

**THE UTILISATION OF TRANSLANGUAGING FOR  
LEARNING AND TEACHING IN MULTILINGUAL  
PRIMARY CLASSROOMS**

**Sameera Ayob**

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UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

# **THE UTILISATION OF TRANSLANGUAGING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING IN MULTILINGUAL PRIMARY CLASSROOMS**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

**PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR**  
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Faculty of Education  
University of Pretoria

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Professor Funke Omidire

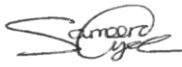
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**2020**

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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I, Sameera Ayob (student number 96145758), hereby declare that all the resources consulted are included in the reference list and that this study titled: THE UTILISATION OF TRANSLANGUAGING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING IN MULTILINGUAL PRIMARY CLASSROOMS is my original work. This thesis was not previously submitted by me for any degree at another university.



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Sameera Ayob

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23 April 2020

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# ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



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## RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

<b>CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE</b>	CLEARANCE NUMBER: <b>UP 18/03/01 Omidire 19-002</b>
<b>DEGREE AND PROJECT</b>	PhD The utilisation of translanguaging for learning and teaching in multilingual primary classrooms
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<b>APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY</b>	16 May 2019
<b>DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE</b>	16 March 2020

**CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE:** Prof Funke Omidire

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Funke Omidire', written over a horizontal line.

**CC** Ms Bronwynne Swarts  
Prof Funke Omidire

This Ethics Clearance Certificate should be read in conjunction with the Integrated Declaration Form (D08) which specifies details regarding:

- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
- Adverse experience or undue risk,
- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.

## ETHICS STATEMENT

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The author, whose name appears on the title page of this thesis, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research approval. The author declares that she has observed the ethical requirements in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of ethics for researchers and the Policy guidelines for responsible research.



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Sameera Ayob  
23 April 2020

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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My sincere gratitude and immense appreciation goes to my supervisor, Professor Funke Omidire, who I would like to leave with the sayings below:-

*“Some people arrive and make such a beautiful impact on your life, you can barely remember what life was like without them”.* Anna Taylor

*“You manifest yourself as kindness in all you do”.* PS145:13

*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”*

Nelson Mandela

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- The University of Pretoria for giving me a platform to grow and learn.
- My Creator for providing me with peace, health and a beating heart.

I would like to sympathize with the many families who have lost loved ones, friends, and relatives amidst the global pandemic of COVID-19 which has become a significant concern. My sincere gratitude goes out to all the essential workers: doctors, nurses, policeman, workers, and other important members who I may have not mentioned who have gone beyond human expectations in the cause of being a part of this global fight for humanity. I wish everyone to be safe. I hope that these uncertain times pass in time to come where we can through resilience flourish and inherent empathy, honesty and integrity to continue to remain true citizens of our world.

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## DECLARATION – LANGUAGE EDITOR

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### Language Editor

6 April 2020


This certifies that I, Lydia Searle, performed the copy edit on the document entitled "The Utilisation of Translanguaging for Learning and Teaching in Multilingual Primary Classrooms".

The document was received 16 March 2020. The edited document was returned 6 April 2020. Citation format and language, grammar, punctuation and layout issues were addressed according to the style indicated in the submission guidelines and the template for theses and dissertations that I received from the author.

I am not accountable for any changes made to this document by the author or any other party subsequent to my edit.

Yours faithfully,

Lydia Searle



Date: 6 April 2020

Member: Professional Editors' Guild RSA (PEG)

Member: Academic and Non-Fiction Authors' Association of South Africa (ANFASA)

There is a need to move away from the negative perceptions of African languages, and towards accepting the first language as an asset. Literature confirms the issues of language policies and practices in South African schools, as well as the predominant socio-economic challenges as contributing factors affecting learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms. Over the last decade, a concrete theoretical foundation of translanguaging as a pedagogy has expanded and gained momentum. Accepting the use of multiple languages to co-exist in multilingual classrooms, translanguaging has been recognised worldwide. The purpose of the study was to gain an in-depth understanding of how teachers manage translanguaging and how learners in multilingual classrooms learn by using home languages, to facilitate the learning and teaching process. From a qualitative mode of enquiry influenced by the interpretive philosophy and a conceptual framework grounded in the socio-cultural theory and asset-based approach; translanguaging practices were introduced in two schools to potentially understand how it affects learning and teaching practices in multilingual classrooms. Participants included the English teachers and Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners using their first languages alongside English. Data was collected qualitatively through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, worksheets and storyboards. Thematic data analysis was applied to the gathered data. The study established that the inclusion of first languages mediated the process of learning and teaching and provided guided support to accommodate academic development in multilingual classrooms. Findings revealed the positive attitude and emotions of the learners towards translanguaging, and the consequent appeal for more translanguaging lessons since the strategy informed better understanding. Moreover recommendations included that policy should incorporate teacher training to facilitate translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms. As solutions to support translanguaging, policy ought to recognise strategies that value the importance of first language as a resource to be implemented in multilingual classrooms. Furthermore, educational psychologists understanding of the systemic needs of all parties involved, and developing proactive support strategies to be initiated in schools as potential learning and teaching methods is recommended. Further studies should include expanding on a comparative and longitudinal research to gain a profound understanding of the effects of translanguaging as pedagogy.



**Keywords:** Translanguaging, multilingual classrooms, first language, learning and teaching.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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HOD	Head of Department
L1	First language
L2	Second language
LoLT	Language of learning and teaching
MLE	Mediated learning experience
SCT	Socio-cultural theory
SOP	Standard operating procedures
ZPD	Zone of proximal development

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration of Originality .....	i
Ethics Clearance Certificate .....	ii
Ethics Statement .....	iii
Acknowledgements .....	iv
Declaration – Language Editor .....	v
Abstract .....	vi
Keywords .....	vii
List of Abbreviations .....	viii
Table of Contents .....	ix
List of Tables .....	xviii
List of Figures .....	xxi
List of Storyboards .....	xxii
List of Worksheets .....	xxiv

---oOo---

Page

### CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

<b>1.1</b>	<b>FRAMING THE RESEARCH STUDY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2</b>	<b>PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.2.1	OVERVIEW OF MULTILINGUALISM .....	3
1.2.2	OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGES IN SOUTH AFRICA .....	5
1.2.3	SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES OF SOUTH AFRICA .....	5
1.2.4	OVERVIEW OF TEACHERS' POSITION IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS IN SOUTH AFRICA.....	7
1.2.5	THE VALUE OF FIRST LANGUAGE .....	8
1.2.6	UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION .....	9
1.2.7	THE TRANSLANGUAGING APPROACH .....	11
1.2.8	MOVEMENT TOWARDS TRANSLANGUAGING AS AN ALTERNATIVE SUPPORT STRATEGY.....	12
1.2.9	EVIDENCE FROM RESEARCH TO SUPPORT TRANSLANGUAGING .....	13
<b>1.3</b>	<b>PROBLEM STATEMENT .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>1.4</b>	<b>RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>1.5</b>	<b>PURPOSE STATEMENT .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>1.6</b>	<b>RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....</b>	<b>17</b>
1.6.1	PRIMARY QUESTION .....	17
1.6.2	SECONDARY QUESTIONS .....	17

	Page
<b>1.7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS</b> .....	18
1.7.1 MULTILINGUALISM .....	18
1.7.2 MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION.....	18
1.7.3 MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS .....	18
1.7.4 SECOND LANGUAGE .....	19
1.7.5 TRANSLANGUAGING OR MULTIPLE LANGUAGES .....	19
1.7.6 FIRST LANGUAGE OR MOTHER TONGUE .....	19
1.7.7 HOME LANGUAGE.....	20
<b>1.8 RESEARCH PARADIGMS</b> .....	20
1.8.1 META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM.....	20
1.8.2 METHADOLOGICAL PARADIGM .....	21
1.8.3 BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN .....	22
<b>1.9 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</b> .....	23
1.9.1 SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORY .....	24
1.9.2 ASSET- BASED APPROACH .....	25
<b>1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY</b> .....	26
<b>1.11 ASSUMPTIONS</b> .....	26
<b>1.12 SUMMARY</b> .....	27
<b>1.13 OUTLINE OF SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS</b> .....	27

---oOo---

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

<b>2.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	29
<b>2.2</b>	<b>OVERVIEW OF MULTILINGUALISM</b> .....	31
2.2.1	HISTORICAL ORIGIN OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION .....	32
2.2.2	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA.....	33
2.2.3	THE ROLE OF L1 IN EDUCATION .....	35
<b>2.3</b>	<b>OVERVIEW OF SOUTH AFRICA'S CHALLENGES</b> .....	37
2.3.1	SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES OF SOUTH AFRICA .....	38
2.3.2	OVERVIEW OF TEACHERS' POSITION IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION SETTINGS IN SOUTH AFRICA.....	40
2.3.3	THE VALUE OF FIRST LANGUAGE .....	44
<b>2.4</b>	<b>UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION</b> ...	45
2.4.1	UNDERSTANDING MULTILINGUALISM GLOBALLY .....	47
2.4.2	STRATEGIES USED IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION.....	49
2.4.2.1	Grouping peer interpreters based on their first language.....	49
2.4.2.2	Code switching .....	50
2.4.2.3	Involving parents and community members .....	52
2.4.3	DISTINCTION BETWEEN CODE SWITCHING AND TRANSLANGUAGING .....	53
<b>2.5</b>	<b>THE TRANSLANGUAGING APPROACH</b> .....	54
<b>2.6</b>	<b>MOVEMENT TOWARDS TRANSLANGUAGING AS AN ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY</b> .....	56
2.6.1	ENABLERS OF TRANSLANGUAGING AS A SUPPORTING STRATEGY .....	57
2.6.2	CONSTRAINTS OF TRANSLANGUAGING .....	59
2.6.3	TEACHER'S ROLE WITHIN THE TRANSLANGUAGING CLASSROOM.....	62
<b>2.7</b>	<b>EVIDENCE FROM RESEARCH REGARDING TRANSLANGUAGING AS AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR LEARNERS IN CLASSROOMS</b> .....	63

	Page
<b>2.8 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .....</b>	<b>71</b>
2.8.1 INTRODUCTION .....	71
2.8.2 SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORY OF VYGOTSKY .....	71
2.8.2.1 Mediated learning experience.....	75
2.8.2.2 Zone of proximal development explained in relation to translanguaging .....	76
2.8.2.3 Scaffolding.....	78
2.8.3 ASSET BASED APPROACH .....	80
2.8.3.1 Classification of assets .....	82
2.8.4 USE OF TRANSLANGUAGING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING .....	84
<b>2.9 SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>87</b>

---oOo---

## CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

<b>3.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	88
<b>3.2</b>	<b>EPISTEMOLOGICAL PARADIGM</b> .....	88
3.2.1	META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM: INTERPRETIVISM .....	89
3.2.1.1	Advantages of using interpretivism .....	90
3.2.1.2	Challenges within an interpretivist paradigm .....	92
3.2.1.3	Characteristics of an interpretivist paradigm .....	93
3.2.1.4	Criteria for an interpretivist paradigm applicable to this study.....	94
<b>3.3</b>	<b>METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM</b> .....	94
3.3.1	QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN .....	94
3.3.2	CRITERIA FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPLICABLE TO THIS STUDY.....	96
<b>3.4</b>	<b>THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b> .....	99
3.4.1	RESEARCH DESIGN - MULTIPLE CASE STUDY .....	99
3.4.2	RESEARCH SITE .....	101
3.4.2.1	Placing the research into context.....	102
3.4.2.2	Selection of participants.....	104
3.4.3	DATA GENERATION PROCESS .....	105
3.4.3.1	Study timeline and procedures .....	105
3.4.3.2	Outline of the data-collection process.....	108
3.4.3.3	Data-collection process .....	109
3.4.4	DATA COLLECTION METHODS .....	110
3.4.4.1	Semi-structured interviews .....	110
3.4.4.2	Classroom observations .....	112
3.4.4.3	Audio/video recordings .....	115
3.4.4.4	Field notes .....	116
3.4.4.5	Document analysis of learners' worksheets.....	118
3.4.4.6	Storyboard .....	119
3.4.5	DATA DOCUMENTATION .....	123
3.4.6	DATA ANALYSIS.....	124
3.4.6.1	Steps taken to analyse the storyboard qualitatively .....	125
<b>3.5</b>	<b>ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS</b> .....	127

	Page
<b>3.6</b>	<b>METHODOLOGICAL NORMS TO ENSURE QUALITY CRITERIA</b> ..... 128
3.6.1	CREDIBILITY ..... 128
3.6.2	TRUSTWORTHINESS ..... 129
3.6.3	AUTHENTICITY ..... 130
3.6.4	DEPENDABILITY/CONFIRMABILITY ..... 130
3.6.5	TRANSFERABILITY ..... 131
<b>3.7</b>	<b>MY ROLE AS RESEARCHER</b> ..... 131
<b>3.8</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b> ..... 132

---oOo---



## CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

<b>4.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	134
<b>4.2</b>	<b>RESULTS FROM THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS</b> .....	135
4.2.1	OUTLINE OF THEMES IN SECTION 1 AND SECTION 2 .....	135
4.2.2	TABLE OF MEANING .....	136
<b>4.3</b>	<b>RESULTS FROM SECTION 1: INTRODUCING THEME 1</b> .....	137
4.3.1	THEME 1: CONCEPTUALIZING L1 AS AN ASSET.....	137
4.3.1.1	Subtheme 1.1: First language facilitates understanding in multilingual learners.....	138
4.3.1.2	Subtheme 1.2: The enablers of translinguaging support strategies are identified.....	143
4.3.1.3	Subtheme 1.3: Positive experiences identified by the learners and teachers.....	147
<b>4.4</b>	<b>RESULTS FROM SECTION 1: INTRODUCING THEME 2</b> .....	150
4.4.1	THEME 2: TRANSLANGUAGING SCAFFOLDS THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE .....	150
4.4.1.1	Subtheme 2.1: Learners supported in the process of learning ....	152
4.4.1.2	Subtheme 2.2: Learners achieve greater understanding through the use of multiple languages.....	157
4.4.1.3	Discussion of Theme 2 .....	161
<b>4.5</b>	<b>RESULTS FROM SECTION 1: INTRODUCING THEME 3</b> .....	162
4.5.1	THEME 3 : IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS.....	162
4.5.1.1	Subtheme 3.1: Constraints of using multiple languages identified .....	165
4.5.1.2	Subtheme 3.2 : External challenges affect the learning and..... teaching environment and Subtheme 3.3: The teaching experience with translinguaging elucidated .....	169
4.5.1.3	Discussion of Theme 3 .....	194
<b>4.6</b>	<b>RESULTS FROM SECTION 2: STORYBOARD ANALYSIS</b> .....	195
4.6.1	THEMES ELICITED FROM THE STORYBOARD TECHNIQUE .....	195
4.6.2	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE STORYBOARD TECHNIQUE.....	196
4.6.3	IDENTIFICATION OF THEMES ELICITED FROM THE STORYBOARD TECHNIQUE .....	198
4.6.3.1	Themes 4, 5, and 6 identified from the storyboards.....	199
4.6.4	DISCUSSION OF STORYBOARDS .....	221

<b>4.7</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b> .....	224
		Page

**CHAPTER 5  
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>5.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	225
<b>5.2</b>	<b>OVERVIEW OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS</b> .....	225
<b>5.3</b>	<b>DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS</b> .....	226
5.3.1	SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 1 .....	226
5.3.1.1	A non-threatening environment .....	226
5.3.1.2	Teachers’ positive attitude towards translanguaging .....	228
5.3.1.3	Availability of translated audio recordings as a resource .....	229
5.3.1.4	Including first language in the classroom facilitates better understanding .....	231
5.3.2	SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 2 .....	234
5.3.2.1	Language complexities and contrary views relating to first language .....	234
5.3.2.2	Lack of resources and time constraints .....	236
5.3.2.3	Insufficient training to teach in multilingual classrooms .....	238
5.3.2.4	Existing socio-economic factors .....	239
5.3.3	SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 3 .....	240
5.3.3.1	Learners supported in the process of learning to a level of achieving greater understanding .....	240
5.3.3.2	Learners experienced positive emotions .....	243
5.3.4	SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 4 .....	245
5.3.4.1	First language built a positive classroom environment and provided support to the learners .....	245
5.3.4.2	Teachers appreciated the guided support from the translated audio recordings .....	246
5.3.4.3	Greater collaboration between learner and teacher was established .....	247
5.3.4.4	More time needed to support the learners .....	248
5.3.5	SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 5 .....	249
5.3.5.1	Value attained from the translated audio recordings of the learners’ first languages.....	249
5.3.5.2	Greater participation amongst learners was established .....	250
5.3.5.3	Teachers’ acknowledgement of importance of receiving training.....	251
5.3.5.4	Translanguaging as a strategy for addressing literacy challenges .....	252
5.3.6	PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION.....	253

	Page
<b>5.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY</b> .....	257
<b>5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY</b> .....	258
<b>5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	258
5.6.1 FUTURE RESEARCH .....	259
5.6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHER TRAINING .....	259
5.6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER PROFESSIONALS .....	260
5.6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY STAKEHOLDERS.....	260
<b>5.7 CONCLUSION</b> .....	261

---oOo---

<b>LIST OF REFERENCES</b> .....	263
---------------------------------	-----

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – Consent – Principal .....	321
APPENDIX 2 – Consent – Parent .....	324
APPENDIX 3 – Consent – Teacher .....	327
APPENDIX 4 – Consent – Learner .....	330
APPENDIX 5 – SOP (Standard operation procedures) .....	333
APPENDIX 6A – Identifying information .....	335
APPENDIX 6B – Semi-structured interview questions outlined .....	336
APPENDIX 7 – Example of coding the data .....	338
APPENDIX 8 – Excerpts of research assistants field notes .....	343
APPENDIX 9 – Learners worksheet examples .....	344
APPENDIX 10 – Excerpts of researchers field notes .....	346
APPENDIX 11 – Storyboard examples .....	349
APPENDIX 12 –Example of one Grade 5 text .....	351
APPENDIX 13 –Example of one Grade 6 text .....	353
APPENDIX 14 – Prescribed text sources .....	354
APPENDIX 15 – Example of observation sheet .....	355

---oOo---

## LIST OF TABLES

---

	Page
Table 1.1: ..... Research Design	22
Table 2.1: ..... Outline of the literature review	30
Table 2.2: ..... Processes to scaffold learners from a translanguaging perspective	79
Table 3.1: ..... Characteristics of the interpretivist paradigm	93
Table 3.2: ..... The eight big-tent criteria for a Qualitative Research Methodology	97
Table 3.3: ..... Rationale for choosing a multiple case-study design	100
Table 3.4: ..... Abbreviations used in this study	102
Table 3.5: ..... Summary of the two school sites	103
Table 3.6: ..... Research participants	105
Table 3.7: ..... Procedures followed at each school	105
Table 3.8: ..... Outline of the data collection process	108
Table 3.9: ..... Data collection process	109
Table 3.10: ..... Observation timeline schedule	114
Table 3.11: ..... Strengths of a storyboard	121
Table 3.12: ..... Phases of data analysis	125

	Page
Table 3.13:..... Qualities for qualitative interpretations	126
Table 4.1:..... Outline of the sources of data	134
Table 4.2:..... Site visits and sources of data	135
Table 4.3:..... Outline of all the themes	135
Table 4.4:..... Table of meaning	136
Table 4.5a:..... Representation of subthemes, and inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 1	137
Table 4.5b:..... Summary of data sources used for thematic identification	138
Table 4.6a:..... Representation of subthemes, and inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 2	151
Table 4.6b:..... Summary of data sources used for thematic identification	151
Table 4.7:..... Representation of subthemes, inclusion and exclusion criteria in Theme 3	163
Table 4.7a:..... Summary of data sources used for thematic identification	164
Table 4.8a:..... Results of worksheets School A – Grade 5	180
Table 4.8b:..... Results of worksheets for School B – Grade 5	181
Table 4.9:..... Results of worksheets for School A – Grade 6	185
Table 4.9a:..... Results of worksheets for School B – Grade 6	186
Table 4.10:..... Summary of the findings of the storyboard	196
Table 4.11:..... Learners’ experiences of translanguaging support implementation strategies	196

## LIST OF FIGURES

---

	Page
Figure 1.1: ..... Research paradigms	20
Figure 1.2: ..... Foundational theories used in the study	24
Figure 2.1: ..... Educational advantages of translanguaging	58
Figure 2.2: ..... Asset tiers	82
Figure 2.3: ..... The conceptual framework of using multiple languages for learning and teaching	86
Figure 3.1: ..... Location of School A and School B	102
Figure 3.2: ..... Predetermined questions on the storyboard	120
Figure 3.3: ..... Data analysis process of the storyboard	126
Figure 3.4: ..... Quality criteria	128
Figure 4.1: ..... Graphical representation of Theme 1	137
Figure 4.2: ..... Graphical representation of Theme 2	150
Figure 4.3: ..... Graphical representation of Theme 3	162
Figure 4.4: ..... Comparison graph	188
Figure 4.5a: ..... Graphical representation of literacy skills identified in the worksheets of learners at School A	189

	Page
Figure 4.5b:.....	190
Graphical representation of literacy skills identified in the worksheets of learners at School B	
Figure 4.6a:.....	192
Collective results of literacy skills identified from the worksheets of learners of both schools	
Figure 4.6b:.....	193
Graphical representation of the percentage of learners with difficulty/no difficulty in literacy skills identified from the worksheets	
Figure 4.7:.....	195
Questions posed on storyboard	
Figure 4.8:.....	195
Themes elicited from the storyboard technique	
Figure 4.9:.....	197
Graphical representation of the data obtained from the storyboard	
Figure 4.10:.....	197
Demonstration of positive vs other (less optimistic) viewpoints	
Figure 4.11:.....	198
Need for translanguaging in multilingual classrooms	
Figure 5.1:.....	252
Extract of the themes identified in this study	

---oOo---

## LIST OF STORYBOARDS

---

	Page
Storyboard 1:..... Storyboard with six quadrants	200
Storyboard 2:..... Positive meaning attached to translanguaging	201
Storyboard 3:..... Visual display of being happy	202
Storyboard 4:..... Motivation for translanguaging to be used in classrooms	202
Storyboard 5:..... L1 linked to Home	203
Storyboard 6:..... L1 linked to a home and there is happiness	204
Storyboard 7:..... Translanguaging supports understanding in a classroom.	204
Storyboard 8:..... A positive emotional experience	205
Storyboard 9:..... L1 is valued	205
Storyboard 10:..... Translanguaging to be made accessible	206
Storyboard 11:..... Understanding content better in L1	207
Storyboard 12:..... Visual representation of a positive response	208
Storyboard 13:..... Link translanguaging to happiness	209
Storyboard 14:..... Happiness towards L1 when audio recordings are played	209
Storyboard 15:..... L1 creates happiness	211



	Page
Storyboard 16:..... Teacher and learner relationship highlighted	212
Storyboard 17:..... Translanguaging promotes gratitude in the learner	213
Storyboard 18:..... L1 elicits happiness	214
Storyboard 19:..... Visual display of happiness linked to multiple languages	215
Storyboard 20:..... Visual depiction of learning and understanding	216
Storyboard 21:..... Positive drawings linked to happiness	216
Storyboard 22:..... Negative aspects of L1	217
Storyboard 23:..... Negative response towards L1	219
Storyboard 24:..... A visual representation of a constraint identified from the learners' perspective	219
Storyboard 25:..... Visual representation of how a learner requests another L1	220
Storyboard 26:..... Mixed emotions identified	221



## LIST OF WORKSHEETS

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	Page
Worksheet 1: Learner's L1 is IsiZulu	182
Worksheet 2: Learner's L1 is Sepedi	183
Worksheet 3: Difficulty with spelling words and formulating comprehensive sentences identified by a learner from School A whose L1 is IsiZulu	183
Worksheet 4: IsiZulu learner answered the questions in his L1	184
Worksheet 5: Grade 6 Sepedi-speaking learner demonstrates literacy difficulties	187
Worksheet 6: Sample of the work of a Grade 6 Sepedi-speaking learner with spelling difficulties, poor grammar and poor sentence construction	187
Worksheet 7: An IsiZulu learner displays work with no literacy difficulties	187
Worksheet 8: Another IsiZulu learner displays work with no literacy difficulties	188

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## **1.1 FRAMING THE RESEARCH STUDY**

In this study, multilingual practices in the field of education are deliberated upon to understand the impeding issues regarding language development of primary school learners in multilingual classrooms. As an educational psychologist in practice, I am aware of the challenges that learners experience, especially when the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) is not their first language (L1). This results in language becoming a barrier to learning when monolingual language-education policies prevail. It appears that proactive support is needed to assist learners, teachers, and schools in reducing the issues of potential language barriers that have become a reality across a multilingual globe.

