptions and their teaching practices to develop SRL skills (SAP3S2, SAP4S2, SAP9S1, SAP10S1, SAP12S2, SAP13S2, SAP14S2). The following are examples of how they demonstrated the development of SRL skills.

The tidy physical environment and posters in their classes and their passionate nature for teaching created a positive effect and emotions in their classes that facilitate task interest and motivation (Schunk *et al.*, 2014). The fostering of persistence, self-efficacy and motivation to develop SRL were also observed in their teaching. All participants developed goalsetting, planning and task analysis in their teaching (Panadero *et al.*, 2014). They set clear learning goals and intervened when learners misunderstood new content. This assisted learners to focus and to stay on-task. Time management skills were facilitated with activities in class, time spent on individual practice with homework and with similar questions in examinations (SAP14S2).

Participants SAP3S2, SAP4S2 and SAP9S1 used scaffolding, metacognitive and task and performance modelling to develop SRL (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996). On their writing boards they gave logical and organised explanations of the subject content that made information processing easier. Participants' self-questioning and thinking-a-louds illustrated their thinking processes from which learners could learn (SAP3S2, SAP4S2, SAP9S1; SAP10S1). Participants exposed learners to task strategies by using the writing board and other visual aids to model how to highlight and underline important concepts, create mnemonics and flow charts and to make summaries.

Struggling learners were never spoon fed with correct answers but were referred to work previously done and to their notes to reflect on incorrect answers (SAP10S1, SAP13S2). This compelled them to engage in help seeking from peers to revise and to take responsibility for

miscomprehension and gaps in their understanding. Having to take responsibility for their own learning resulted in self-evaluation of progress, making alternative decisions about task analysis and strategies to complete activities. These opportunities for individual improvement, learning, progress and mastery are essential for the development of SRL skills such as self-efficacy, task interest, self-observation, self-satisfaction (Zimmerman, 2013) and teaching learners to see mistakes as opportunities for learning (Schunk *et al.*, 2014).

Learners were given some freedom of decision-making when they could decide on with whom and where to learn (Zimmerman, 2013). Learners could work with peers in pairs or in small heterogeneous groups as well as move to another group if they struggled to understand and no one in the group could assist them (SAP4S2, SAP13S2 and SAP14S2). Furthermore, it seemed as if most participants in the category could meaningfully link their subject content to learners' everyday lives (Schunk *et al.*, 2014). Learners were explicitly taught how to form study groups to discuss, to read newspapers and to watch certain programmes on television to see the connection between school and real life (SAP3S2, SAP12S2). These strategies are confirmed by Schunk *et al.* (2014) who state that tasks relevant to real life stimulate learners' personal desire to learn as well as their persistence and cognitive engagement, which are important SRL skills.

6. CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was threefold, namely to explore and interpret Namibian and South African teachers' perceptions of how they develop SRL skills in their learners, possible differences between the participants of the two countries and differences, if any, between participants' perceptions and their subsequent practices to develop SRL.

Responses from the interviews revealed that participants from both countries perceive the importance of their subject knowledge and their motivational roles as vehicles to develop SRL skills. However, the South African participants emphasised the importance of being a passionate, well prepared teacher to foster SRL skills. From the responses on the SRL skills developed in the volitional phase it seemed Namibian participants rely on memorisation whereas the South African participants mentioned more sophisticated and meaningful task strategies. The most common strategy used by Namibian and South African participants to develop skills in the self-reflection phase was small tests, homework, peer and self-assessment.

The lesson observations revealed a considerable variation in the occurrence. Additionally, all the participants claimed to develop SRL but only a little more than half of the participants' teaching aided the development and support of learners' SRL skills. Disjunctions were noted between some lesson observations and teachers' perceptions of how they develop SRL. Data from lesson observations showed that almost half of each country's participants' perceptions of how they develop SRL were not aligned with their actual teaching practices to develop SRL. South African participants demonstrated more and better supportive practices to develop SRL skills, however the large number of participants from both countries who are under the erroneous impression that they do develop SRL, remain troublesome. Despite education reform programmes and curriculum transformation in both countries, the transmission teaching approach is more dominant in the Namibian schools.

Participants in both countries voiced concern and frustration with illiterate and poor parental involvement as well as with the poor socio-economic living conditions of both township school and rural school learners. Other similar challenging, contextual factors mentioned are little

support from communities to emphasise the value of education. Namibian participants' responses highlighted low learner motivation, teenage pregnancies, unfavourable physical environments surrounding their schools, a shortage of infrastructure and access to libraries and laboratories as well as learner absenteeism caused by geographical locations (Sikwanga, 2018).

The research design and sample size does not allow the generalisation of the results to other domains or populations. However, although this interpretive basic qualitative study is subjective in nature, it is objective in its particular teaching context, namely township and rural schools and the research area of SRL.

7. FUTURE RESEARCH

This study indicates a need for interventions to train practising teachers and student teachers in the development of SRL during teacher education sessions and workshops. Another recommendation is that national curriculum policy statements should outline teachers' roles in the development of SRL. Findings from this study may also serve as an instrument for reflection and offer some ideas for changing practice in rural and township schools. It is anticipated that this research might stimulate discussions with Education Departments and teachers about the significance of developing SRL by means of professional development courses in order to advance academic performances.

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