Over the past few years, including L1 to enhance learning and providing support to learners in multilingual classrooms has gained momentum. Studies of Garcia and Wei (2014), Makalela (2015b), and Mgijima and Makalela (2016) support the idea of integrating L1 into the learning environment and advocate attempts to move away from imposed monolingual orientations. The orientations that imposed a one language, one nation, and one classroom ideology on multilingual learners have shifted towards an approach that builds on multiple repertoires of languages that overlap one another.

My study endeavoured to gain a deeper understanding of the use of translanguaging in learning and teaching in primary school classrooms in South Africa by drawing firstly on the valuable work of Garcia (2009a, 2009b) on the recognition of translanguaging in the field of multilingualism. This approach “deliberately alternates the language of input and output during a lesson, thus allowing a learner to think and express their ideas in whichever language they are comfortable” (Mgijima & Makalela, 2016, p. 87). Secondly, I acknowledged the view of Makalela (2015b, p. 27) on “changing negative perceptions towards African languages, investing in their multiple linguistic identities, enhancing multilingualism as a norm and making language learning a positive experience” and applied it to my study that focuses on Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners in multilingual classrooms in South Africa.

On this note, Makalela (2015b, p. 17) explains that “translanguaging does not recognise boundaries between languages, but focuses on what the speakers do with their language repertoires”. This enables teachers and learners to build language spaces together where different language practices are used to communicate in order to promote creative and critical learning (García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017). Simply stated, translanguaging as described by Garcia (2019, pp. 370-371) “is to educate all learners, regardless of their language practices, to maximize the meaning making, creativity and criticality of their educational experience”.

According to (Garcia, 2009b; Hornberger & Link, 2012) translanguaging increases learners cognitive skills in reading development, and similar views are shared by Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012b, p. 643) who describe translanguaging as a “language practice that involved a deliberate alternation between the language of input and output in the classroom”. Translanguaging allows learners’ L1 to be used alongside the LoLT to enhance the value of language diversity and multilingualism experiences inside classrooms (Bartlett & García, 2011).

Regarding the use of three or more languages in parallel as a support strategy, I agree with Wei and Lin (2019) who endorse translanguaging as an effective pedagogical practice in multilingual classroom settings where the language of instruction is different from the languages of the learners. Thus, I used this approach in my study to support the learning of primary school learners in multilingual classrooms. I additionally explored how teachers experience teaching in multiple languages by acknowledging multiple languages (known as translanguaging) as important contributions to language distribution in multilingual classrooms (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Burcu, Fannin, Montanero & Cummins, 2014; Daniel, Jimenez, Pray & Pacheco, 2019; Stoop, 2017).

On a global platform, the assimilation of multilingual practices in classrooms has shown increased academic achievement in multilingual learners (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Turner, 2017; Vaish & Subhan, 2015). More specifically, “the concept of translanguaging has emerged giving space to the dynamic practices of multilingual people all over the world” (García, 2019, p. 370). My study aimed to provide a better understanding of useful methods that support learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms within a South African context by accepting diversity, multilingualism, and

L1 as inherent assets of the country as a whole (Bratland, 2016; Carstens, 2016; Ferreira-Meyers & Horne, 2017; Hurst & Mona, 2017).

Duarte (2019) claims that translanguaging strategies have provided learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms with flexible ways to use multiple languages to communicate, yet very little is known as to what enables the translanguaging approach to be positively utilised in multilingual classrooms to promote knowledge. It was my intention to draw upon my knowledge as an educational psychologist to understand the learning environment and the learning process and to find effective ways to work systemically to make learning and teaching a holistic experience in multilingual classrooms.

The following section provides a discussion of the literature on translanguaging pedagogy in multilingual classrooms. Literature pertaining to multilingualism and its effect on a global platform and from a South African perspective were considered pertinent to this study. Furthermore, I illuminated South Africa and its socio-economic challenges and discussed the teacher's position in a multilingual educational setting and the value of L1. An understanding of multilingual education becoming a reality in schools all over the world is deliberated, more specifically in relation to South Africa due to the language policies adopted in the schooling systems that accept monolingual language hierarchies (Makalela, 2018b), subsequently impacting a good education to be accessible in the L1 (Makoe & McKinney, 2014). An understanding of translanguaging and its practical implications in school settings are carefully taken into account for my study.

## **1.2 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1.2.1 OVERVIEW OF MULTILINGUALISM**

Most countries live in a globalised world (Cenoz, 2019; Ferreira-Meyers & Horne, 2017; Mabiletja, 2015), which is the result of “geographical and social mobility, economic and political transformations, and the omnipresence of technology in all areas of life” (Ruiz de Zarobe & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2015, p. 395). Factors such as “immigration, transnational relationships, and technological developments continue to create spaces where speakers of many different languages and cultures interact” (Lopez, Turkan & Guzman-Orth, 2016, p. 1).

Inevitably, the effects of multilingualism have led to more multilingual interactions (Nagy, 2018), and there have been ongoing debates on upholding multilingualism across all education levels as a norm (Lopez et al., 2016). Ruiz de Zarobe and Ruiz de Zarobe (2015) state that multilingualism has escalated as a widespread phenomenon that has influenced all domains of an individual's social and linguistic demands within communities. According to Lopez et al. (2016, p. 2), this leads to "interactions amongst learners in school environments where there is a repertoire of multiple languages, and most of them are encouraged to learn additional languages, whether through schooling or through interaction with peers outside of school". Mampane, Omidire and Aluko (2018, p. 2) concur and state that "the world has become a global village of which Africa is part". The reality of multilingualism is that no country in the world is linguistically homogeneous and translanguaging has become the norm (Hurst & Mona, 2017; Stavans & Hoffmann, 2015; Stoop, 2017).

Agnihotri (2014) advocates approaching multilingualism differently and concurs with Shohamy (2013) who endorses moving away from the monoglossic views of languages as separate entities and towards combining the use of multiple languages. Both the aforementioned views are supported by Daniel et al. (2019) who insist that by weighing in on full linguistic repertoires, learners acquire a richer learning experience, more commonly known as translanguaging. Similar views are shared by Moody, Chowdhury and Eslami (2019) who agree that when learners' L1s are included in multilingual classrooms, translanguaging is taking place.

While there is agreement in the research that advocates translanguaging to support linguistic challenges (Jantjies & Joy, 2016), there is extensive research that displays that multilingual learners experience linguistic challenges due to their L1 not being the LoLT (Nagy, 2018). In addition, the learners are influenced by the ramifications of past historical disparity, initially compounded by colonisation (Hurst & Mona, 2017; Makalela, 2018a; Strauss, 2016) and later by apartheid (Hurst & Mona, 2017; Krstic & Nilsson, 2018), thus influencing learning and teaching outcomes.

Colonisation was largely controlled by the British Empire that established colonies in developing countries, provoking language policies (Heleta, 2016; Makalela, 2018b; Plüddemann, 2015). This is comprehensively addressed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.1). It is also worthwhile to understand the trajectory of multilingual education in South Africa by being aware of the historical background that was predominantly dominated

by government policies, inequality and power supremacy and which was subsequently influenced by the current landscape of the country as a whole (Krstic & Nilsson, 2018). This is discussed in Section 2.2.2.

A prominent ramification that emanated from the historical trajectory of South Africa is the linguistic challenges currently present in the educational sphere. This revealed the role of L1 in learning and teaching (Canagarajah, 2011b; Kioko, Mutiga, Muthwii, Schroeder, Inyega & Trudell, 2008; Li, 2008) as an important contribution to learning, and equated L1 as beneficial for learners (Nagy, 2018). In my study, the role of L1 is a topic of significance. The 11 official languages in South Africa are Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Sesotho, Sepedi, Setswana, isiZulu, and isiXhosa (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). These have influenced the multilingual education system since many learners lack proficiency in English, and this has become a challenge (Brock-Utne, 2015; Hurst & Mona, 2017; Ngcobo, Ndaba, Nyangiwe, Mpungose & Jamal, 2016).

### **1.2.2 OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

In Africa, majority of learners begin their schooling career without their L1 and conform to a foreign language due to the past trajectories of historical, political, and colonial instability (Ouane & Glanz, 2010). Ouane and Glanz (2010, p. 8) confirm that “forty eight percent of Sub-Saharan African countries have an African language that is spoken by over half the population as the L1”. The challenges in South Africa are not limited to English being the preferred language in classrooms but to factors that include the socio-economic conditions and the teacher’s position in the multilingual classroom in meeting the diverse needs of multilingual learners. Also included are the challenges experienced when working with learners in multilingual classrooms, the subsequent negative attitudes of parents towards L1 education and lastly, interrogation of the value of L1 inside multilingual classrooms. These factors were considered important aspects in the present study. Concise discussions of the aforementioned challenges are presented in the sections below, followed by a comprehensive argument in Chapter 2.

### **1.2.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES OF SOUTH AFRICA**

The socio-economic challenges within the context of multilingualism are not isolated but intersect with each other, affecting learning outcomes. Poverty has been an

ongoing concern and has become a significant challenge for the South African government (Biyase & Zwane, 2017; Omidire, 2019a). This is in addition to the social concerns related to restricted access to social services, low levels of education, poor health, higher incidence of ill-health and chronic diseases, poor living conditions and standards, and lack of employment (Biyase & Zwane, 2017; Von Fintel, Zoch & Van der Berg, 2015). According to the academic and policy-orientated literature, the adverse effects caused by these factors (Decancq & Lugo, 2013; Frame, De Lannoy & Leibbrandt, 2016; Sen, 2011; Stiglitz, Sen & Fitoussi, 2010) have added to the strain on learners who are already challenged linguistically.

Krause and Prinsloo (2016) raise awareness that different socio-economic backgrounds result in different schooling experiences and influence learning outcomes. Mokolo (2014), Myende (2014), and Gobingca (2013) share a similar concern and affirm that poverty in South Africa permeates many government schools, including those operating in the rural areas, and this affects the learning experiences of multilingual learners. Similarly, Omidire (2019a) points out those learners in rural settings are aware of their overcrowded classroom spaces and also perceive their learning environments to be lacking in resources and scholastic support.

The difficulties identified in South Africa were considered in the current study. Thus, the asset-based approach rooted in the positive psychology framework was identified as a platform for addressing and accepting each challenge applicable to South Africa as not isolated but rather one of many. International studies on the asset-based approach focus on psychology and community development and feature education as an important aspect of community development (Boyd, Hayes, Wilson & Bearsley-Smith, 2008; Bryant, 2006; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993, 1996; Kretzmann, McKnight & Puntteney, 2005).

By employing the asset-based approach as the theoretical base in my study, I was able to identify assets within the community (Chikoko & Khanare, 2012) and understand how these assets can be of immense value in addressing the aforementioned challenges within a South African educational context.



#### **1.2.4 OVERVIEW OF TEACHERS' POSITION IN A MULTILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL SETTING IN SOUTH AFRICA**

It is important to be mindful of the teacher's position in a multilingual educational setting, specifically relating to the teaching of learners in a multilingual classroom, which can become complicated. Teachers often struggle to support learners effectively because learners come from diverse backgrounds and speak different languages, resulting in three or four languages being represented in the same classroom (Omidire, 2019b).

Kotzé, Van der Westhuizen and Barnard (2017) assert that these language challenges may be intensified when teachers lack the experience and knowledge to support multilingual learners (Chataika, Mckenzie, Swart & Lyner-Cleophas, 2012) or have their own L1, which is not the same as that of the learners in the classroom (Duarte, 2019; Ismaili, 2015; Mabiletja, 2015). Thus, teaching may require a great deal of preparation by the teacher in an attempt to meet the diverse needs of all of the learners in the classroom through exploring several teaching strategies to avoid challenges (De Oliveira, 2014; Gobingca & Makura, 2016; Nel, Nel & Hugo, 2012).

Bialystok (2018) and Ismaili (2015) maintain that teachers in diverse linguistic settings need to have a positive attitude to create a harmonious classroom environment. Furthermore, Daniel et al. (2019) claim that by scaffolding translanguaging into classrooms, teachers can optimise the learners' learning experience to be beneficial and worthwhile in their school environment. However, Omidire (2019b, p. 3) asserts that "there is a long way to go in terms of acceptance for pedagogy and scaffolding in the classroom". The aforementioned challenges together with the need to embrace translanguaging are not unique to South Africa but are recognised as worldwide challenges that affect multilingualism globally.

Parents additionally contribute to the language choice they prefer to be used for their children who begin their formal schooling. Parents prefer English as the language of instruction (Prinsloo, Rogers & Harvey, 2018; Nel et al., 2012), resulting in language challenges due to English not being their L1 (Omidire, 2019b; Rossi & Stuart, 2007). Additionally, past historical ideologies found that parents in rural areas preferred their children's language instruction to be English, as English was the language spoken by majority of South Africans (Prinsloo, et al., 2018).

### 1.2.5 THE VALUE OF FIRST LANGUAGE

There is a growing inclination in the field of education to increase the number of multilingual learners in school settings, thus creating the demand for L1 to be recognised as an asset in catering for this linguistic spread (Daly & Sharma, 2018; Planas & Setati-Phakeng, 2014; Rabab'ah & Al-Yasin, 2017). Nyaga (2013, p. 2) maintains, "Language is the medium of education". This generates the universal question: Which language is best to use in education? This is an especially relevant question since most countries in the world are multilingual (Stoop, 2017; UNESCO, 2003, 2010), yet the preferred language is English across most countries (Aronin & Singleton, 2012; Cenoz, 2019; Llurda, Cots & Armengol, 2013; Tembe & Norton, 2008).

Certainly in South Africa, multilingualism presents additional challenges to learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms because it is not dominated by two languages (L1 and English) but rather by 11 official languages (Krstic & Nilsson, 2018; Makalela, 2018a). Despite being more proficient in their L1, the majority of learners go through most of their school education with English as the LoLT (Gobingca, 2013; Krstic & Nilsson, 2018; Nomlomo & Katiya, 2018).

Learning in one language, especially in diverse South African schooling communities, is often unsuccessful (Makalela, 2015a) and does not provide positive schooling experiences and/or the cognitive support needed for multilingual learners (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Garcia & Wei, 2014). My study intends to use translanguaging in multilingual classrooms. In so doing, learners' and teachers' diverse L1s together with English are used in a parallel manner to assist learners and teachers in advancing their achievement, progression, learning and teaching through using their assets (i.e. their L1) in multilingual classrooms.

It is worthwhile to borrow from previous studies that have advocated L1 as an important tool to support learning and teaching in learners (Daly & Sharma, 2018; Mashiya, 2010; Nagy, 2018). This is in line with the view of Omidire (2019b, p.5) who states that "for learning to take place, there needs to be interaction between learners in the classroom and this could be facilitated by promoting the use of home languages to engage and make connections that lead to high-level comprehension". I share the view that L1 in South Africa should be viewed as a resource for learning

and teaching (Makalela, 2015b; Ngcobo et al., 2016) amidst all the challenges that the country is experiencing. I additionally concur that South Africans should progress in a positive manner and find meaning amidst the difficulties by identifying L1 as an asset for growth and academic development (Agnihotri, 2014; Joseph & Ramani, 2012).

### **1.2.6 UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION**

Multilingualism has expanded rapidly, affecting all societies alike (Aronin, 2015). This is especially significant in the educational sphere (Dodman, 2016), making multilingual education across the world a norm (Ruiz de Zarobe & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2015). Globally, the 21st century has seen populations becoming more mobile and dispersed, breaking traditional language boundaries that are restrictive, inhibitive, and counterproductive for learners in multilingual settings (Blommaert, 2010; Shohamy, 2006). In response to this growing trend of linguistic diversity, there is a raised awareness of multilingualism from an educational point of view that is widely recognised (Bamgbose, 2005; Brock-Utne, 2015; Chumbow, 2013; Lwanga-Lumu, 2020; Prah, 2006) and is described as an asset in education (Bialystok & Shapero, 2005; García, 2009b; Omidire, 2019b; Poulin-Dubois, Blaye, Coutva & Bialystok, 2011).

In the 1900s, Corson (1990) and Heugh (1999) defined multilingualism as the use of more than two languages and the ability to communicate in both. However, Makoni and Pennycook (2007, p. 22) describe multilingualism as the knowledge of separate languages, a “pluralisation of monolingualism”. Makoe and McKinney (2014) critically argue that multilingualism is the creation of boundaries around languages to conform to prescriptive norms, and Creese and Blackledge (2010, p. 105) present the view that learners and/or teachers are in fact “two monolinguals in one body”.

Additionally, Garcia and Wei (2014) maintain that for multilingualism to be beneficial for the learners in the field of education, teachers need to play an instrumental role by becoming bilingual teachers and building on and developing learners’ additional languages while teaching (Daly & Sharma, 2018; Kumar & Narendra, 2012). Makoe and McKinney (2014) comment on the language policies adopted by South African schools that maintain English as the LoLT, which inevitably results in majority of the learners being restricted to receive quality education in their L1’s. In response to this

limiting pedagogy of language practice, multilingualism is becoming a reality in school settings (UNICEF, 2016).

In view of the above, it was determined that Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (SCT) was appropriate to use as a foundation for my study because it plays a predominant role in education and learning. More specifically, the SCT views language as a fundamental tool to learning (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015) and if compromised can affect learners negatively, especially if language proficiency is an issue (Lantolf et al., 2015). The SCT provided a solid theoretical base for my study because there is a clear link between the theory and my study. It is within the framework of SCT that my research questions could be answered.

Specifically in the South African educational context, learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds are frequently mingled into single classrooms (Songxaba, Coetzer & Molepo, 2017). This awareness has led to socio-linguistic work on multilingualism in diverse contexts such as South Africa that has recognised wide variation and complexity of individual linguistic repertoires (Blommaert & Backus, 2011; Jørgensen, 2008). Embracing multilingualism in school settings has become essential.

Many support strategies have been used on the international platform to support multilingualism, more specifically, the needs of learners in multilingual classrooms. These varied language practices include peer interpreters (Curran, 2003; Lucas & Katz, 1994; Plüddemann, Mati & Mahlalela-Thusi, 2000), code switching where scholars like Madonsela (2016), Moodley (2010), Singh and Sharma (2011), and Van der Walt (2009), have contributed significantly to explaining its discourse; and lastly involving parents as community members where researchers like Plüddemann et al. (2000), Craig, Hull, Haggart and Crowder (2001), and Schwarzer, Haywood and Lorenzen (2003), endorse this practice as a strategy, and are discussed more in depth in Chapter 2.

The interrogation related to the distinctive nature of code switching and translanguaging is necessary because while code switching has been practised in multilingual classrooms to support multilingual learners, it has been utilised on a more subconscious and automatic response (Modupeola, 2013) compared with the intentional teaching strategy known as translanguaging. Hillman, Graham and Eslami (2019) maintain that translanguaging embraces code switching which allows bilingual

learners a space to engage in switching between two languages, and at the same time drawing meaningful words from a single linguistic structure to enable learning.

Simply stated, translanguaging seems to be a more flexible approach that allows multilingual learners to shuttle between languages in an innate manner (Canagarajah, 2011a; Phipps, 2019). By understanding this rationale, I aimed to use an intentional approach to scaffold the learning and teaching methods in primary classrooms where multiple languages are the norm. While the research that supports code switching is well received and accepted, the idea of translanguaging is to allow L1 to be used in a parallel manner with three or more languages to support learners in making meaning from the language they know well. That is, their L1 is to be used simultaneously with other languages in order for learners to acquire an understanding as opposed to learning in two separate languages.

### **1.2.7 THE TRANSLANGUAGING APPROACH**

There is support in literature that upholds using L1 in education as a step forward to correct the previous wrongs that marginalised and discriminated against L1s (Hurst & Mona, 2017; Makalela, 2015b; Mignolo, 2000). Other authors agree that learners who begin their schooling in a language that they know well achieve better academically than those who begin in a language which is not their L1 (Cummins, 1978, 2000a, 2000b; Klaus, 2003; Thomas & Collier, 1997; Stoop, 2017). Such learners find it easier to learn an L2 (Bamgbose, 2005; Cummins, 2000b; Dutcher, 2004; Malone, 2003; Okal, 2014) and are able to read faster (Baker, 2006; Bamgbose, 1991; Eisemon, Schwille, Prouty, Ukobizoba, Kana & Manirabona, 1993; Walter & Trammell, 2010).

Similarly, Mady and Garbarti (2014) and Schleppegrell (2011) highlight the importance of L1 by pointing out that learning concepts in a language other than the L1 often results in a poor quality of learning. Studies also confirm positive outcomes when literacy and verbal communication skills in English and the learners' L1 are entwined in a classroom lesson setting (Condelli & Wrigley, 2004; Omidire, 2019b). Axelsson (2013) agrees by asserting that if learners in multilingual classrooms have an opportunity to develop cognitive skills of thinking and learning in all their languages, they can progress on an equivalent plane with other learners to achieve

language competence in most school subjects. The role of L1 in education is comprehensively discussed in Section 2.2.3.

Research studies internationally (Okal, 2014; Stoop, 2017) and on the African continent (Jantjies & Joy, 2014; Ngcobo et al., 2016; Nomlomo & Katiya, 2018) informed my initial conceptualisation of multilingualism and the critical challenges to language, education, and practice that it poses. Particularly in South Africa, literature confirms the value of using learners' L1 in primary schools; Magwa (2010) and Phiri, Kagunda and Mabhena (2013) endorse that learners develop a sound base for learning additional languages when their L1 is included in their linguistic repertoire. These compelling findings demonstrate that there is a relationship between academic proficiency and L1. In contrast, there is the need to fill the gap of including multiple languages to facilitate learning and teaching in multilingual classroom situations.

#### **1.2.8 MOVEMENT TOWARDS TRANSLANGUAGING AS AN ALTERNATIVE SUPPORT STRATEGY**

In South Africa, it is critically important to accommodate learners from various linguistic backgrounds in the academic sphere (García, 2019; Krause & Prinsloo, 2016; Makalela, 2015a; Omidire, 2019b; Paxton, 2009). For decades, multilingualism has continued to be a prominent topic that plays an important role in multilingual education (Daly & Sharma, 2018). Strategies that support multilingualism have been employed extensively (discussed in Section 1.2.6). More recently, multilingualism has adopted a new trend called translanguaging, a more widely used concept associated with the study of multilingualism.

Translanguaging advocates that L1 should not be completely separated from the language of learning but rather used as an asset together with the language of learning (Ngcobo et al., 2016; Stoop, 2017). Translanguaging is described as the intentional planned and organized switching of the language of input and output to allow information processing (Lewis et al., 2012b; Phipps, 2019).

Translanguaging has been identified as addressing the multilingual landscape of learners in school settings. Garcia and Wei (2014), García, Flores and Woodley (2015), Garcia and Lin (2017), and Jaspers (2018) advocate that this approach is a platform to support performance and make sense of a multilingual world. The translanguaging approach broadens its view and adopts the notion that languages

should be viewed as “the flexible and meaningful actions through which bilinguals select features in their linguistic repertoire in order to communicate appropriately” (Velasco & Garcia, 2014, p. 7). As a result, translanguaging is a method that gives learners an opportunity to be part of multilingual education on a global platform (García, 2009b, 2019; Garcia & Wei, 2014; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Krause & Prinsloo, 2016; Makalela, 2015b).

The benefits of translanguaging have been demonstrated by many scholars who maintain that it is a strategy for learning and teaching as opposed to simply learning in a single language (Blommaert, 2010; Canagarajah, 2011b; Smith, Robertson, Auger, & Wysocki, 2020). Gorter and Cenoz (2017) and Ngcobo et al. (2016) extend the view on translanguaging as a way to accommodate comprehension skills, by making available translations of the tasks to provide learners a platform to answer content questions in the language of familiarity to make them to feel comfortable. Similarly, Menken and Shohamy (2015) agree and explain that translanguaging attributes more positively on the multilingual speaker’s knowledge, contributing to more proficient scores in academic content.

It is beneficial to identify the enablers for translanguaging to be successful in classroom settings and the constraints that surface during the adopted translanguaging strategies. It was important for me to be guided by the enablers and the constraints of translanguaging as a supporting strategy to accommodate learners in multilingual classrooms and to draw from the extensive knowledge base discussed in Sections 2.6.1 and 2.6.2. In addition, my study considered the positive effects of translanguaging and the teacher’s role within the translanguaging classroom.

### **1.2.9 EVIDENCE FROM RESEARCH TO SUPPORT TRANSLANGUAGING**

My study was guided by evidence from previous research studies (Gravett & Geysler, 2004; Krstic & Nilsson, 2018; Smith, Robertson, Auger, & Wysocki, 2020; Phiri et al., 2013; Schreiner, 2010; Songxaba et al., 2017) to demonstrate the effects of translanguaging as an implementation strategy to support learners in multilingual classrooms both internationally and on a South African platform and are systematically discussed in Section 2.7.

Recent studies promote the use of translanguaging and identify it as a feasible choice to include in classrooms (Cummins, 2019; Daniel et al., 2019; Martinez, Duran

& Hikida, 2017; Smith et al., 2020). Giambo and Szecsi (2015) state that using materials in the language in which a learner has a better repertoire, increases the learner's literacy performance in both languages, which results in the literacy skills possessed in one language advancing the literacy skills in the other.

Similarly, Garcia and Lin (2017) assert that the use of several languages spoken by minoritised learners makes academic content comprehensible and enhances the development of the dominant language. Notably, in education in the South African context, the concept of multilingualism can use linguistic resources as assets to challenge English domination while establishing learners' L1 (Hopewell & Escamilla, 2014). As discussed earlier, there is an increased number of linguistically diverse learners across the world, making translanguaging an alternative approach to be promoted in multilingual classrooms (Cenoz, 2019; Giambo & Szecsi, 2015).

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

South Africa's classrooms exemplify with a variation of cultural and linguistic differences, leading to educational challenges faced by many teachers (Jantjies & Joy, 2016; Prinsloo et al., 2018). It seems that the movement towards English as the LoLT from grade 4 onwards does not adequately prepare learners with the ability to learn effectively (Stoop, 2017). Language plays an essential role in schools, not specifically for English as a subject but also for other subjects across the school curriculum.

However, the problem arises that many learners in South Africa are not proficient in English as the language of instruction and are more reliant on their L1, which falls away from Grade 4 onwards when English is embraced as the LoLT in public schools (Collins, 2017; Krstic & Nilsson, 2018; Makoe & McKinney, 2014; Taylor & Von Fintel, 2016). This results in learners not being able to express themselves in their L1 because their L1 becomes irrelevant (Aronin & Singleton, 2012; Plüddemann, 2015). This negatively affects the learners because although they have an understanding of the content taught in their L1, they cannot use it (Ismaili, 2015; Makoe & McKinney, 2014) for the reason that L1 is often not accepted in school systems and teachers do not include it in the teaching process (Cummins, 2009, 2019).

Studies on incorporating translanguaging as a support strategy to accommodate primary school learners in a classroom in South Africa are limited (Duarte, 2019;



Makalela, 2015b; Mgijima & Makalela, 2016; Moody et al., 2019). By implication, there is limited research conducted in South African primary schools on support strategies for using translanguaging as an asset to inform our knowledge on learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms. There is an urgent need to develop support strategies that will cultivate the learners' L1 (Kioko et al., 2008) so that learners can learn in a language with which they are familiar and which they understand.

Furthermore, Moody et al. (2019) share that their study focused on the perceptions of translanguaging of graduate students by means of a quantitative analysis that ideally demonstrated translanguaging as significantly positive. However, they motivate for an in-depth qualitative analysis to understand the participants' perceptions and the meanings they attach to translanguaging by exploring their specific reasons for the positive impact of translanguaging (Moody et al., 2019). My study addresses this gap. Moreover, the gap in support of literature regarding the use of translanguaging practices inside the classroom is eloquently addressed by Hillman et al. (2019, p. 58) who state that "classrooms that utilize translanguaging pedagogies have the potential to develop multilingual students who are able to use their rich linguistic systems to achieve communicative and cognitive tasks".

#### **1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

While the focus of this study is to create opportunities for learners in multilingual classrooms to use multiple languages in meaningful ways to explore learning and teaching practices, the rationale for undertaking this study was motivated by my allegiance towards my professional role as an educational psychologist. My incentive was to use the knowledge obtained from theoretical frameworks learnt within the field of psychology and apply it practically to make significant changes within the educational sphere.

In line with my professional stance, I agree with the description of Moolla and Lazarus (2014) of an educational psychologist who is involved in observing, evaluating and engaging with psychosocial factors within the school system, parent system and community, influencing learners and teachers alike. Similarly, Shakir and Sharma (2017) assert that an educational psychologist's role is to create a favourable learning and teaching environment in the classroom. My decision to work with learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms seemed necessary because my

role aligns closely with the view of Shakir and Sharma (2017). This view supports an understanding of all learners, their classroom environments, instructional strategies, methods employed, and the approaches and tools required to meet the needs of learners in obtaining better results in learning. I felt obliged to be part of a support strategy that provides guidance to learners in gaining a more concrete understanding of what they are taught and giving teacher's methods to enhance their teaching in multilingual classrooms.

Research studies stress on the importance of use and accessibility of the services of educational psychologists (Boyle & Lauchlan, 2009; Fallon, Woods & Rooney, 2010). Similarly, Shakir and Sharma (2017) state that with the support from an educational psychologist, a teacher can create positive learning environments, leading to successful learning amongst most learners. Similarly, Pluskota (2014) expresses that educational psychology is a platform that provides support to learners to gain self-confidence and attain self-esteem, and understand the meaning of life.

Based on this premise, I considered it worthwhile to embark on this journey with the hope of proposing meaningful and effective changes within the school system by using South Africa's assets of multiple languages and diversity as a way for learners and teachers to mutually partake in the co-construction of knowledge in multilingual classrooms. I felt it equally important to use my learnt skills of compassion, patience, and empathy to impart my knowledge in the support of teachers and learners in creating a positive learning and teaching environment.

Scholars in the field of education believe that learners' L1 is an asset and if appropriately recognised in education can support the process for the learning and development of knowledge (Bamgbose, 1991; Makalela, 2015b; Ngcobo et al., 2016). Researchers maintain that South Africans have been disadvantaged by linguistic dominance, which has resulted in the failure to recognise L1 as the preferred LoLT (Bloch, 1998; Childs, 2016; Mkhize & Ndimande-Hlongwa, 2014; Mwindi & Van der Walt, 2015; Webb, 2013). First language is important for developing academic knowledge, critical and creative thinking, multiple languages, and confident identities (Natri & Räsänen, 2015; Omidire, 2019b).

There is agreement in the research that multilingual education can improve learning outcomes, reduce school dropout rates, and improve critical thinking and cognitive

abilities (Cummins, 2000b; Komorowska, 2011; Räsänen, 2014; Skutnabb-Kangas & García, 1995; Stoop, 2017). The current study deviated from the pressures experienced by learners in multilingual classrooms who have conformed to the use of monolingual methods to inform their learning (Garcia & Wei, 2014; Natri & Räsänen, 2015) and moved towards the method of translanguaging as a learning resource (Collins, 2017; García, 2019; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Manyike, 2013).

## **1.5 PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The purpose of this study was to focus on using translanguaging as a support strategy within a multilingual classroom with the aim of facilitating learning and teaching and developing both L1 and the English language within the framework of additive multilingualism. My study sought to gain a comprehensive understanding of how teachers manage translanguaging in their classrooms and how learners in multilingual classrooms learn by using L1 to facilitate the learning and teaching process. This could clarify up to date practice in the development of language skills and contribute to potential practices in multilingual classrooms.

## **1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study was guided by the research questions indicated in the following sections.

### **1.6.1 PRIMARY QUESTION**

How can insights into the utilisation of translanguaging inform our knowledge of learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms?

### **1.6.2 SECONDARY QUESTIONS**

- What are the enablers of translanguaging in primary school classes?
- What are the constraints of translanguaging to support learning in primary school classes?
- How do learners experience learning in multilingual contexts?
- How do teachers experience teaching in multilingual contexts?
- What are the teachers' perceptions of using translanguaging as a support strategy for learning in multilingual contexts?

## **1.7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

### **1.7.1 MULTILINGUALISM**

Multilingualism is described “as a condition in which more than two languages are used in the same setting for similar purposes” (Poudel, 2010, p. 121). Jessner (2008, p. 18) defines it “as an acquisition of more than two languages” and indicates that it “covers a wide range of meanings including the mastery of two languages”. Catalano and Hamann (2016) describe multilingualism as learners having the ability to know and utilize more than two languages, particularly in the research field of multilingualism. In this study, multilingualism refers to learners learning in two or more languages, one of them being their L1.

### **1.7.2 MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION**

Multilingual education refers to the contexts in which more than one language is used in school and other settings for the development of knowledge (De Oliveira, 2014). In the foundational schooling phase, multilingual education refers to the use of more than one language for developing literacy and giving instruction. This begins with the development of the learner’s L1, followed by the gradual addition of other languages. Cenoz and Gorter (2015, p. 2) define multilingual education as “the use of two or more languages in education provided that schools aim at multilingualism and multiliteracy”. Garcia and Lin (2017, p. 2) extend the term to situations in which the languages spoken by the minority of learners are used “to make subject matter comprehensible and enhance the development of a dominant language”. For my study, multilingual education is the use of more than two languages to enhance learning.

### **1.7.3 MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS**

Multilingual classrooms are described as spaces which welcome learners with varied and different linguistic identities to share a common classroom space and combine languages to actualize multilingual repertoire during learning and teaching (Kartika-Ningsih & Rose, 2018). Omidire (2013, p. 3) describes multilingual classrooms as “places where students of various linguistic and cultural backgrounds are studying together, where the language of instruction is an additional language and usually most of the learners are still learning it”. For the purposes of the current study,

multilingual classrooms comprises of learners whose L1 is an African language and learning and teaching takes place in English first additional language.

#### **1.7.4 SECOND LANGUAGE**

Bernhardt (1998, p. 2) defines second language (L2) as a language that is not spoken in the home but may be the language of wider communication. According to Cenoz (2013), L2 is the

language that is learned chronologically after the first language. However, that second language can be learned in a variety of significantly different ways. For example, a second language can be studied as a foreign language for a few hours a week at school, or it may be the language of instruction or the main language of the community. (p. 73)

In the current study, L2 is the English language, which is used from Grade 4 onwards in South African primary school classrooms as the language of instruction (Collins, 2017; Krstic & Nilsson, 2018).

#### **1.7.5 TRANSLANGUAGING OR MULTIPLE LANGUAGES**

Translanguaging has emerged as a new term within bilingual education and has influenced language ideology (Bailey, 2007; García, 2019). Canagarajah (2011a, p. 401), defines translanguaging as the “the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system”. A multilingual perspective on translanguaging acknowledges the existence of discrete languages and multilingualism and includes the right to language, use of the mother tongue, and code switching (MacSwan, 2017). For this study, the terms ‘translanguaging’ and ‘multiple languages’ were used interchangeably and included the learners’ L1s that were used together with English.

#### **1.7.6 FIRST LANGUAGE OR MOTHER TONGUE**

The first language or mother tongue is the language that the learners use when they begin their formal schooling experiences (Mashiya, 2010). The mother tongue is the language that is best known and most used; this term is synonymous with the terms ‘first language’, ‘home language’, and ‘native language’ (UNESCO, 2007). The

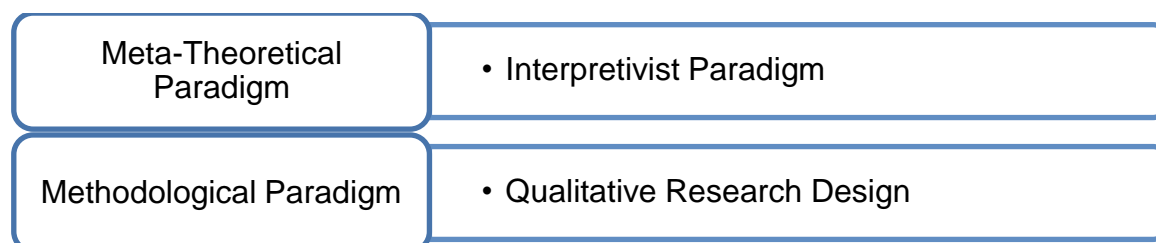
mother tongue is the first language in which children learn to express themselves (Nyaga, 2013). In some contexts, the mother tongue includes the language with which one identifies and the language that others use to identify one as a native speaker (Nyaga, 2013). In this study, the L1 is the home language of the learners and one with which the learners are most comfortable.

### 1.7.7 HOME LANGUAGE

Home language as the name suggests is the the language spoken in the home, and is not the official language or the language used in classrooms. Home language is a term more commonly also called 'first language' is also recognized as the 'mother tongue' and/or 'native language' (Nyaga, 2013). ). The term 'first language' will be used as the learners' mother tongue language and/or home language for the purpose of this study.

## 1.8 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

An outline of the research paradigms is presented in Figure 1.1, which graphically represents the meta-theoretical and methodological paradigms applied to my study. These paradigms are discussed concisely in the following sections and a detailed overview is presented in Chapter 3 (Sections 3.2.1 and 3.3.1).



**Figure 1.1: Research paradigms**

### 1.8.1 META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM

My study relied on an interpretive paradigm because it is socially constructed, embraces subjectivity, acknowledges multiple realities, and has significant meaning and value (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Pulla & Carter, 2018; Rapley, 2017; Wahyuni, 2012). Interpretivism argues that “truth and knowledge are subjective, as well as culturally and historically situated, based on people’s experiences and their

understanding of them” (Ryan, 2018, p. 7), while Harrison (2014) points out that multiple truths exist and are interpreted as products of human subjectivity.

Hammersley (2013) emphasises that human relationships can be interpreted in multiple ways, and to make the experience worthwhile and not be subjective in interpreting events and humans, interpretivist researchers should use diverse views to understand the different contexts and cultures that exist in the world. This paradigm aims to understand the phenomena through which meanings are made by people in their natural settings. It also attempts to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that these people bring to a situation and to everyday life.

The interpretivist paradigm is appropriate because I wanted to understand the real-world experiences of learners and their teachers in multilingual classroom settings. Chapter 3 broadly focuses on the advantages of interpretivism, the challenges experienced within an interpretivist paradigm, and the characteristics of the interpretivist paradigm as important aspects to be considered in my study. The interpretive lens guided my understanding on how translanguaging as a support strategy could be used in relation to learning and teaching in primary school classes in South Africa. Interpretivism shares a space within the qualitative research paradigm and is favoured but is not the only theoretical approach in qualitative research (Goldkuhl, 2012; Pulla & Carter, 2018).

### **1.8.2 METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM**

My study is an exploration and an attempt to gain insight into the use of translanguaging as a support strategy to inform our knowledge on learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms. A qualitative research methodology guided this study with a view to answering the research questions. McMillan and Schumacher (2010, 2014) describe qualitative research as an inquest into understanding meanings, the nature of knowledge and perspectives according to a particular theoretical framework and field of study.

Additionally, Halcomb (2016) details that qualitative researchers immerse themselves into their natural surroundings, endeavouring to understand or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to it. Similarly, McMillan and Schumacher (2010, 2014) concur that qualitative measures recognize the possible layers that the

study offers, and that there is no influence, domination or manipulation of behaviour or setting within the qualitative paradigm.

Qualitative research is guided by eight ‘big-tent’ criteria, as described by Tracy (2010). These include worthy topic, rich rigour, sincerity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution, ethics, and meaningful coherence (Tracy, 2010). The eight criteria for qualitative research are listed with the means, practices and methods through which to achieve them, and I have ensured that they are related to my study (see Section 3.3.2).

The intended focus of my study was to comprehensively understand the subjective meanings and experiences of primary school learners in regard to the use of translanguaging. By using the learners L1 parallelly with other languages for understanding and learning in multilingual classrooms was explored. My study also explored how teachers teach in a multilingual setting by using translanguaging and L1 as assets for learning and teaching.

By utilising qualitative research methods, an in-depth exploration was possible (Tracy, 2010). My interest was directed towards determining not only what happened in multilingual classrooms in terms of how teachers and learners interact with translanguaging in their classrooms but also how their attitudes, skills, and experiences were reflected in what they did in those classrooms. By using multiple data sources collected directly from the participants, the rich, in-depth experiences of the participants were demonstrated (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014; Nieuwenhuis, 2016b).

### 1.8.3 BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Table 1.1 is a summary of the research design applied in this study. A more in-depth discussion of all the applicable components follows in Section 3.4.

**Table 1.1: Research design**

<b>RESEARCH METHODS</b>	
<b>Research design</b>	Multiple-case study design
<b>Placing the context of the research into perspective</b>	
<b>Research site</b>	School setting

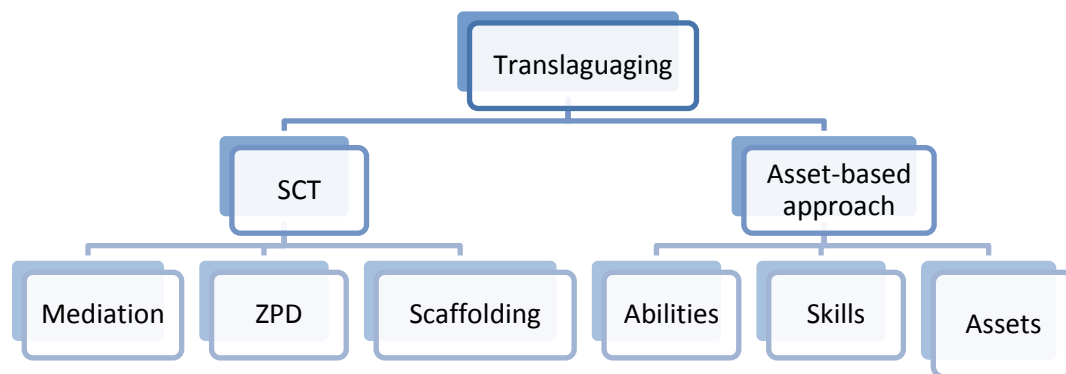


<b>RESEARCH METHODS</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Data generation process summary structure</li> <li>– Outline of the research collection process</li> <li>– Study timeline and procedures</li> </ul>
<b>Participants in the study</b>	Learners, teachers, HOD and School Principal from two schools
<b>Selection of participants</b>	Purposive sampling
<b>Data-collection process</b>	Site visits at two schools
<b>Data-collection methods</b>	Semi-structured interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Teachers, HOD, and School Principal</li> </ul> Classroom observations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Observations (non-participant observations)</li> <li>– Observation sheets from the teachers</li> <li>– Observation schedule</li> </ul> Field notes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Researchers field notes</li> <li>– Research assistants field notes</li> </ul> Document analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Learners' workbooks after each lesson</li> </ul> Storyboards
<b>Data documentation</b>	Audio recordings Video recordings Storyboards Transcripts
<b>Data analysis</b>	Thematic analysis
<b>Quality criteria</b>	Credibility, transferability, authenticity, dependability, confirmability, trustworthiness
<b>Ethical considerations</b>	Informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity
<b>My role as the researcher</b>	

## 1.9 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As discussed previously, my study was guided by Vygotsky's (1962, 1987) SCT and highlighted concepts that were pertinent to the study such as mediation, zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding. Additionally, the assets-based approach of Kretzmann and McKnight (1993, 1996) was deemed valuable for my

study. This approach addresses resources such as abilities, skills, and assets and links them within the framework of the positive psychology approach that re-orientates and redirects its vision towards cultivating a quality lifestyle (Seligman, 2005a, 2005b). Figure 1.2 below demonstrates the theories that were used as a foundation for my study.



**Figure 1.2: Foundational theories used in the study**

### 1.9.1 SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORY

The SCT has been used extensively in educational research and has influenced language education significantly. Carstens (2016, p. 3) states that “a central tenet is that language is the main vehicle of thought and starts as dialogue and social interaction, which in turn facilitates learning and development”. Vygotsky’s theory focuses on an instructional technique that with the guidance of an adult systematically leads learners through the process of learning (Carstens, 2016).

More specifically, Vygotsky’s (1962, 1987) work gives meaning to concepts such as mediation, ZPD and scaffolding, which were integrated into my study. According to Guerrero Nieto (2007), mediation is the appropriate assistance from other people, while the ZPD is the distance between what a person can do with help and what a person can do without help (Verenikina, 2010). The term proximal (nearby) indicates that the assistance provided goes slightly beyond the learners’ current competence, complementing and building on their existing abilities (Cole & Cole, 2001). And lastly, scaffolding, according to Stierer and Maybin (1994, p. 97), is the guided support given to a learner up to the point where the learner can develop competence to complete the task alone.

The above concepts are significant and were appropriately incorporated into a conceptual framework. This framework used translanguaging as a support strategy to scaffold and to provide guided mediation for the involved multilingual learners and teachers with the aim of enhancing the learning and teaching experience in multilingual classrooms.

### **1.9.2 Asset-based approach**

Another significant theory applicable to this study is the asset-based approach of Kretzmann and McKnight (1993, 1996). This approach was relevant to my study because it shifts its focus from what is deficient or lacking (Eloff & Ebersöhn, 2001) and progresses towards positive psychology, which centres its ideology on how individuals thrive and flourish, acknowledging the ordinary human strengths and virtues that make life good (Csikszentmihalyi & Nakamura, 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive psychology has promptly expanded in psychology and has important implications for learning a L2 (Pluskota, 2014).

In addition, the asset-based approach was chosen as a support strategy with a view to expand on academic performance in multilingual classrooms through acknowledging the rationale of Eloff and Ebersöhn (2001):

[E]ach classroom setting, school or learning environment boasts a unique combination of assets and capacities. If it is not recognised in the first place, it cannot contribute to the creation and continuance of effective learning environments. There is a basic truth that every individual has something to contribute, even though it may not be mobilised yet. In any context, or eco-system, there may be resources available that are still unacknowledged. (pp. 150–151)

For my study, the asset-based approach was used to find meaning amidst the economic struggles current in the South African context. The asset-based approach revealed resources such as abilities, skills, and assets within the community to counteract the challenges predominant in South Africa. The approach was developed from the community development work conducted by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) and was prominent in the United States of America (USA) to recognise capabilities, abilities, and social resources in every person and community.

The asset-based approach can be used alongside the economic struggles in which South Africa is immersed by identifying the assets within the complexities and adversities of both learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms.

### **1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study was to determine how translanguaging can be used more effectively as a learning and teaching support strategy which can inform curriculum development. It is foreseeable that my study may firstly provide recommendations that could support learners in multilingual classrooms to feel included in classroom life and flourish in competency regarding their academic work. Secondly, it is hoped that teachers can be guided in developing effective teaching strategies that support learners in multilingual classrooms.

There is conformity in many research studies which coherently explain that learners who begin their schooling in their L1 which they are familiar with attain better academic success than those who do not (Joseph & Ramani, 2012; Mashiya, 2010). Based on this, the significance of the current study is to support the learning of learners in a positive environment by using their L1 to possibly inform their understanding in multilingual classrooms. By using L1 parallelly with other languages from the foundation phase into the intermediate phase up until grade 7, could support learners to become proficient in both the language of instruction and L1.

It seems feasible to obtain an increased understanding of diversity and multilingualism in South Africa as affirmative assets that are inseparable in educational settings, and if used appropriately, could benefit multilingual countries in a positive way.

### **1.11 ASSUMPTIONS**

This study is based on the following assumptions:

- Language complexities, diversity and multilingualism are identified as contributing factors that influence learners in an academic environment.
- The proposed sample of primary school learners from four classrooms in Grade 5 and Grade 6 will contribute to the understanding of how learners learn in multilingual classrooms. Furthermore, the sampled teachers will add

value to the study regarding how they perceive teaching in multilingual classrooms.

- South Africa is unique in that it has a variety of diverse cultures and languages, meaning that learners who have become used to operating within a multilingual environment can typically play a role in explaining how they perceive learning in multilingual classrooms.
- A multilingual environment is characterised in terms of four intersecting variables: space, time, people, and activities (Dodman, 2016). Teachers are crucial in balancing multilingual classrooms with competence in different languages in order to work in multilingual environments.
- Being educated in multiple languages may inform higher-order thinking skills because the learners' L1 will be used.
- There are benefits for learners educated in multiple languages in a parallel manner where L1s and the English language are used simultaneously to inform learning.
- The proposed sample of primary school learners and teachers willingness to participate in the research and provide honest responses will contribute positively to this study.

## **1.12 SUMMARY**

In summary, Chapter 1 introduced the study by giving a concise overview of the literature pertinent to the study, addressed the problem statement, elaborated on the rationale for the study, outlined the purpose, and identified the primary and secondary research questions that guided the study. Furthermore, this chapter envisaged the significance of the study and the contribution that it could make to the existing body of knowledge on translanguaging as a strategy in multilingual classrooms to support both learners and teachers. A concise overview of the research methodology applied to this study was explained, in particular, the interpretive philosophy underpinning the study, the theoretical framework in which the study is anchored, the qualitative inquiry methods and the research procedures used in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data. Chapter 2 presents an

extensive dialogue of the literature reviewed to identify the existence of gaps regarding the phenomenon explored in this study.

### **1.13 OUTLINE OF SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS**

Chapter 2 consists of the comprehensive literature review pertaining to strategies to support learning and teachings in multilingual classrooms. This chapter focuses on translanguaging as a method to accommodate learners who may not speak the language(s) of classroom instruction, hence employing L1 as a potential asset to be recognised and adopted in classroom settings. The approach taken in this chapter is to draw attention to the language and communication practices identified in learners and teachers in learning and teaching contexts. Centralising translanguaging can act as a scaffold to enable learners to use their L1 as assets/resources in the classroom while moving away from past monolingual views that embrace strong language boundaries.

Chapter 3 focuses on the research design and methods. It discusses the research process and the ethical domains of the study comprehensively. The data-collection process and the findings that support the research are depicted and described in detail in this chapter.

Chapter 4 describes the results of the thematic analysis of the data and identifies the themes and subthemes generated through an in-depth data analysis process.

Chapter 5 reflects on the findings presented in Chapter 4. These findings are compared with the literature review presented in Chapter 2, and the research questions are answered. Contributions and limitations of the study are discussed. Recommendations are made, followed by the conclusion.

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## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides insight into understanding translanguaging as a support strategy by making use of three or more languages in one classroom that facilitates learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms. Existing literature is reviewed as a knowledge base to draw attention to the language and communication practices identified in learners and teachers in learning and teaching contexts. Thereafter, relevant debates associated with my topic are presented. I begin this chapter by providing an overview of multilingualism, particularly highlighting the historical origin of multilingualism, the historical background of multilingual education in South Africa, and the role of African languages, specifically termed first language (L1).

This chapter additionally discusses the challenges of the socio-economic disparity relevant to South Africa and highlights teachers' positions when they work with learners in multilingual classrooms. I deliberate on the value of L1 as a potential asset for learning and teaching practices in South Africa particularly. I extend my study to consider the concept of multilingual education on a global platform and review the strategies employed to support multilingual education in countries that share the characteristics of linguistic diversity.

Moreover, translanguaging is introduced as an alternative strategy in the educational sphere, indicating the enablers and the constraints in support of and against this strategy. These are subsequently investigated to increase the understanding of translanguaging as a practical option. The benefits of translanguaging indicated in my study that support primary school learners and teachers in multilingual classroom settings are also considered.

The study broadly explains how translanguaging has become a contemporary term embedded in multilingualism and demonstrates the effectiveness of using translanguaging in the global context. It is equally important to understand the fundamental principles of L1 and how these influence educational outcomes. The positive and negative contributions of translanguaging in education are discussed,

followed by the manner in which translanguaging strategies have positively affected learners in multilingual classrooms.

This chapter additionally provides an introduction to my conceptual framework and finds relevant links to the research questions posed. More specifically, Chapter 2 highlights that understanding translanguaging is imperative to fill the gap by utilizing it as a support strategy, especially in South Africa where there is an essential need to support learners in multilingual classrooms.

Duarte (2019, p. 163) advances “how a sociocultural theorization of translanguaging can add valuable insights to the current sociolinguistic efforts by focussing on the functions of multilingual repertoires for negotiating and acquiring knowledge in mainstream education”. This view strongly aligns with my role as an educational psychologist in which I can support and accommodate learners and teachers in their learning and teaching by using their L1 together with English, thus enhancing their experiences in multilingual classrooms. Teachers and learners can be guided by translanguaging practices that have been used previously in similar situations and be used as supporting strategies in multilingual classrooms to provide a positive learning and teaching environment. Table 2.1 outlines the literature review that guided my study.

**Table 2.1: Outline of the literature review**

OVERVIEW OF MULTILINGUALISM			
Historical origin of multilingual education	Historical background of multilingual education in South Africa	The role of first language (L1) in education	
OVERVIEW OF SOUTH AFRICA'S CHALLENGES			
Socio-economic challenges of South Africa	Overview of the teachers' positions in multilingual education settings in South Africa	The value of first language (L1)	
UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION			
UNDERSTANDING MULTILINGUALISM GLOBALLY		STRATEGIES USED IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION	
		Peer interpreters	Involving parents and community members
		Code switching	
Distinction between code switching and translanguaging			



THE TRANSLANGUAGING APPROACH					
MOVEMENT TOWARDS TRANSLANGUAGING AS AN ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY					
Enablers of translanguaging as a supporting strategy		Constraints of translanguaging		The teacher's role within the translanguaging classroom	
EVIDENCE FROM RESEARCH TO SUPPORT TRANSLANGUAGING AS A SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR LEARNERS IN CLASSROOMS					
The need for embracing translanguaging in primary classrooms					
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK					
Socio-cultural theory (SCT)			Asset-based approach		
Mediated learning experience (MLE)	Zone of proximal development (ZPD)	Scaffolding	Abilities	Skills	Assets

## 2.2 OVERVIEW OF MULTILINGUALISM

Over the years, multilingualism has become a widespread phenomenon not only in South Africa but also around the world (Cenoz, 2019; Ferreira-Meyers & Horne, 2017; Schissel, DeKorne & López-Gopar, 2018; Seals & Peyton, 2016; Stavans & Hoffmann, 2015; Stoop, 2017). Globalisation has infiltrated into the economic, financial, geographic, political, and societal spheres, influencing the mobility of capital, goods, human resources, and knowledge (Lee, 2019). This global spread has resulted in multiple languages being spoken in more places than ever before (Ruiz de Zarobe & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2015).

The plethora of languages created by the development of different languages cannot be separated from the global ripple effect of the relevant socio-economic and socio-political factors (Edwards, 2012; Otheguy, Garcia & Reid, 2015). Furthermore, the escalating contact between languages due to globalisation and migration has led to an increase of L1 speakers in educational institutions around the world (Daly & Sharma, 2018), altering the landscape of linguistic diversity across the globe.

The global spread of linguistic diversity is more prominent in school settings, and teachers struggle to provide accommodating support for learners (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016; Goldstein, 2003; Omidire, 2019b). In addition, there is consensus in research to move away from imposing monolingual orientations on multilingual learners (Garcia & Wei, 2014; Kleyn & García, 2019) and towards adopting methods to

accommodate the diverse linguistic needs of all learners in a classroom (Celic & Seltzer, 2011; Garcia et al., 2017).

This movement can be traced back to Vygotskian's theory SCT which has contributed to studies whose particular interest was to mediate and scaffold the learning experiences of L2 learners (Frawley & Lantolf, 1985). The SCT has become an established part of the landscape of linguistic diversity and its acquisition. Accepting that multilingualism is globally a reality and that multilingual education must accommodate the needs of learners in multilingual classrooms, it is critical to understand the historical origin that brought about this dynamic shift.

### **2.2.1 HISTORICAL ORIGIN OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION**

To a great extent, colonialism contributed to the supremacy of European languages in educational systems across the world and especially on the African continent (Makalela, 2015b). European societies dominated by the British Empire created colonies across many countries, including the developing countries, inevitably affecting the educational system in which language policies were driven by power and disadvantaging minority communities who could not escape the context of the political state of affairs (Makalela, 2018a; Mampane et al., 2018; Strauss, 2016).

Colonialism began to increase during the European Enlightenment period (1685–1815) and embraced the ideology of one-language-one-nation to control nation states (Gal & Irvine, 1995; Makalela, 2015b). During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the British Empire built on this ideology, and countries such as the USA and the United Kingdom imposed the English language to educate their native people as well as the immigrants flocking into the country, inversely maintaining a monolingual educational system (Garcia & Wei, 2014; Makalela, 2015a).

Colonialism expanded its vision to control labour, social relationships, and the sanctioning of knowledge (De los Rios & Seltzer, 2017). The preservation of one language was advocated to uphold control due to the fear of immigrants filtering into the states and creating diaspora communities, resulting in disputes with regards to educational interests, compelling colonial migrants to show hostility towards the native people (Ricento, 2000). Furthermore, colonialism continued to induce monolingual languaging (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007) to emergent bilinguals.

During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was there movement in schools internationally that saluted bilingualism, causing a radical shift from monolingual schools and giving rise to states recognising multilingualism (Garcia & Wei, 2014; Makalela, 2013). The 21<sup>st</sup> century considered monolingualism a hindrance, restricting growth and productivity for learners who grew up multilingual (Blommaert, 2010). In response to the limitations of this language pedagogy, a multilingual approach to language practices was proposed by many researchers as an additional teaching strategy for diverse multilingual classrooms (Hornberger & Link, 2012; Makalela, 2014a). The world began to accept the reality of multilingualism and began to embrace L1 as an inherent asset in the educational sphere.

### **2.2.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

South Africa is considered an exceedingly high multilingual country (Krstic & Nilsson, 2018; Makalela, 2018a) whose historical narrative was influenced not only by colonisation but also by apartheid (Krstic & Nilsson, 2018; Plüddemann, 2015). This meant that education moved away from the L1s spoken by the majority of people to either Afrikaans and/or English (Aronin & Singleton, 2012; Ferreira-Meyers & Horne, 2017; Hartshorne, 1992; Macdonald, 1990; Makoe & McKinney, 2014; Plüddemann, 2015). This led to a lack of access to education in learners' L1 and subsequently affected learning outcomes (Brock-Utne, 2016; Cummins, 1978, Gobingca, 2013; Makalela, 2018b; Ouane & Glanz, 2010; Save the Children, 2009).

The trajectory of language diversity in South Africa was determined greatly by the government's education policy, which was influenced by inequality and power domination and subsequently resulted in a strong dispute over the role of languages in education (Heugh, 2013). The first dispute after the Anglo-Boer War(1899-1901) prioritized English as the dominant language in education, followed by the consequential resistance from the Dutch speaking communities who preferred Afrikaans, thereby wanting to limit English language in education (Heugh, 2013).

During the period 1955–1976, “ethno linguistic groups were kept separate from one another through an education policy (Bantu education) which used the mother tongue as medium of instruction throughout primary school” (Heugh 2013, p. 217). This dispute is significant to my study because L1 was brought into the educational sphere and preserved for eight years as the main language for learning, which

resulted in a higher pass rate of the final year of study (matriculation) of black learners (Gobingca, 2013). During this period, however, the negative influence that impeded this policy was that Afrikaans was enforced as a language of instruction across all subjects for high school African-speaking learners, inversely minimizing the use of English (Gobingca, 2013; Plüddemann, 2015), which subsequently led to the last dispute which was the 1976 Soweto uprisings, which changed the direction and transformed the history of language education in South Africa, and dismissed Afrikaans as the LoLT (Gobingca, 2013).

The third dispute forced government to succumb and in 1979, it was during this time that the Education and Training Act (Act, No. 90 of 1979) was accepted, and firstly L1 was limited to only four years of primary school and secondly permitting a choice from two languages, Afrikaans and English, where the English language was a more popular choice chosen in majority of the schools (Gobingca, 2013). This posed substantial problems in the educational sphere; the decline of L1 after the first four years of primary school adversely resulted in decreasing pass rates, which significantly dropped to as low as 48.3% by 1982 and 44% by 1992 (Heugh, 1999). Since the elimination of L1 from the curriculum after Grade 3 significantly affected learning outcomes for multilingual learners. My study therefore, incorporated L1 as an important contributor for the learning and teaching experiences in multilingual classrooms.

Unmistakably the South African language policies embraced during both the colonial and the apartheid period enforced a specific language choice which negatively had an effect on parents, as well as both the learners and the teachers, Hartshorne (1989), Kamwangamalu (2000), and Webb (2002). Access to education in South Africa was dominated by political upheaval. Fundamental educational rights of learners were not taken into consideration, feeding into additional shortcomings such as education inequality (Krstic & Nilsson, 2018; Makalela, 2018a), unfair language systems (Dowling & Krause, 2018; Makalela, 2018b; May, 2014), and sub-standard educational systems (Mampane et al., 2018; Plüddemann, 2015; Spaull, 2013).

The critique received on the impact of excluding L1 was argued by Mabiletja (2015) whose view on previous language policies were the consequence of language status inequalities, and the power of English (Dowling & Krause, 2018), and the marginalisation of African languages (Baker, 2011; Hibbert, 2011; Kamusella &

Ndhlovu, 2018). Similarly, Plüddemann (2015) claimed that the planning and policies of language were used in the educational system to strengthen an English/Afrikaans bilingualism during the 20th century. Childs (2016) and Mkhize and Ndimande-Hlongwa (2014) similarly expressed strong views when they labelled the exclusive use of European languages especially in a democratic South Africa as a dehumanising experience for the vast majority of African citizens in their own democratic country.

### **2.2.3 THE ROLE OF L1 IN EDUCATION**

The role of L1 in classrooms globally was viewed positively (Choy & Lee, 2012; Lasagabaster & García, 2014; Ngcobo et al., 2016; Prinsloo et al., 2018; Visedo, 2013). Tian and Macaro (2012) maintain that learners who receive input in their L1 benefit more than learners who receive input in a different language. Similarly, Cummins (2009) regards L1 as a platform to enable the construction of new knowledge. Within the South Africa context, the role of L1 in education and learning has been a topic of much significance (Kioko et al., 2008; Omidire, 2019b; Prinsloo et al., 2018) due to the 11 official languages (Hurst & Mona, 2017; Songxaba et al., 2017).

Although democracy has prevailed in South Africa where English is collectively adopted as a language of stature and a symbol of social and educational mobility, it would seem that L1s do not receive support despite their official status (Gobingca, 2013). It is maintained that teaching learners using their L1 in primary schools is perceived to be favourable for learning additional languages (Magwa, 2010; Phiri et al., 2013).

I agree with this view. However, although South African schools are identified as having multilingual learners, in reality, the schools do not cater for L1 to be used as a resource (Hillman et al., 2019; Omidire, 2019b). This can have implications for learning because if learners cannot understand what is taught, they will experience difficulties in progressing to the next level. The argument presented here is that L1 needs a space in the educational environment so that learners can scaffold their learning (Hillman et al., 2019; Moody et al., 2019; Omidire, 2019b, Smith et al., 2020). This is achieved by understanding the content being taught through their L1 (Makalela, 2015b) and by allowing learners to navigate their learning through not

relying fully on L1 but rather using it as a mediator to accommodate their learning experience (Daniel et al., 2019; Hillman et al., 2019; Makalela, 2015a).

Hurst and Mona (2017) and Ferreira-Meyers and Horne (2017) explain that the choice of language in education is still marginalised because L1s in schools are seen as drawbacks. These scholars elaborate that learners do not feel confident because they struggle to speak fluently in English. Additionally, findings from the study of Hurst (2016) elaborate that these learners feel sad that they have to relinquish their L1 and that their L1 is considered inferior. Additionally, L1 is viewed negatively from the parents' perspective; parents feel that English should be prioritised as the language for both learning and teaching in order to meet expectations on an international platform (Heugh, 2008; Mashiya, 2010).

This has indeed influenced the multilingual South African education system because many learners lack proficiency in English, and this has adversely become an additional challenge (Brock-Utne, 2015; Hurst & Mona, 2017; Ngcobo et al., 2016). As discussed, "education policy set out that every learner should be exposed to their L1 during the first three years of schooling, yet, despite efforts to advance learners' achievement through multilingual education, recent research showed the declining student achievement figures" (Heugh, 2013, p. 215).

The impact of education through a foreign and non-proficient language on learner's educational achievement has been a concern for some time (Bialystok, 2018). Omidire (2013) reiterates that language plays an instrumental role in classrooms by supporting learners in their learning process to construct knowledge and to apply meaning to concepts. Bialystok (2018) asserts that learners need language and literacy to develop foundational skills to build their educational futures. Snell (2017) elaborates that for learners to interact with the world and to create new meaning, they need to use language to shape, recall, and communicate their experiences.

Busch (2012) and Garcia and Baetens Beardsmore (2009) describe language as a social process that involves a learner's linguistic repertoire to make connections and meaning using creativity to move fluidly amongst the linguistic practices that are most appropriate in any given situation. Meanwhile, Dodman (2016) reiterates that language permits the flow and the sharing of information between individuals and

their environments through communication. Similarly, Wells (1999) confirms that language enables one to make sense of the world in which we live and act according.

The conflicts of language resolution affected South Africa severely because learners were disadvantaged with the English language as a medium of learning and teaching. This was additionally intertwined with socio-economic inequalities that greatly affected the population (Prinsloo et al., 2018; Spaul, 2015). To understand the acuteness of the impact of education due to language disparity, it was important to draw attention to South Africa, a predominantly rich multilingual country.

The problem many learners in South Africa encounter is that they are not proficient in English, which is the language of instruction, because this language is not practised or reinforced at home. These learners are, therefore, more reliant on their L1, which in public schools, falls away from Grade 4 onwards when English is embraced as the LoLT (Collins, 2017; Krstic & Nilsson, 2018; Makalela, 2018b). Desai (2016) and Lwanga-Lumu, (2020) exemplifies this by stating that even after two decades of democracy, the colonial and apartheid legacies of language practices have left an irrevocable impact on the schools and on higher education in South Africa.

Discussing multilingualism on a global level and from a South African perspective is valuable in making evident the universal nature of the challenges encountered by multilingual learners in educational settings and addressing the effective methods that have been employed to curb the linguistic dispute globally. Furthermore, this growing awareness simultaneously brings forth the idea of establishing potentially supportive strategies to uphold multilingualism by illuminating L1 as an overarching framework to intervene in the learning and teaching within the education system. The use of multilingualism and/or translanguaging (discussed in Sections 2.4 and 2.5) as a support strategy to support multilingual learners in acquiring literacy skills in English while promoting the L1 as a more reliant language to support learning and teaching in primary school classrooms is explored.

### **2.3 OVERVIEW OF SOUTH AFRICA'S CHALLENGES**

Replicating global support implementation strategies that support multilingualism/translanguaging in South Africa is a proficient way to support learners, and at the same time promote learning and teaching in the educational system, especially since research has considered these support implementation

strategies favourable (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García, 2019; Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012a).

However, when considering the adversities of South Africa as a whole, it is even more important to be cognisant of the multiple forms of prevalent challenges that the current generation of young learners have experienced to date (Omotoso & Koch, 2017). Socio-economic factors are predominant in South Africa (Prinsloo et al., 2018; SACMEQ, 2010) and are clearly considered to have an effect on learning outcomes for South African multilingual learners (Omidire, 2019a; Spaul, 2015). This is especially significant since little attention is given to the factors relating to learners' different schooling experiences such as differences in socio-economic, socio-cultural and language backgrounds that have an impact on learning outcomes (Krause & Prinsloo, 2016).

### **2.3.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES OF SOUTH AFRICA**

The reality of South Africa's educational predicament is compounded by factors such as the socio-economic status of families, poor households, unemployment, lack of infrastructure, lack of basic needs such as electricity and water, and deplorable living conditions (Omotoso & Koch, 2017; SACMEQ, 2010). Limited access to adequate electricity, transport facilities, deprived education and health services (Ebersöhn, Loots, Mampane, Omidire & Malan-Van Rooyen, 2017) and poverty (Chipkin & Ngqulunga, 2008), characterise the several adversities encountered. Central to this, the repercussions of the density of the aforementioned factors prevalent in South Africa together with the linguistic challenges play a significant role in understanding the learners from this inequitable context.

Accordingly, the extent of multidimensional poverty in South Africa permeates into many government schools, including those operating in the rural areas. Omidire (2019a), Mokolo (2014), Myende (2014), and Gobingca (2013) elucidate these educational configurations as being under resourced and not having fundamental amenities such as sufficient classrooms, electricity and water. These schools often lack furniture such as desks and chairs for the learners. The classrooms are overcrowded and the teacher–learner ratio is concerning. Mokolo (2014) additionally points out that many of these schools lack essentials like libraries not having adequate resources, or sufficient textbooks, or even sports ground, and also not



having subjects like art and music, being included into the curriculum. These disparities often result in education inequality (Krstic & Nilsson, 2018) and sub-standard educational systems (Mampane et al., 2018).

According to the view of Omidire (2013) on language practices, the reality in Africa is that the LoLT is often a foreign language due to the many L1s in the various African countries. This is especially relevant in South Africa that has 11 official languages and where English is the language used. Omidire (2013) additionally states that literacy statistics in South African schools over the years indicate concerning results in basic literacy skills.

The recent work of Omidire (2019a) highlights the extent of the language challenges that learners in rural schools experience, and this is evident in their receptive or expressive abilities. Omidire's (2019a) longitudinal study emphasises that most learners experience difficulty to communicate in English and this is often reflected in the quality of their written work which appears to magnify the extent of illegible sentences, the manner in which they use grammar and poor handwriting which can be linked to the ramifications of learning in their L2's.

Additionally, Balfour, Mitchell and Moletsane (2008) highlight that there are not enough teachers, coupled with their inability to provide support for the reason that they too have an L1 that differs from that of the learners, and the inadequate resources at many of the schools have a great influence on the learners' schooling. There is agreement in research that most schools are under resourced and are not equipped to cater for learners in multilingual classrooms (Rassool & Edwards, 2010). Omidire (2013) extends this argument by stating that a large percentage of resources are only available in English, making it necessary to develop and adapt resources to assist teachers in multilingual classrooms in their use to enable effective learning and teaching.

Poverty issues are prominently recognized in South Africa (Biyase & Zwane, 2017; Prinsloo et al., 2018). In 2010, the South African President, Mr Jacob Zuma, highlighted issues of unemployment and poverty as being at their peak when compared with international standards. The National Development Plan policy outlined in 2013 describing "South Africa's long-term socio-economic development roadmap placed even more emphasis on similar issues and was viewed as a policy

blueprint for eradicating poverty and reducing inequality in South Africa by 2030” (Biyase & Zwane, 2017, p.2).

In South Africa, children from ages 0 to 17 years constitute a population made up of 37% (Hall & Meintjes, 2016; Hall, Meintjes, Sambu, Mathews, Jamieson, Lake & Smith, 2014; UNICEF, 2011). Based on these findings, poverty and inequality are more prevalent in this age group because this age group is most vulnerable in households and society (Triegaardt, 2006; Von Fintel et al., 2015). Most young learners who become statistics of poverty is the result of the suffering in their home or to their parents (Frame, De Lannoy, Koka & Leibbrandt, 2016; Frame et al., 2016; Von Fintel et al., 2015), resulting in neglect and overall ill-being.

Omotoso and Koch (2017) illuminate that inadequate access to social services and education, health issues, chronic diseases, inadequate living conditions, and unemployment are inheritantly embedded into the landscape of South Africa. The aforementioned adversities within a South African context cannot be viewed in isolation but should be approached in the academic and policy-orientated literature as being inseparable and, therefore, understood in its entirety (Decancq & Lugo, 2013; Frame et al., 2016, Sen, 2011; Stiglitz et al., 2010).

By acknowledging that South Africa has a multitude of socio-economic challenges coupled with poverty and unemployment (Spaull, 2013), overcrowded classrooms, and teachers whose L1 is different to that of the learners (Daly & Sharma, 2018), it is important to consider these challenges as important attributes that affect learners’ overall intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development. In summary, the adversity within a South African context is indeed a complex problem, which typically affects the educational sphere (Omidire, 2019a; Spaull, 2013). It was imperative to be mindful of these challenges and to incorporate them into my study to ensure that they are not sidelined but rather presented as an important area of awareness to be considered.

### **2.3.2 OVERVIEW OF TEACHERS’ POSITIONS IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION SETTINGS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

According to Catalano and Hamann (2016),

English still overwhelmingly dominates the curriculum, and students read, write, listen, and speak largely only in English inside and outside teacher preparation classrooms, regardless of the many languages they bring with them due to the displacements and movements of many people into different spaces characterize the world today. (pp. 265-266)

This is especially significant since it identifies the core problem of L1 being sidelined (Makalela, 2018b) due to an overwhelming and dominating curriculum that compels learners to 'fit into a box' that does not allow flexibility in their choice of language (Makalela, 2015c). This in turn restricts diversity and choice and suppresses ability. These concerns are challenging the "squandering of bilingual resources in mainstream contexts" (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 105) and, therefore, flexible approaches to language teaching are necessary.

While education is a long-term process that affects learners and educational outcomes throughout life (Bialystok, 2018). Hillman et al. (2019, p. 43) point out that "teachers often use the students' L1 to build relationships, cultivate a shared identity, and create a positive classroom climate". Hillman et al. (2019, p. 43) further contend that for translanguaging practices to be successful, the "teacher-student relationships must be positive and supportive". It would seem that when teachers adopt multilingual perspectives in the classroom and establish a multilingual climate in which all the learners can participate, a positive outcome results, demonstrating translanguaging as a supporting strategy that should be upheld in multilingual classrooms.

However, Kotzé et al. (2017) state that supporting learners in multilingual classrooms is sometimes difficult because teachers do not have the necessary knowledge, and skills needed to support the varied use of languages to be offered in classrooms (Chataika et al., 2012; Engelbrecht, 2006). Nagy (2018) similarly states that teachers are challenged when they have to use multiple languages in the classroom to promote learning because they have been trained according to monolingual language norms that discard the use of other languages in class. Omidire (2019b) summarises the teachers' position in multilingual classrooms by stating

[T]hat many teachers are ill prepared to deal with learners who speak English as a second language. Teachers have insufficient training to

handle second language learning and to adjust the curriculum in support of their teaching. To teach second language learners properly, more time is needed to work effectively with them. (p. 8)

Ismaili (2015), Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), and Mabiletja (2015) elucidate that when the language of instruction is foreign to the teacher or is not the teachers L1, this poses additional challenges. Therefore, it is imperative for teachers to recognise learners' assets such as their L1s and their socio-cultural and developmental backgrounds to develop an open mind about alternative teaching practices to enhance learning (Lwanga-Lumu, 2020; Omidire, 2019b). However, it is important to note that this is not only a problem in South Africa; teachers in schooling systems in many different locations around the world encounter linguistically and socio-culturally diverse groups of learners (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Gardner & Martin-Jones, 2012; Krause & Prinsloo, 2016).

Gravett and Geysler (2004) and Phiri et al. (2013) state that a variety of teaching strategies is essential to give all learners equal opportunities to learn and to demonstrate their learning in multilingual classrooms. However, a recent study by Schissel et al. (2018) indicates that teachers do not receive training on linguistic diversity nor techniques for working with learners in multilingual classrooms. These scholars explain that the teachers in their study realised that there is a need to change their attitudes towards multilingualism and to adopt an attitude that acknowledges that effort is required from the school team to accept multilingual education settings (Schissel et al., 2018).

Garcia and Leiva (2014) and Velasco and Garcia (2014) concur and add that teachers should steer away from practising English monolingual teaching in multilingual classrooms and rather permit learners to practise dynamic language; this would open a space for liberation and give learners a voice, eventually eradicating negative outcomes for minority learners. In South Africa, learners from varied language populations are taught in one classroom (Bloch, 1998; Jones, 2010; Plüddemann et al., 2000). Clauss-Ehlers (2006) found that in addition to the learners coming from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, teachers bring their own backgrounds and histories to the classroom spaces that they share with linguistically diverse learners. Regarding this insight, Nel and Müller (2010) recommend that

teachers should receive training to equip them to teach English as an L2 in addition to general support to teach the learners effectively.

Moreover, Wu (2018) states that when deciding to use L1, teachers ought to understand their teaching contexts when they choose to use L1, and make certain that they are aware of the learners' levels of proficiency and their attitudes towards utilizing L1. Wu (2018) continues that school policymakers and administrators should take action such as adjusting policies properly, supporting teachers' professional training, and establishing a comfortable and positive environment where learners and teachers may feel less anxious and become more confident.

It would seem that learning and teaching in multilingual settings needs a shift in focus within the academic sphere to accommodate diversity. Previous sections of this study have discussed the impact of multilingualism as being a worldwide phenomenon and have demonstrated how educational environments are catering for this radical shift and thus, this change is inevitable. It is, therefore, important that all role players such as teachers, parents, learners, and principals unite and make the shift worthwhile to promote positivity, embrace diversity in languages, and accept the reality of multilingualism to inform effective learning and teaching practices.

The literature on South Africa's educational crisis is well established and points to many complex factors that have an impact on learning and teaching outcomes. Many scholars agree with the complex factors inherent in South Africa but also hold the view that the possibility of academic challenges may be attributed to the ineffective use of the resources that learners bring to school. These resources comprise learners' knowledge of and fluency in their own language, their L1, which has been overlooked and not appropriately used in school settings. It would be feasible to explore L1 as an asset for learning and teaching while being cognisant and sympathetic towards the setbacks of South Africa's challenges.

As a result, my study utilised South Africa's assets of L1 as a way to explore learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms. The field of multilingualism/translanguaging using L1 as an asset in the educational sphere has met with great success globally and has been widely considered a good way to compensate for the challenges experienced by multilingual learners. The following section introduces an in-depth

understanding of the value of L1, explores multilingualism and presents an overview of multilingual education globally.

### **2.3.3 THE VALUE OF FIRST LANGUAGE**

On a global platform, learners' L1 is rightfully recognised in research as an asset in education that is influential and a strong foundation for learning and development of knowledge (Bamgbose, 1991; Lasagabaster & García, 2014; Makalela, 2015b; Ngcobo et al., 2016; Omidire, 2019b). There have been growing appeals from researchers who maintain that South Africans have been disadvantaged by linguistic dominance (Childs, 2016; Ferreira-Meyers & Horne, 2017; Mkhize & Ndimande-Hlongwa, 2014; Mwindi & Van der Walt, 2015). First language is not recognised as the preferred LoLT despite the fact that L1 is important for developing academic knowledge, critical and creative thinking, multiple languages, and confident identities (Ferreira-Meyers & Horne, 2017; Natri & Räsänen, 2015). Owen-Smith (2010) reaffirms the value of L1 as giving learners the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability and to reach their full potential, and such opportunities are imperative (Lwanga-Lumu, 2020).

The value of L1 cannot be overemphasised. Agnihotri (2014) asserts that every learner's L1 should be treated as an asset to be used in their academic space as part of their linguistic and cognitive growth. More specifically, "the language of every child is important, and there is a very careful attempt to make sure that the multilinguality of every child becomes a part of the pedagogical process" (Agnihotri, 2014, p. 365). Stoop (2017) and Mashiya (2010) favourably maintain the importance of embedding L1 in education since this affects learners positively in their cognitive and social dimensions while also increases the incidence of high-performance education systems in a multilingual world. The idea of using L1 as a resource or an asset for learning is reiterated by Agnihotri (2014), Joseph and Ramani (2012), and Omidire (2019b) who agree that L1 can be a medium of instruction that results in attaining higher levels of academic cognition.

I concur with the above since L1 being the dominant language can be viewed as an asset to scaffold the learning experience of learners, especially when these learners also experience socio-economic struggles. First language can serve as a vehicle upon which knowledge can be built and once this is attained, learners can begin to

learn additional languages. The importance of L1 is well documented; L1 can be used across the curriculum to promote understanding, which can then filter into all subject areas covered in the curriculum

There is agreement in research that supports the use of L1 for teaching in classrooms (Hillman et al., 2019). Lwanga-Lumu, (2020) and Sayer (2013) recommends that teachers should recognise and use learners' L1s as teaching tools to access the various opportunities that translanguaging approaches afford. Similarly, Mwaniki (2014) contends that L1 learning should be given priority in classrooms because “[t]he mother tongue is the basis upon which all other learning is anchored ... it is a sound educational principle to proceed from the familiar to the new” (p. 1). Mwaniki (2014) additionally motivates that L1 is essential and that learning should begin with L1, the language that is most familiar to learners, and thereafter move into new learning.

Lwanga-Lumu, (2020); Makalela (2015a) and Rivera and Mazak (2017) agree that integrating L1 could potentially lead to a greater sense of ownership within the learning process and foster a stronger sense of identity. The works of Carstens (2016), Gyagenda and Rajab-Gyagenda (2014) and Hopewell and Escamilla (2014), call for support strategies to be put in place that value the importance of L1 as a resource. Seals and Peyton (2016) argue that valuing L1 in education serves learners and societies alike. Meanwhile, Ferreira-Meyers and Horne (2017) assert that multilingualism within a South African context would allow learners to draw upon existing competence and repertoires while acquiring a level of functional proficiency.

The research cited indicates that there is consensus regarding L1 being used as an asset to enhance learning and teaching outcomes. My study regards the value of L1 as being significant and considers L1 an important contributor to the promotion of learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms. The benefits of using L1 in classrooms are discussed in more depth in Section 2.5.4.

## **2.4 UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION**

“Multilingual education is becoming the norm almost everywhere in the world” (Ruiz de Zarobe & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2015, p. 396). The diverse nature of languages has an effect on the school environment and to a large extent, affects how learning and teaching is implemented. Similarly, Corson (1990) and Cenoz and Genesee (1998)

define multilingualism as the use of more than two languages in every sector of the community. Jessner (2008, p. 18) defines multilingual education as the “acquisition of more than two languages and indicates that it covers a wide range of meanings, including the mastery of two languages”. Poudel (2010, p. 121) defines multilingualism as “a condition in which more than two languages are used in the same setting for similar purposes”.

It is important to recognise multilingualism in an educational context. Multilingualism in education is concisely described by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2003) as the use of at least three languages, these being the mother tongue, a regional language or national language, and an international language. Heugh (2002) agrees and elaborates that multilingualism acts as a facilitator in developing the L1, with the addition of an L2 in such a manner that the L1 is used side by side with the L2 for successful learning of the latter. Makalela (2018b) agrees that multilingualism is a norm and is considered a resource for educational purposes. Nyaga (2013) reiterates that multilingual education programmes encourage the use of L1 together with the language of instruction to promote learners’ cognitive development and to support their scholastic achievement.

Including L1 in education aligns with my study to utilise multiple languages in a parallel manner to support the learning and teaching of Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners in a South African classroom where multiple languages are a reality. The language used is the dominant language, English, which is a prerequisite in the school curriculum, together with Sepedi and isiZulu that are the prominent L1s of these specific learners in their contextual environment. The rationale behind this strategy was to present L1 as a resource for supporting learners in multilingual classrooms.

Skutnabb-Kangas and Garcia (1995), Cummins (2000b), Garcia (2009a), MacKenzie (2009), and Komorowska (2011) endorse multilingualism as an asset for learning and teaching. Ferreira-Meyers and Horne (2017) confirm that when learners are exposed to multilingualism in the educational system gives learners skills to use in schools and outside school to eventually become valuable assets in their society, by being able to work and study in other countries, become members of a larger society and



be able to function in it, and have more access to job opportunities (Crawford, 1996; De Klerk, 1995; Laitin & Ramachandran, 2014; Skutnabb-Kangas & Garcia, 1995).

The scope of multilingual education has broadened, demonstrating additional benefits over and above the school environment. These benefits subsequently enable individuals to infiltrate into a multilingual world. Multilingual education presents learners with the skills needed to participate confidently, to become responsible adults with the view to succeed, and to become more productive in the workplace (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2012), which implies access to better opportunities and capital growth in society due to L1 not being minoritised in communities (Laitin & Ramachandran, 2014).

#### **2.4.1 UNDERSTANDING MULTILINGUALISM GLOBALLY**

As discussed in Section 2.2, multilingualism is present in most countries which are made up of diverse populations and many people interact due to globalisation and economic relationships. Multilingualism refers to different languages spoken in a particular community and includes language competency in a variety of languages (Burcu et al., 2014; Prah, 2006). An abundance of international and local literature exists on the use of multilingualism to support linguistically diverse societies that align closely with values of democracy, equity, inclusion, and social justice (Burcu et al., 2014; Makoe & McKinney, 2014; UNESCO, 2010).

The benefits of being multilingual vary widely, particularly amongst learners whose L1 is different from the language used for instruction at school, and there are indications that the context surrounding the learner is of paramount importance (Paradis, 2009). The multilingual classroom is a feature of education that is recognised worldwide (Omidire, 2019b) as a place where multilinguals have the proficiency to use more than two languages to enhance communication (Clyne, 2017).

A recent study by Nomlomo and Katiya (2018) on the use of multilingual glossaries at a South African university established that multilingual education is a necessary transformative way to facilitate literacy development amongst students. Findings from Nomlomo and Katiya (2018) work demonstrated that multilingual education allows students to prioritise their L1 to strengthen and facilitate better learning.

The focus of language in education is significant for most countries in the world (UNESCO, 2010). Countries such as the USA, Germany, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand initiated programmes that promote bilingual or multilingual education by identifying trends regarding L1 instruction, multilingual education and its use in developing skills for educational success (Schwarzer et al., 2003). Such programmes have been recognised on an international platform to promote multilingualism.

The initial three types of programmes that featured bilingual education included immersion (Garcia, 2009a; Lindholm-Leary, 2001), mother tongue-maintenance (San Miguel, 2004; Crawford, 2004; Hornberger, 2006) and dual languages (Heath, 1984, Garcia, 2009a). According to Turnbull, (2018) immersion bilingual education prioritised the language of instruction to take precedence over L1, while the mother tongue-maintenance education occurred when language minority learners used L1 as the medium of instruction to maintain their minority language in the development of proficiency in the majority language. The dual language bilingual education occurred when equal numbers of language minority and majority learner's were in the same class, prompting the medium of instruction in both languages (Garcia, 2009a; Turnbull, 2018).

Additional two forms of bilingual programmes that took the form of monolingualism was called submersion (Collier & Thomas, 2002) which featured minority language learners to learn in the majority language without the help of their L1, and transitional bilingual education which meant that learners were initially taught in their L1 until they reached a level at which they could function in the majority language in mainstream education (Turnbull, 2018).

However, such programmes have been both positively and negatively critiqued. Mabiletja's (2015) positive critique included enabling learners to become bilingual, achieving equity, integrity, enhancing academic achievement and cognitive development. On the contrary Flores and Garcia (2017) were concerned that bilingual education programmes could slow down a learner's overall progress, thereby not being successful long term support interventions. On this note, Turnbull (2018) asserts that it is worthwhile to consider Grosjean's (1989) view on languages being an equal part of one linguistic system, and to integrate it with the benefits of bilingual education alongside supporting learning strategies to develop multilingual learners successfully.

## **2.4.2 STRATEGIES USED IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION**

It is important to discuss the strategies that have been attempted to support the multilingual classroom effectively. Gobingca and Makura (2016) maintain that for effective teaching and learning to transpire in classrooms, a variety of teaching strategies are required to enhance learning. The teaching strategies are discussed below.

### **2.4.2.1 Grouping peer interpreters based on their first language**

This strategy places learners who have the same L1 into a group in which one or more of the learners are also fluent in English and assist the other learners in the group (Curran, 2003; Hakuta, 1990; Lucas & Katz, 1994; Plüddemann et al., 2000). The study of Gobingca and Makura (2016) yielded strategies to support multilingualism; the research motivated teachers to group (mixed) non-isiXhosa-speaking learners with isiXhosa-speaking learners during teaching sessions. The findings suggest that this method of grouping is vital in achieving educational goals because it promotes an opportunity for learners to get to know each other, to establish common ground, and to share common problems and common feelings (Gobingca & Makura, 2016). Lewis et al. (2012b) concur and state that the grouping of learners can create collaboration and improve learners' oral communication skills, enabling learners to master the subject matter.

Nyaga (2013) expresses the positive nature of this strategy and highlights that in a multilingual classroom, grouping of learners with similar L1s promotes classroom discussions, and freedom of language choice to share ideas. Studies show that this strategy is successfully used even in classes where the teacher does not share the language with the learners (Cummins, 2007; Lucas & Katz, 1994) and success is additionally achieved because cooperative learning is promoted (Plüddemann et al., 2000).

Garcia and Sylvan (2011) describe how learners rely on peers, technology (such as iPads and Google Translate), and the additional support of the teacher who generates opportunities for language use. In this context, Garcia and Sylvan (2011) maintain that learners collaborate with each other in any language that advances the task, resulting in multiple conversations in multiple languages in the classroom, with

sporadic breaks where the teacher intervenes to explain a concept or for the class to practice a skill collectively.

On the contrary, Plüddemann et al. (2000) caution that L1 groupings should be utilised appropriately to not create situations where learners feel isolated and stigmatised throughout the school day. Therefore, the authors advise that other strategies that could be used in combination with L1 groupings should be explored. A combination of strategies would help to bridge the intractable language-related problems in the classroom (Plüddemann et al., 2000).

#### **2.4.2.2 Code switching**

Code switching is recognised as a teaching strategy in multilingual classrooms and is a global phenomenon in many educational contexts (Madonsela, 2016; Moodley, 2010; Shin, 2010; Singh & Sharma, 2011). Chimbganda and Mokgwathi (2012, p. 23) define code switching as "a communicative strategy of redeploying the linguistic resources available to bilingual speakers in a particular situation in order to enhance meaning and understanding of subject matter".

Kamwangamalu (2010, p.116) describes code switching as "the intersentential alternating use of two or more languages or varieties of a language in the same speech situation", while Baker (2001, p. 101) labels code switching as "any switch within the course of a single conversation, whether at the word or sentence level or at the level of blocks of speech". The term 'code alternation' (Auer, 1995) has been used to refer to the phenomenon of code switching. The above terms are used synonymously in research.

Many scholars, like Li (2008), Madonsela (2016), Moodley (2010) and Mahofa and Adendorf (2014), view code switching positively. They allege that code switching supports the bilingual teacher to achieve goals pertaining to teaching which is context-specific, and supports the learner to be able to learn intricate concepts by using separate language systems to reinforce learning. Code switching enables teachers and learners to understand one another (Songxaba et al., 2017).

In the study of Songxaba et al. (2017), the perceptions of teachers creating space for the use of code switching as a teaching strategy in Afrikaans learning and teaching in the isiXhosa-speaking environments of the Transkei region were explored. Findings

from this study highlighted the power dynamics at play that created an ominous picture for the Afrikaans learners who did not resonate with the L1 of isiXhosa being presented in the classroom (Songxaba et al., 2017). In addition, a Malaysian study by Ahmad (2009) found that teachers employed code switching as a means of enhancing the learners' understanding of concepts and providing learners with the opportunities to communicate. Conversely, MacSwan (2017) points out that if teachers recognise code switching as being positive, then a learner's multilingual ability will be more likely viewed as an asset than a deficit in educational settings.

Furthermore, South African studies (Setati & Adler, 2000; Setati, Adler, Reed & Bapoo, 2002; Uys, 2010) considered code switching as a tool that could provide discussions of concepts by learners and teachers in their main language. Gobingca and Makura (2016) agree that code switching implies that learners are afforded the opportunity to grasp concepts. DeWitt and Storcksdieck (2008) affirmed that taking learners outside their traditional classroom for educational purposes offered a wide range of powerful learning outcomes. This is supported by Gobingca and Makura (2016) who express that real-life experiences and simulations can assist linguistically diverse learners.

On the contrary, there is support in literature that views code switching negatively (Heredia & Brown, 2009; Li, 2008). Songxaba et al. (2017, p. 2) assert that code switching "is a sign of linguistic decay or a strategy to compensate for diminished proficiency and the unsystematic result of not knowing at least one of the languages involved very well". Additionally, Songxaba et al. (2017) found that code switching could not be accommodated in the assessment process of the learners in the classroom due to the existing language policies and curriculum expectations that hindered the progression of code switching.

Code switching has been used extensively in multilingualism and has met with both approval and criticism. Despite this, code switching is rooted in multilingualism as a strategy to accommodate multilingual learners. Mgijima and Makalela (2016) deliberate on the difference between code switching and translanguaging in that translanguaging makes use of multiple separate language systems whereby the speaker alternates between languages to express communicational exchange. In line with this, my study explored alternative strategies such as translanguaging to be used side by side to act as a scaffold and to complement the learning experience.

### **2.4.2.3 Involving parents and community members**

Another approach to support multilingual strategies were highlighted favourably by Craig, Hull, Haggart and Crowder (2001), Plüddemann et al. (2000), Schwarzer, Haywood and Lorenzen (2003), and Whitehead (1996) who believed in the idea of involving community members as tutors for the diverse languages in the classrooms. Parents and/or grandparents together with the teacher can read aloud dual language books together, with the parent/grandparent reading a page in his/her home language followed by the teacher reading the same page in the classroom language” (Roma Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012 as cited in Cummins, 2019, p. 26). According to Smith et al., (2020), involving parents or additional members of the family to participate inside classrooms and help to translate, created a translanguaging enquiry space.

Whitehead (1996) and Schwarzer et al. (2003) agree and elaborate on this strategy by providing examples. These include community members to engage in activities such as story telling, assisting learners to write simple messages and/or recipes of traditional foods in their L1, and teaching counting. According to Cummins (1986) and Greenberg (1989), when parents are involved in the decision-making in the learning of their children, they develop confidence and a sense of own efficacy, which positively influences learners' learning and diminishes the negative stereotyping that teachers often develop. Nyaga (2013) confirms that involving community members in the classrooms, especially the parents, has a dual advantage – it serves as a strategy for dealing with the language diversity in the classroom, boosting the achievement of the learners, and reverses teachers' negative attitudes and stereotypes.

The study of Gobingca and Makura (2016) found that teachers reached out to parents to support them in multilingual classrooms. This is supported by Arthur, Grainger and Wray (2009) and Smith et al., (2020) who value this approach and elaborate that the home is crucial in enhancing learners' knowledge. Additionally, a study by Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Jansorn and Van Voorhis (2002) shows parental involvement as playing a crucial role in learners' academic progress.

### 2.4.3 DISTINCTION BETWEEN CODE SWITCHING AND TRANSLANGUAGING

The distinction between code switching and translanguaging has been influential in the field of education. Some scholars assert that translanguaging is not seen to replace code switching but rather to integrate it as a product of code switching (Adamson & Fujimoto-Adamson, 2012; Gallagher & Colohan, 2014). Other scholars such as Nikula and Moore (2019) pose that translanguaging goes beyond code-switching. Garcia and Wei (2014) concur that translanguaging orientates towards discursive practices and is more socio-linguistically and ideologically inclined (Lewis et al., 2012b).

Garcia (2011b) affirms that translanguaging creates a space for bilinguals to have one linguistic repertoire from which they can select features intentionally to communicate successfully. Cahyani, de Courcy and Barnett (2016) agree with this view and reiterate that translanguaging combines at least two languages to attain successful communication in contrast to code switching which is switching from one language to the other leading to two very different monolingual codes. Translanguaging creates a space where multiple languages can be used simultaneously in the input and output process (Stathopoulou, 2013). The distinction between code switching and translanguaging for multilinguals is that code switching views languages as being isolated from each other, while translanguaging views all languages as part of one linguistic system (Li, 2008; Smith et al., 2020).

I agree with Garcia (2011a, 2011b) who confirms that translanguaging embraces the observable communicative practice of bilinguals and with Cahyani et al. (2016) who share that translanguaging inside classrooms allows multiple languages to be utilized coherently to facilitate the cognitive process of learning and teaching. Garcia (2009b) confirms that translanguaging is seen as a progressive movement in education that shifts from one language ideologies toward multilingual education, as opening doors to integrating varied linguistic opportunities to expand on communication and knowledge, and promote meaning making. Heugh (2015) in agreement views translanguaging as a strategic tool which employs aspects of code-switching which includes cognitive engagement but at the same time utilizes the simultaneous use of multiple languages to inform understanding rather than using languages separately.

Prada and Nikula (2018) and Lujčić (2017) elaborate that translanguaging launches from the field of multilingualism and has gained recognition in the field of multilingual education because it adopts a holistic linguistic repertoire to communicate effectively.

## **2.5 THE TRANSLANGUAGING APPROACH**

First language is recognised as a valuable asset that supports learning and teaching in school settings (Hillman et al., 2019; Lwanga-Lumu, 2020; Omidire, 2019b). Multilingual education is valued and practised to address issues of inequality in education due to language disparity. Ngcobo et al. (2016) acknowledge that using learners' L1 alongside English can create equity and justice in South Africa, a country that features many African languages. However, recent studies have introduced a variety of terms that subtly address multilingual education.

Mazak (2016) and Smith et al., (2020) recognise translanguaging as an important contribution in the learning and teaching sphere and which has gained momentum in educational settings. Translanguaging, according to Mwindi and Van der Walt (2015), needs to be explored further for effective support strategies within multilingual contexts. Moreover, the translanguaging approach can address the disparity of education in the South African context for the reason that it features planned and structured activities enabling a teacher to contribute meaningfully to 'a transformative pedagogy' (Garcia & Wei, 2014, p. 92).

Mokolo (2014) asserts that translanguaging is similar to code switching in that it refers to multilingual speakers shuttling between languages in a natural manner. Mokolo (2014) continues that this approach seeks to assist multilingual speakers in making meaning, shaping experiences, and gaining deeper understandings and knowledge of the languages in use and even the content that is being taught (Baker, 2003; Williams, 1996).

In view of the above, my study used the idea of translanguaging as an alternative approach to learning and teaching practice in a South African context. Through extensive reading on multilingualism and the subsequent understanding of the political and socio-economic climate of South Africa, it is accepted that learners are indeed challenged with significant adversities in school settings. This realisation motivated my study to determine the complexity of the role of languages and how it



has infiltrated the lives of school-going learners who are torn between their L1 and the language of instruction in the classrooms.

My study delved into translanguaging as a method to provide support by allowing three or more languages such as English and the L1s specific to the population (in this case Sepedi and isiZulu) to be taught parallelly in the classroom to allow the learners full linguistic system to be integrated. By realising that many teachers are not fluent in their learners' L1 and have their own L1, this study used mediated support by including translated audio recordings of L1s. This meant that an English passage was translated by translators, printed as a hard copy, and was pre-recorded in the specific L1s of the learners. The translated audio recordings were played during the lesson and hard copies of the translated texts in multiple languages (English, Sepedi, isiZulu) were accessible to all learners during the lesson. This promoted the idea of the same learning content being presented in multiple languages simultaneously to initiate translanguaging pedagogy.

The reason for this support strategy was to understand the real-life experiences of the learners regarding the occurrence of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms, to observe their reactions, and to capture their experiences in their drawings, which could possibly explain how they perceived the lessons when exposed to L1.

The reality of South Africa is that although it is a democratic country, the ripple effects of colonialism, the apartheid era, globalisation, the exclusiveness of the 11 official languages, and immigrants entering South Africa from neighbouring African countries who have their own L1 have had a strong impact on the development of the LoLT. Furthermore, these challenges have filtered into the classrooms and have indeed affected the learning and teaching outcomes of South African learners. Classrooms are diverse, multiple languages are the norm, and multilingualism is recognised.

Despite this knowledge being well documented in research, learners are still not competent in English as the language of instruction, yet learners are still communicating in English in the classroom. Angu, Boakye, and Eybers (2020); Madiba (2014) and Prinsloo et al., (2018) confirm that in South Africa, a few studies have experimented with translanguaging as a pedagogic strategy.

Leung and Valdes (2019, p. 366) critically analyse translanguaging by stating the following: “[T]ranslanguaging is both challenging and exciting: challenging because it forces us to examine our previous perspectives on language itself, and exciting because it suggests new possibilities and outcomes for the teaching and learning of additional languages”.

The following section explains translanguaging as an alternative strategy that is used globally and presents research studies that have adopted this approach in multilingual environments. The enablers and the constraints of the translanguaging approach are also discussed in depth.

## **2.6 MOVEMENT TOWARDS TRANSLANGUAGING AS AN ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY**

For decades, multilingualism has continued to be prominent and has played an important role in multilingual education. More recently, a new trend called translanguaging has been adopted as a more widely used concept associated with the study of multilingualism. The term ‘translanguaging’ originated from the studies of Cen Williams (1994, 1996), a leading educationalist in the 1980s, who used the term *trawsieithu* to describe a language practice that implied the planned and systematic use of two languages within the same lesson (Nagy, 2018). Nagy (2018) further explains that the term translated into English as ‘translinguifying’ but was later changed to translanguaging by Baker (2001) to describe a language practice that involved the deliberate alternation between the language of input and the language of output in the classroom (Lewis et al., 2012b).

The extensive work on translanguaging by Garcia (2009a, 2009b, 2019) has expanded greatly. Scholars in the field have used her initial discourse and have embraced it as a new way to support multilingual learners in classroom settings. Garcia (2009a) initially describes translanguaging as how bilingual individuals use their linguistic resources without specific language categories to make meaning and to communicate.

Similarly, García, Skutnabb-Kangas, and Torres-Guzman (2006, p. 14) state that translanguaging is “the use of more than one language in a classroom”. Garcia (2009c) has broadened the concept to include multiple language practices which open doors in school settings and beyond to communicate effectively to promote

understanding and a form of expression. It is appropriate to deduce that translanguaging creates a space for the use of two or more languages in one lesson with the aim of supporting learners to learn and understand in multilingual classrooms. Garcia collaborated with many scholars in the field and advanced her research to cater for the multilingual population. Translanguaging adopts the notion that languages should be viewed as “the flexible and meaningful actions through which bilinguals select features in their linguistic repertoire in order to communicate appropriately” (Velasco & Garcia, 2014, p. 7).

From an educational view, Heugh (2012, 2015), Lewis et al. (2012a), and Probyn (2015) concur that translanguaging can systematically promote learning. Baker (2011), Garcia and Wei (2015) and Heugh (2015) agree that both languages can be used in an organised manner to mediate understanding and learning. Nagy (2018) concurs that translanguaging is the process of switching between two languages and is an approach to language teaching that encompasses the learners’ linguistic skills, experience, and competences acquired in L1 for meaning-making purposes.

An overview of past terms that underline the interrelationship between language practices of bilinguals include work done by scholars such as Creese and Blackledge, (2010), who explained ‘*flexible bilingualism*’. Bailey (2007) highlighted ‘*heteroglossia*’, the term ‘*polylingualism*’ was described by Jørgensen (2008), ‘*metrolingualism*’ was captured in the work of Otsuji and Pennycook (2010), and lastly ‘*code meshing*’ explained by Michael-Luna and Canagarajah (2007), and Canagarajah (2011). This subsequently identifies ‘*translanguaging*’ broadening in the field of education and embracing learners as part of the multilingual education on a global platform (García, 2011; Garcia & Wei, 2014; Krause & Prinsloo, 2016).

My study followed the path of Garcia (2009c) to view translanguaging with its pedagogical potentials. Stavrou (2015) from a similar point of view describes translanguaging as a pedagogical practice in an educational context where the LoLT does not include the learners L1 which subsequently falls in line with the current study.

### **2.6.1 ENABLERS OF TRANSLANGUAGING AS A SUPPORTING STRATEGY**

Ngcobo et al. (2016) regard translanguaging as an approach that gives learners the freedom to use their L1 in classrooms to make sense of what is taught in English by

discussing the content with classmates. This in turn enables learners to give feedback to the teacher using English (Murphy, 2011). Baker (2006) supports this method and adds that translanguaging may promote a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter.

Baker (2011) identifies four educational advantages of translanguaging when positioned strategically into classrooms, where both the learner and the teacher can employ two languages simultaneously for both input and output. The four potential educational advantages of translanguaging are outlined in Figure 2.1.

<b>Advantages of translanguaging</b>
– Facilitate a deeper understanding of translanguaging as a support strategy
– Helps the development of parallel languaging
– Facilitates both the home-school links and co-operation
– Support integration of confident speakers with early learners

**Figure 2.1: Educational advantages of translanguaging**

By recognising the educational advantages of translanguaging, I used this approach in my study. The aim of L1s is to promote a deeper understanding of translanguaging through agreeing with its potential benefits and positioning L1 alongside English to be of value to learners (Ngcobo et al., 2016). Canagarajah (2011b) and Paxton (2012) support this approach and believe that translanguaging will give learners a voice that will better position, improve and organise future pedagogical practices that can contribute to an equal opportunity in education. Paxton (2009) and Prinsloo et al., (2018) agree with the above and acknowledge that in South Africa, the development and inclusion of L1 for academic purposes is an imperative topic.

Additionally Ngcobo et al. (2016) demonstrates positive views on translanguaging that would provide learners in South Africa with a sense of empowerment, enabling L1 to advocate equality, broadmindedness and demonstrate the ability for learners to intermingle in their communities with a view to better prepare to serve their nation.

Mgijima and Makalela (2016) study on the effects of translanguaging on Grade 4 learners using their L1 and L2 in reading development amongst bilingual Xhosa-English readers also illustrated the enablers for effective translanguaging. These included creation of meaning-making by learners, a safe environment in which

learners could experiment with their L1 and L2 in a non-threatening way, and collaboration and association amongst the learners. These findings resonate with three of the potential educational advantages of translanguaging mentioned by Lewis et al. (2012b) namely a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter; possible development of the weaker language (concurrent development of L2 ability and subject content); and co-operation.

Mays (2019) advocates using technology is an asset for learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms and accepting that diversity in the classroom requires proactive support strategies. Mays (2019, p. 141) additionally states that technology can “be used during the process of teaching and learning to address barriers to learning”.

Similarly, Makalela (2016) accepts translanguaging as an educational approach that accepts language alternation as a norm in contemporary societies. Garcia et al. (2017, p. 21) compare the translanguaging approach in a classroom with a flowing body of water, a “dynamic and continuous movement of language features that change the static linguistic landscape of the classroom”, and integrating a linguistic repertoire that enables meaningful change.

According to Leask (2019), enabling language learning in multilingual classrooms requires a specific social environment and school culture together with an instructional classroom to integrate and support learners by creating innovative ways for them to achieve academically. Similar views are shared by Omidire (2019b), she asserts that enabling translanguaging to take place in an increasingly multilingual world requires a “dynamic and transformative process of structuring and restructuring two languages across different modes in various contexts” (Song, 2016, p. 89), creating opportunities to use language in meaningful ways in multilingual classroom discourse.

## **2.6.2 CONSTRAINTS OF TRANSLANGUAGING**

By considering the background of the initial discourse of the inequalities of past policies, socio-economic struggles, language policies, personal dynamics, and personal views regarding L1 that continue to affect many people, Biesta (2007, p. 18) is of the view that “unless we operate on a deterministic ontology, evidence of ‘what worked’ never guarantees ‘what works or will work’”. Biesta (2007) seems to not

support the view that by introducing fluid languages into classrooms is not beneficial, nor can they guarantee to alter more than the actual languages into classrooms. Likewise, Garcia and Wei (2014) articulate that although it is important to place the minority language alongside the majority language, thus ensuring its place in powerful domains, it should not compete with the majority language.

Strauss (2016) draws attention to the many parents who preferred their children be taught in English, discarding L1 as a resource within African languages. Madiba (2012) and Jaspers (2018) indicate that translanguaging is not beneficial to learners who do not consider it liberating at all. Charalambous, Charalambous and Zembylas (2016) elaborate that despite the positive effects of translanguaging such as promoting mutual understanding, increasing linguistic hybridity, and giving voice to learners' L1, translanguaging was met with resistance by learners in a Greek primary school class in Cyprus, where despite the teachers' efforts to introduce translanguaging, the Turkish language was discarded due to the ideologies of that society that maintained conflict regarding hybrid linguistic practices.

Additionally Parmegiani and Rudwick (2014) voiced that some learners in their study were uncomfortable using their L1 in a classroom setting due to the lack of opportunity in their schooling years to develop strong academic literacy skills in their L1. Ferreira-Meyers and Horne (2017, p. 28) similarly highlight that learners who have limited means to be "socialised" into the language, much less use the language in conjunction with their existing language repertoires. These outcomes differ with studies conducted in South African classrooms where most participants had affirmative views about the supportive role of their L1 in L2 educational experience (Angu et al., 2020; Makalela, 2015b; Lwanga-Lumu, 2020; Omidire, 2019b).

Deumert (2010) observed that speakers of isiXhosa prefer to use English in texting since isiXhosa is regarded as complex and complicated. This was met with agreement by Mgijima and Makalela (2016) whose study confirmed the positive effects of translanguaging but demonstrated that the isiXhosa L1 group repeatedly found L1 to be complicated as opposed to simplifying their understanding of content taught.

Additionally Ngcobo et al. (2016) point out those learners who cannot speak any of the African languages may feel left out in class. A more recent international study by

Schissel et al. (2018) focused on the evaluation of translanguaging for teaching and assessing in diverse cultural contexts. Schissel et al. (2018) demonstrated the constraints of translanguaging which can be difficult to navigate in well-established practices, can curb additional difficulties in the power dynamics inside school systems, furthermore teachers do not receive the necessary support from other colleagues, and demoralizing potential interest in trying such an approach.

Duarte's (2019) study centralizes teachers' assumptions which view linguistic diversity in the classroom as having negative consequences for learning (Dooly, 2007). These teachers assert that the reason for not including specific L1's in their classrooms is due to the lack of proficiency in the minority languages (Van Der Wildt, Van Avermaet & Van Houtte, 2015).

Bateman (2008) conducted a case study focusing on 10 student teachers attitudes and beliefs about using L1. The author concluded that linguistic limitations of non-native teachers influence the student teachers' choice in using languages. Student teachers may find it difficult and uncomfortable to use L2 throughout the entire class. Findings included that linguistic limitations involving teachers would influence their choice in using L1. However some student teachers adopted positive attitudes while others did not (Carson & Kashihara, 2012).

Omidire (2013) deliberates that teachers need additional support and better preparation to make meaningful changes in multilingual classrooms. Omidire (2019a) repeats this concern, expressing that teachers do not have sufficient training to deal with L2 learning, and they cannot adjust the curriculum in support of their teaching due to time constraints, especially in overcrowded classrooms (Khong & Saito, 2013). Additionally, teachers find it difficult to include support strategies for their learners as there is not enough resources at many South African schools (Balfour et al., 2008), which affects learners' schooling.

Notwithstanding the constraints identified for implementing translanguaging, there is agreement in research that translanguaging pedagogies should find meaningful ways of including multiple and varied resources in instruction, and multiple languages should be incorporated into educational contexts (Garcia & Wei, 2014) to support learners. Gort and Pontier (2013) advocate that teachers can pool resources in translanguaging without personally using multiple languages and can support the

learners by offering activities such as retelling English texts in their L1 (Martínez-Roldán & Sayer, 2006) in order to create possibilities for learners to scaffold their own linguistic expertise. This could be one of the ways to curb the constraints identified in translanguaging pedagogies.

### **2.6.3 TEACHER'S ROLE WITHIN THE TRANSLANGUAGING CLASSROOM**

Teachers are significant role players in the classrooms and should feature qualities to support the linguistic repertoire in multilingual settings. In essence, teachers should adopt a flexible approach and alter their teaching methods to accommodate and scaffold the process of learning (Lwanga-Lumu, 2020). An interesting finding from Garcia et al. (2017) on translanguaging from an educational perspective revealed three components of translanguaging that should be managed by teachers to enable the restructuring of learning and teaching from a translanguaging perspective. These are stance, design, and shifts.

Garcia et al. (2017) describe a teacher's *stance* as the beliefs and principles about emergent bilingual students and their language practices, despite the named language or variety. *Design* refers to how teachers set up affordances as they construct learning experiences for emergent bilinguals. *Shifts* indicate the moves that teachers make in response to their learners.

Kleyn and Garcia (2019) support these components of translanguaging and deliberate that the teacher's stance must include the teacher's cognisance of the learners' L1 and accept the L1 as a resource to be used for their learning. This will subsequently allow each learner to immerse themselves fully into the lessons by bringing their L1 with them to achieve academically. The 'stance' according to these scholars aims to eradicate past structures of hierarchy and power and scaffold and transition learners into a learning environment (Kleyn & García, 2019).

Kleyn and Garcia (2019) explain that the component 'design' looks closely at how a teacher sets up facilities to support translanguaging in the classroom. Examples include group work with speakers of similar L1 and allowing learners to design tasks together, thus giving them opportunities to use their full linguistic repertoire to create meaning from the features of L1. Lastly, the component 'shift' places the needs of the learner as being of paramount importance; it is this shift in mindset that allows the teacher to adapt to flexible strategies to promote learning and understanding.



Kleyn and Garcia (2019) agree that the collaborative components discussed above conflict with current teaching practices that accept that a teacher has to conform to curriculum guidelines and texts stipulated by policy. However, these scholars maintain that a teacher must be willing to consider shifting practice slightly to accommodate multilingual learners and forgo being strict and rigid. Similarly, Garcia and Leiva (2014) and Velasco and Garcia (2014) advocate that a teacher must shift teaching practices towards an education that creates a space for multilingualism, by accepting the intrinsic worth of dynamic language practices.

This is in line with my study, which accepts that the aforementioned components are vital since they serve as important contributors or enablers for translanguaging as strategies to support multilingual learners in a classroom. It is equally important to acknowledge that a teacher must embrace L1 as a strategy within the translanguaging approach. This can be seen as a vehicle for success and can lead to learners' achievement in classroom settings by permitting flexibility and employing creative methods to promote the learning and teaching experiences.

The components of translanguaging are applicable to this study because the participants are Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners in a school with their respective teachers. It is valuable to equate the above with my research to support multilingual learners in classrooms in which there exists multiple languages. The translanguaging approach as a strategy to explore learning and teaching must adhere to the components discussed by Kleyn and Garcia (2019) with a view to integrate their contributions into the teaching practices in diverse classroom settings. Sufficient benefits that act as enablers for the translanguaging approach have been demonstrated to support the present research study.

## **2.7 EVIDENCE FROM RESEARCH REGARDING TRANSLANGUAGING AS AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR LEARNERS IN CLASSROOMS**

Using multiple languages in a parallel manner provides learners with the opportunity to listen and read learning content in a familiar language. This also requires giving teachers the skills to enhance their learning and teaching practices simultaneously in classroom settings. Literature demonstrates that translanguaging is viewed positively; however, studies both endorse and refute translanguaging as a supporting strategy. The current research screened these previous studies by identifying the

enablers and the constraints of translanguaging. The findings guided my study in determining a course that could add value to learners from multilingual settings.

It is worthwhile to accept the view of Childs (2016), which supports translanguaging as a strategy to be used in classrooms. Childs (2016) acknowledges that translanguaging practices are transformational and are humanising enablers in school classrooms. According to Childs (2016), the reason for this is that there is a divide between the dominant language of the classroom and the L1 of South African learners, which leads to dehumanising experiences in classrooms. Angu et al.,(2020) and Makalela (2015a) supports this argument and claims that studies should encourage the revision of previous linguistic policies to promote fluidity amongst languages. The research of Childs (2016) and Makalela (2014b, 2015b) recommends the use translanguaging as a strategy for the planned and systematic use of learners' L1 together with the language of the classroom in order to foster learning and teaching and to improve the learning and teaching experiences for learners and teachers.

Advantages of Childs (2016), study triggered harmony, where both learners and teachers L1's were accepted and encouraged to bring into the classroom. In doing so, they can experience being accepted and participating with others in a harmonious world with no language boundaries. Scholars like (Alexander, 2012; Heugh, 2013, Prinsloo, et al., 2018) supported this view and further commented that policy which inhibits L1 from Grade 4 onwards in most South African schools, should rather maintain L1 across Grade 7 to further develop L1.

My study deliberated and documented both international and national studies that made use of translanguaging as a strategy to support the global spread of multilingualism. A study by Hassan and Ahmed (2015) explored translanguaging on an Islamic platform in a *madrasah* (an institution that promotes Islamic studies with the dominant language of Arabic). Their study was a case study aimed at understanding how a variety of languages can be employed effectively within classroom environments by observing how teachers and learners combine and alternate between four languages (Arabic, Sylheti, Urdu and English) to engage in the learning and teaching context. Findings from their study demonstrated the positive effect of translanguaging, which reinforced certain concepts through repetition in various languages, inevitably leading to a more profound understanding

and learning of the subject material (Hassan & Ahmed, 2015). This is in agreement with literature that views translanguaging positively.

Similarly, the study by Lopez et al. (2014) evidenced how multilingual learners alternated between English and Spanish while interacting with mathematical items. This made it possible for the learners to show their mathematical skills even under conditions where their knowledge of English was not good. Mgijima and Makalela (2016) explored the effects of translanguaging on Grade 4 learners by simultaneously using their L1 and L2 in reading development amongst bilingual Xhosa-English readers in a rural school in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

Their study aligned with previous research that supported translanguaging, demonstrating that learners' L1 and L2 need not be seen as competing against each other but rather as complementing each other (Baker, Jones & Lewis, 2012; Makalela, 2014a). The findings from their work demonstrated that translanguaging techniques improve learners' ability to draw relevant inferences when reading in either isiXhosa or English, thus discarding previous monolingual ideologies of using one language only (Mgijima & Makalela, 2016).

The research of Makalela (2014b, 2015a) focused on the learning of an additional language at university level. Significant findings from this research were identified in a follow-up study (Makalela, 2015b), which indicated that through translanguaging, university learners gained multilingual identities, an emotionally safe environment, and an improvement in their oral reading competencies.

Similarly, the study of Fan (2018) focused on perceptions of the use of translanguaging (*Xinjiangweiwuer*) of Chinese students in Changji University. The findings aligned with previous research and demonstrated neutral to positive attitudes overall and indicated that the teacher used translanguaging in an appropriate way and situation. Bhooth, Azman and Ismail (2014) investigated the role of L1 as a scaffolding tool in an 'English as a Foreign Language' reading classroom at a university in Yemen. The sample comprised of 45 Yemeni university students. Findings from this study indicated that the dependence of L1 decreased as the students' proficiency in the L2 increased (Bhooth et al., 2014).

In South Africa, studies completed by Madiba (2014) and Makalela (2014a) demonstrated the cognitive advantages in literacy and language classes at two

tertiary institutions. Translanguaging offered a way in which university students had a better chance to use their linguistic repertoire and helped the students to practise the integration skills of using languages. Similarly, an interesting study by Makalela (2015b) focused on reading comprehension and multilingual interactions in two settings: a university class and a primary school in a rural area in Limpopo province. Pertinent to the current study was the case involving primary school learners. The rationale of Makalela (2015b) for the use of translanguaging techniques was to facilitate reading development in the L1 (Sepedi) and the additional language (English). The participants involved were Grade 6 learners. The translanguaging strategies included alternation of languages in vocabulary exercises, reading comprehension, viewing the development of the print environment in both languages.

The main finding from both settings investigated by Makalela (2015b) was that using translanguaging techniques is an effective way to teach languages in multilingual contexts. Makalela's study has shown that the students appreciated the translanguaging approach, which firstly moved away from negative perceptions towards L1 and accepted multilingualism, secondly endorsed multiple linguistic identities, and lastly accepted language learning a positive experience. There is transparency in research that considers the use of translanguaging beneficial in both tertiary and school settings.

A study by Seals and Peyton (2016) featured heritage language education and investigated the languages, literacies, and cultural competencies of immigrant youth. The study involved a public primary school in rural Oregon and focused on the value of L1 as an asset in mainstream school programmes. Seals and Peyton (2016) found that there were positive effects on learners' identities and scores regarding the state-level assessments during the existence of the programme as opposed to when the programme was terminated. The authors concluded that L1 should be established in policies to support L1 speakers in their schools.

A recent study by Torpsten (2018) investigated translanguaging in a Swedish multilingual classroom to determine the perceptions regarding linguistic potential and language competence in relation to translanguaging strategies. This was achieved by presenting classroom activities, texts, and pictures produced by 11-year-old learners and their teacher in a multilingual classroom context. This study demonstrated that

the interaction between the learner and teacher is imperative for the acquisition of a L2, as well as the attitude of the learners.

Torpsten (2018) states that the most conducive learning of languages takes place through socializing with friends who speak L1, and connect with others through the medium of engaging in conversation, or by reading in classrooms or even by practicing writing in school settings. Frank and Torpsten (2015) recommend that teachers ought to coordinate lessons and use teaching strategies to enable learners to feel accepted by their teachers and promote a sense of belonging in the classroom environment. Torpsten (2018) summarizes that working with translanguaging approaches subsequently leads to positive influences where languages are easily learned.

Chukly-Bonato (2016) observed how translanguaging processes in the classroom influenced learners' linguistic behaviour for several weeks. Findings that emanated were that translanguaging pedagogy changes learners' behaviour in a short amount of time; implementing translanguaging practices eliminates the pressure of having to articulate in perfect English, thus creating a calmer and more relaxed atmosphere in a classroom; and learners began to take an active part in class and use their language skills more confidently.

The prospects of translanguaging in education for learners allows movement between the language practices that they know, which subsequently demonstrates increased participation; better relationships between each other; and promotes a deeper understanding (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Snell 2017). This enables learners to have greater control over their learning subsequently being able to apply a full linguistic repertoire to a life over and beyond school boundaries (Hélot, 2012).

Nagy (2018) supports the views of Chukly-Bonato (2016) and agrees that translanguaging practices lead to a more relaxed atmosphere in which the learning process is creative and based on the language skills of all individuals who come into contact to create and negotiate meaning together. Nagy (2018) links these benefits to the recognition of the translanguaging space in the classroom as a community of practice whose role players include both the learners and teachers. Both the learners and the teachers share the common goal of performing in a classroom that accepts mixed linguistic skills and competences, and different linguistic backgrounds so that

translanguaging can function as a scaffolding device to overcome cultural and linguistic differences.

Nagy (2018) adds that translanguaging can be implemented in a wide range of activities when practising various linguistic skills. In line with the above benefits, Nagy (2018) complements the benefits by mentioning the advantages of various linguistic skills such as speaking, writing, reading, or listening, which allow learners to use their full linguistic potential within a planned activity in the classroom. In addition, these benefits motivate weaker learners to engage more in learning activities by moving away from monolingual norms.

Swain and Lapkin (2013) mention additional benefits that learners associate with using L1. The first benefit is “moving the task along” (p. 109), which means using L1 to manage the task. The second benefit is “focusing attention” (p. 109), including using L1 to lexical searches and explaining grammatical information. The third benefit is identified as “interpersonal interaction” (p. 110), where L1 is used by learners when arguing and discussing amongst one another.

More recently, Kleyn and Garcia (2019) advocated an approach known as TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages) to a Grade 5 classroom in New York, USA. These scholars worked with 27 learners whose L1’s made up a total of seven in one classroom. According to these scholars, the TESOL approach began with a question, translated in four different languages, giving learners an opportunity to correct each translation on the smart board, while the teacher is explaining the linguistic rationale as they are becoming more familiar with the goal of the lesson. The method employed here was for the teacher to read an English text aloud, giving learners an opportunity to listen to key concepts/vocabulary through different languages, and become aware of some words not being easy to translate (Kleyn & Garcia, 2019).

Findings that emanated were that Kleyn and Garcia (2019) acknowledged that if learners are given the opportunity to use L1 in their language repertoire to expand their linguistic capacity, it can contribute to meaning-making of the new features needed for language learning across all subject areas in the curriculum. These scholars further contend that it can also open doors to a multilingual world if

translanguaging pedagogies are embraced as a promising tool to support learners in multilingual classrooms.

There is ongoing evidence in research that supports translanguaging as a strategy to promote learning and teaching in classrooms where multiple languages are the norm. It would seem that the translanguaging approach would be a useful practice to include in South Africa as there are many L1's which are not successfully included in the school system .for the reason that not all languages are understood by learners, let alone the teachers. My study aimed to fill this void by introducing translated audio recordings of L1. In particular translated audio recordings of learners specific L1s alongside English to scaffold the learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms. This support strategy allows for a lenient space where L1 can be scaffolded alongside the dominant language with a view to promote understanding.

Research confirms that translanguaging provides learners with a space to feel accepted and features L1 as a resource to be used and promoted, which in turn may influence positive learning outcomes (Omidire, 2019b). Similarly, Nagy (2018) states that if translanguaging practices are conducted correctly, practising multiple languages does not harm language skills in a particular language, but rather fosters language learning by allowing learners to engage more actively in learning activities and to use their linguistic skills with more confidence in any circumstance.

Bhooth et al. (2014) posit that there is a lack of studies on the use of L1 to determine whether its use facilitates or impedes the learning of English L1 in the Arab world. Moodley, Kritzinger and Vinck (2019) share that although their research on translanguaging identified positive outcomes with graduate students; there is a need for a qualitative enquiry on understanding how individuals experienced the translanguaging approaches and insights into their meaningful perceptions of the approach. These subtle annotations prompted the current study to use translanguaging as a support strategy to guide multilingual learners in a classroom by employing a qualitative mode of enquiry where learners have the freedom to learn in both L1 and English. The idea behind this support strategy was to scaffold the learning and teaching process of learners in an amicable and reputable way to promote L1 as a resource to be used in the process of learning and teaching.

Broad consensus supports translanguaging as a feasible option, and the benefits of using translanguaging as a strategy appear to be ongoing. Studies continue to be conducted in this field to find ways of valuing L1 to support the learning and teaching experience of learners in classroom settings. It would seem that L1 is now viewed as an asset to be exercised in affirming a foundational base to learning, which concurs with the importance of L1 to be viewed as an asset.

The inclusion of translanguaging as a support strategy in South African schools is warranted due to the language disparities present. First language is the language in which learners experience their home environments, attribute meaning by communicating and formulating discussions and arguments, and follow instructions. First language is regarded as an asset in the life world of these learners.

Previous sections of this study confirm that L1 can support learners in the academic sphere since L1 can scaffold learning, which in turn can enhance understanding. South Africa has limited resources to accommodate schoolgoing learners due to the socio-economic climate. This has had a significant effect on these learners' academic development. Translanguaging was used as a resource in my study to navigate learning and teaching, especially in the intermediate grades, with the aim of possibly initiating the process to eradicate the language barriers that are so profound.

It is important to list the evidence from previous studies because these findings can support new ideologies and support strategies that can be used in a space where there is a need for translanguaging. South Africa is indeed such a space, being a country of diversity, multiple languages, distinctive L1's, and most importantly, a country with a platform for learning and teaching that is in need of assistance, support, and guidance.

The following section outlines the conceptual framework that guided this study. The earlier sections set the tone of using and exploring translanguaging as a strategy to promote learning and teaching in multilingual individuals. The historical background of language policies was discussed in depth. Additionally, the stages of multilingualism were reviewed, which led to current practices of translanguaging as an alternative strategy to use in multilingual setups.

The value of my study is to address learners in South Africa who are struggling academically and to provide them with support by using their L1 to promote their



understanding in multilingual classrooms. Using multiple languages in the form of translated texts and translated audio recordings of learners' L1s together with English to mediate the learning experience at school seemed feasible because L1 has been recognised as a resource in the development of learners to obtain academic proficiency.

Translanguaging being a global phenomenon was considered valuable to my study since there are a large number of conducted studies that elaborate on the positive nature of including translanguaging as a support strategy in multilingual classrooms. Similarly, the benefits and the constraints of translanguaging were also critically investigated. The developed conceptual framework identified seminal theorists who demonstrate commonalities within my study and provided a strong foundation upon which to build my research.

## **2.8 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.8.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study was guided by Vygotsky's SCT and the asset-based approach of Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) to create a conceptual framework that supported the use of multiple languages in a classroom with a view to transition into translanguaging as an approach to support the learning and teaching of multilingual learners within a South African context.

### **2.8.2 SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORY OF VYGOTSKY**

The SCT of Lev Vygotsky has been widely used in educational research (Marginson & Dang, 2017) and has influenced language education for decades (Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Marginson & Dang, 2017; Swain & Lapkin, 2013; Van Lier, 2004). More recently, the theory has expanded and plays a significant role in the social aspects of L2 acquisition (Ma, 2017), making the seminal work of Vygotsky influential in the field of education as a whole (Turuk, 2008).

The SCT is central in the works of Vygotsky, which recognise that learning cannot be separated from its social context but rather flows into three themes:

- Social interaction in the construction of knowledge and one's own understanding of self, others, and the world (Lin, 2018)

- The concept of 'more knowledgeable other'
- The ZPD, which is also related to the concept of scaffolding

All these tenets are interconnected and belong under the umbrella term, 'mediation' (Guerrero Nieto, 2007).

According to Lantolf (2000), one of the main concepts of the SCT is that the mind is mediated. This means that the individual does not establish a direct relationship with the world, but the relationship is mediated through the use of tools. Vygotsky (1962) regarded the moment when speech and practical activity meet as contributing to the intellectual development of a human being and therefore, deduced that language provides a means through which information is transmitted. Language is a powerful tool for intellectual adaptation, which inevitably implies that individual development cannot be understood without making reference to its underlying social and cultural contexts (Vygotsky, 1962).

Vygotsky (1978, p. 22) emphasised "the dominant role of social experience in human development" and considered development to be a lifelong process that ultimately paves the way for cognitive development, which is influenced by social interaction and social context. Similarly, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, Hilppö & Mikkola (2014) share the same conviction that knowledge development becomes more constructed and exchanged through social interactions involving learners in specific social settings.

Against this background, Wu (2018) suggests that Vygotsky's SCT theory is pertinent to language acquisition in that L1 plays a vital role in the L2 classroom where learners can learn and acquire a new language by building on their ideas through relationships with the social world, these can include their class teacher and other learners, which can have an essential influence in their cognitive development.

Upon this platform, translanguaging has been recognised as playing a fundamental role in distributing language in multilingual classrooms (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Stoop, 2017). Thus, it is feasible to incorporate SCT and translanguaging to provide a better understanding of potentially effective methods that support learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms within a South African context by accepting that diversity, L1, and multilingualism may be inherent assets of the country as a whole.

While my study focuses on employing translanguaging support strategies to scaffold learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms, Vygotsky's theories play an influential role in focusing on relationships in the social world, in this case the school setting, to influence cognitive development. Both the aforementioned are equally important in guiding learners from multilingual settings.

More specifically, Vygotsky's work on the ZPD and the scaffolding and mediation theory, which are central constructs in the SCT, has had a significant impact on the learning process in classrooms. These constructs were used exclusively as the foundational base to build on the present study's conceptual framework specific to the use of translanguaging as a means to provide learners with understanding. The SCT appears to be an appropriate theory to enable the use of multiple languages to support learning and teaching in primary school classrooms.

By scaffolding learning and teaching from a translanguaging perspective, my study aimed to include a support implementation strategy that acknowledges L1 in the classroom to scaffold the learning experiences for multilingual learners. This was achieved by accepting that the SCT embraces a learning environment which establishes both learners and teachers with an opportunity to become navigators for their own understanding during interaction with others (Atkinson, Derry, Renkl & Wortham, 2000).

It was my intention to use translanguaging by playing the translated audio recordings of learning content in learners' L1s (Sepedi and isiZulu) as well as providing the learners with the hard copies of the translated texts. My study created a space for learners to experience learning in multiple languages, more specifically, languages in which they have better understanding and are comfortable with, and to also allow the creative supportive strategies to possibly enhance communication and collaboration in classroom discussions.

The idea of communication as stipulated above is supported by Vygotsky (1987, pp. 249-250) who places communication at the centre of his theory of language and thought by arguing, "the thought is completed in word". This implies that in designing activities, teachers ought to create opportunities to arranging interactions where the teacher and the learners can pause to comment on their problem-solving efforts in oral or written format (Brown & Cole, 2002), promoting mediated learning. Ideally, this

would include a platform for mediation and/or support implementation to occur where teachers would allow learners to express if the translated audio recordings supported their understanding of the text, and to convey the feelings evoked while having the opportunity to engage with L1 through creating storyboards.

Wu (2018) adds that what learners learn through interaction with others inescapably assimilates into their individual mental structures. This is maintained through Vygotsky's (1978) view that every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: initially on the social level (between people: inter-psychological) and later on the individual level (inside the child: intra-psychological). This is important since the idea of allowing learners to engage in L1 is ultimately to discover if such a support implementation strategy can uphold an understanding of higher functions of knowledge. Thus, Vygotsky's theory was the acceptable theory to uphold for this study.

Within the South African context, the reality is that classrooms feature diverse learners, teachers, and languages, creating disharmony in the classrooms. This reality has attracted much attention in the field of education. There is value in understanding the enablers and constraints of using translanguaging as an insightful pedagogical tool in multilingual classrooms and highlighting the problems that learners experience in multilingual contexts. Furthermore, it is worthwhile to understand how teachers experience teaching in multilingual contexts and to determine their perceptions of using translanguaging as a support strategy to enhance teaching practices in multilingual classrooms. This is possible by engaging critically with the SCT to support and uphold translanguaging to overcome the challenges that are paramount in the South African context.

Vygotsky (1978) considered language as a symbolic tool enabling individuals to mediate between their minds and the world beyond. Guerrero Nieto (2007) describes the work of Vygotsky on mediation as powerful and effective, because it can be used to support learners in current diverse settings by providing adult or peer assistance in achieving a task they could not do alone.

Vygotsky's contribution to mediation has been met with success in classrooms where the role of the teacher is to act as a mediator between the learners and the knowledge to be acquired. Based on this rationale, my study encompassed

mediation but linked it firstly to technology, such as the translated audio recordings in which the learners had the opportunity to learn in their L1, and secondly to the availability of the translated learning content in a hard copy format. This form of mediation allowed translanguaging to be practised despite the fact that the teacher did not share the same L1.

According to Guerrero Nieto (2007), mediation through technology that scaffolds language learning dates back to the 1960s. More recently, technology, a medium of interactive learning that enables learners to enhance their L2 skills and to construct meaning interactively (Fotos, 2004) has been adopted, creating a learning platform where learners and teachers can exchange ideas regarding what has been learnt (Guerrero Nieto, 2007). Technology is seen as a mediating tool that aligns closely to Vygotsky's concept of mediation. Fotos (2004, p. 7) reaffirms this and clarifies that "[t]echnology will not replace teachers; teachers who use technology will replace those who don't".

### **2.8.2.1 Mediated learning experience**

There is agreement in research that language plays a pivotal role in development and for this reason, mediated learning experience (MLE) embedded in the SCT was applied in my study. Van Compernelle and Williams (2013) and Guerrero Nieto (2007) agree that mediation allows for appropriate assistance from other people, which support an individual's internalisation of psychological tools. This closely aligns with peer interpreters who have been identified as supporting multilingualism. This peer support shares a principle to group learners who share the same L1, but there are one or more learners who are also fluent in English and can support the other learners in the group (Curran, 2003; Plüddemann et al., 2000).

It is worthwhile to make a distinction between two categories of mediation. Firstly, Kozulin (2002), and Compernelle and Williams (2013) refer to mediation as 'psychological tools', which are integrated into human mental functioning as culturally constructed artefacts, examples of psychological mediators include language. Secondly, Kozulin (2002) notes the importance that Vygotsky ascribed to developmentally appropriate assistance from other people, who support an individual's internalization of psychological tools. The latter being an appropriate tool to consider in my study.

The idea of tools is significant to mediated theory, ZPD as well as scaffolding and is explained by Ma (2017), who states that these tools are indeed the assistance provided to support the learner to reach his/her zone of proximal development (ZPD) or develop language acquisition.

### **2.8.2.2 Zone of proximal development explained in relation to translanguaging**

The iconic definition of ZPD by Vygotsky (1978, p. 86) is “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”. Simply stated the ZPD involves the distance between what a learner can do or understand without assistance as opposed to what the learner can do or understand when assistance is provided (Kozulin, 1990). Baker (2001) associated translanguaging to the ZPD which identifies learning development is based on pre-existing knowledge. Earlier work from Bruner (1966) recognizes the teacher to provide support to a learner by acknowledging the learner’s existing level of skill or understanding and thereby moving towards her/his potential level of skill or understanding.

This is relevant to my study because translanguaging becomes the supporting tool to initiate the learning process by including L1 as a mediator to enhance learning. In essence, this comprises scaffolding the learning experience of learners by improvising and allowing creative aids to underpin the gaps identified with linguistic diversity. From a Vygotskian perspective, the ZPD fits the description of allowing scaffolding and guided mediation to fill the void of distance between the learner and his/her knowledge base.

From the viewpoints of White and Dinos (2010), Vygotsky’s contention was to develop the full potential of a learner for learning development. These scholars additionally state that by understanding a learner’s ZPD in line with their peer groups, objectives can be delivered to promote ongoing growth and development of social maturation and cooperation.

Rizve (2012) highlights Vygotsky, by claiming that the most efficient way of implementing learning and teaching pedagogy is to rely on a more knowledgeable peer to support learners in learning effectively by scaffolding them in their particular ZPD. Peer guidance has been used as an effective strategy to add value to

classrooms in which there is linguistic diversity. This peer support provides a medium for learners who struggle with English – the learner is seated next to a stronger learner who understands L1 and English.

The zone of proximal development was applicable to my study because the theory of Vygotsky can sustain the linguistic diversity of learners by accepting that shared support can be obtained through both the teacher and peers. Thus, the translated audio recordings and hard copies of the text in learners' L1s scaffolded and filled the gap for learners who experienced difficulty in understanding the content in English. The mediation was guided by the translated audio recordings in the learners' L1 that had been translated from the language of instruction to cater for the L1. This guided support strategy in line with the ZPD scaffolded the learners' learning experience by providing an alternative where the learner could understand content that may have not been understood without the MLE.

Swain and Lapkin (2013, pp. 122-123) acknowledge and support the above and suggest that learners are given an opportunity to use their L1 during collaborative dialogues and in private speech so that they can “mediate their understanding and generation of complex ideas (language) before they produce an end product (oral or written) in the target language”. Once their proficiency increases, the learners can be encouraged to use L2 as a tool for mediation. Each time the learners encounter new and complex material, they should be allowed to mediate their thinking via their L1. The use of L1 needs to be “purposeful, not random” (Swain & Lapkin, 2013, p. 123). In particular, the use of L1 “to illustrate cross-linguistic comparisons or to provide the meaning of abstract vocabulary items can mediate L2 development during ZPD activity in the target language” (Swain & Lapkin, 2013, p. 123).

Siyepu (2013) shares this conviction by elaborating that once the learner, with guided support masters the task, the support can then be removed and the learner will then be able to complete the task on his or her own, which falls in line with Vygotsky's belief that by providing appropriate support will assist the learner to achieve the task (Galloway, 2001). This belief is shared by (Atkinson et al., 2000) who fervour that SCT underlines a dynamic interaction in a learning environment between role players like teachers, learners and tasks providing possibilities for learners to capture their own understanding during interaction with others. Atherton (2005) emphasises that in a socio-cultural classroom, learners learn to learn when the teacher scaffolds the

learning process by guiding the learner to attain meaningful understanding of the learning material.

Furthermore, building on Vygotsky's work, language has three important operations: it can be considered as a cognitive tool to manipulate knowledge; as a social or cultural tool for sharing knowledge amongst each others; and as a teaching tool with which intellectual support is provided (Mercer & Littleton, 2007). Garcia (2009a) states that socio-cultural studies related to literacy practices are influenced by social, cultural, political and economic situations.

To build on Vygotsky's view, appropriate assistance would be channelled by the use of translated audio recordings that take the place of the teacher to scaffold the learning experience by enforcing L1. Once the learners familiarise themselves with the content and begin to link L1 to fill in the gaps in L2, there is mastery of the task.

The ZPD requires that teachers ought to be more knowledgeable in order to assist learners', however, it is evident that many teachers are not equipped with skills, competence and sometimes commitment in the workplace. The Department of Education (2009a, p. 28) substantiates that "limited teacher knowledge, coupled with low levels of accountability is one of the challenges that impact learners' performance in a South African context". Due to these challenges, the aim of the current research was to provide an alternative that would limit such challenges. By exploring the use of translanguaging of including three or more languages by making use of translated audio recordings as support to guide the learners with the notion of meaning-making and understanding seemed feasible.

### **2.8.2.3 Scaffolding**

Scaffolding can be defined as "a process of setting up the situation to make the child's entry easy and successful and then gradually pulling back and handing the role to the child as he becomes skilled enough to manage it" (Bruner, 1983, p. 60). Stierer and Maybin (1994) state,

[S]caffolding is not just any assistance which helps a learner accomplish a task. It is help which will enable a learner to accomplish a task which they would not have been quite able to manage on their own and it is help which intended to bring the learner close to a state of



competence which will enable them eventually to complete such a task on their own. (p. 97)

Scaffolding instruction promotes the idea of having assistance from a more knowledgeable other to facilitate the learner's development, to facilitate a learner's ability to build on existing knowledge and learn new information. The activities provided in scaffolding instruction are just beyond the level of what the learner can do alone (Olson & Pratt, 2000).

Jabbar (2017) links the idea of scaffolding to the ZPD, which is guided assistance given by adults or peers to support a learner, followed by the gradual process of taking away the support. Cotterall and Cohen (2003) link scaffolding to cultivate autonomy and Carstens (2016) elaborates that scaffolding can be removed once proficiency and ownership of one's own learning is established. It is practical to incorporate translanguaging since it can support learners in learning an L2 by including L1 in their process of learning. Thus, the scaffold is that the learner can use the L1 to make meaning of what may not have been understood in the L2 or the additional language (Carstens, 2016). I included the processes of Sarker (2019) that meaningfully scaffold learners' experiences and thus were relevant to my study. These processes are listed in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2: Processes to scaffold learners from a translanguaging perspective**

Process 1	A productive combination between the help of more knowledgeable others and the needs of the children.
Process 2	Learners interest in the task which is neither too simple nor too hard.
Process 3	Identifying effective solutions to the learners' tasks is mandatory.
Process 4	Understanding the reasons of learners' frustration and controlling it.
Process 5	Assess learners' current knowledge and experience.
Process 6	The relation between learners' current knowledge, and potential for learning.
Process 7	Allow tasks to be broken down to manage it effectively.
Process 8	Promoting and adapting learning materials to provide a means to support knowledge.
Process 9	Interacting with others provides scaffolding.
Process 10	Endorsing collaborative or cooperative learning to scaffold learners.
Process 11	Reciprocal teaching between the learner and the teacher is imperative and can be tapered off once the learner gains competence.

### 2.8.3 ASSET-BASED APPROACH

The asset-based approach has been referred to as the "half-full glass" approach to intervention (McDonald, 1997, p. 115). The asset-based approach has expanded from the existing theory in the community-development work of Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) in the USA. The approach has its roots in positive psychology, which focuses on happiness with the aim of understanding how people experience a good life by thriving, flourishing, and discovering individual strengths and virtues (Csikszentmihalyi & Nakamura, 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). From my understanding, the asset-based approach is identified as a theory to overcome challenges and provide support by acknowledging inherent strengths such as assets, skills, and resources in situational contexts and is applicable to my study within the South African context.

International studies on the asset-based approach have focused on psychology and community development in the field of educational progression (Boyd et al., 2008; Bryant, 2006; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993, 1996; Kretzmann et al., 2005). Furthermore, the emergence of the asset-based approach and positive psychology approaches are inversely rooted in each other. I share this belief and quote from a recent study in which Dewaele, Chen, Padilla and Lake (2019) claim:

[P]ositive psychology interventions have been carried out in schools and universities to strengthen learners and teachers' experiences of flow, hope, courage, well-being, optimism, creativity, happiness, grit, resilience, strengths, and laughter with the aim of enhancing learners' linguistic progress" (p. 1).

Similarly, McDonald (1997, p. 115) describes the asset-based approach as "a diligent, compassionate approach that supports strengths and helps to create connected, caring communities", confirming that both theories complement each other.

I considered the asset-based approach an acceptable choice for my study because the contextual issues in South Africa call for an approach that acts as a buffer to build on inherent strengths within the community with a view to provide control. Du Toit, Erasmus and Strydom (2010) confirm that in South Africa, education needs to be addressed to overcome the injustices of the apartheid system of government that

resulted in language choice due to unequal education opportunities amongst different racial groups. More specifically, the focus should be on the primary and secondary school learners (Myende, 2013; Naiker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2014).

The adversities present within the South African context have an effect on learners and teachers in multilingual settings. Balfour et al. (2008) point out that poverty is extensively prominent in rural communities in the South African context. The asset-based approach was purposefully selected for my study because it identifies with the challenges present in South Africa. The realisation of the economic challenges makes this theory notable in supporting the struggles of poverty and economic disparity. Myende and Chikoko (2014) agree that schools need to identify their existing assets and initiate mobility to give a standpoint for the asset-based approach.

Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) found that the traditional approach to community interventions often had an unconstructive effect in the communities that they intended to help, because of the strong focus on deficiencies and problems (Eloff & Ebersöhn, 2001). A central part of the approach of Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) is to recognise the capacities, abilities, skills, and social resources in every person and community.

Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) assert that support for communities is possible and feasible only if support begins from within. According to their approach, it is valuable to begin by determining the available assets such as social resources, abilities, and skills that are to be used within the community to conceptualise the assets (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). With this in mind, the asset-based approach includes the theoretical framework of the eco-systemic perspective of Donald, Lazarus, and Lolwana (1997), and encircles the whole social system, including the local community consisting of families, schools with classrooms, peer groups and the individual (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006). Both approaches together with positive psychology were pertinent to my study.

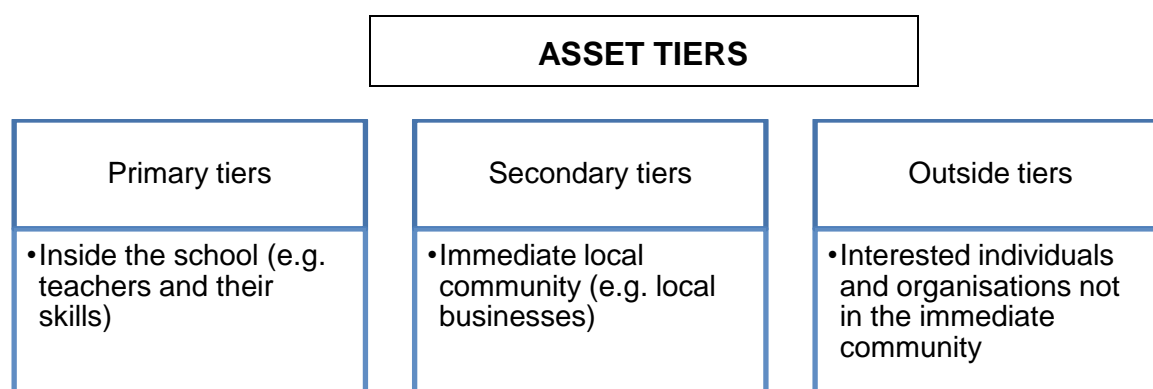
Translanguaging strategies have been well documented as an approach to support the learning of multilingual learners. Translanguaging recognises L1s as potential assets used to promote learning and teaching on an educational platform. Likewise, Childs (2016) endorses translanguaging as a strategy that incorporates the planned

and systematic use of learners' L1 together with the language of the classroom in order to foster learning and teaching. Myende and Chikoko (2014) recommend the asset-based approach for providing a solution when socio-economic conditions are paramount; the authors advocate a resilient approach that focuses on the positive. The asset based approach focuses on the present, by wanting to know what is currently present in the environment (Eloff & Ebersöhn, 2001).

### 2.8.3.1 Classification of assets

There is great disparity in the field of education that highlights the challenges encountered in the educational sphere as discussed earlier. Myende (2014) acknowledges that there is immense pressure on South African schools to expand on ideas and strategies as a way of improving the quality of education. However, the quality of education is compromised due to factors such as poverty (Kamper, 2008), HIV and AIDS, alcohol and drug abuse, violence and gangsterism (Bojuwoye, 2009; Khanare, 2009).

Myende (2014) asserts that to overcome these problems, schools need to develop strategies such as assessing their existing assets and mobilising them before they seek external supplementary resources or assets. School-community partnerships have relied on additional external resources. Myende (2014) additionally maintain that there is a strong consensus that this support will be strengthened if support is built on assets that are available within a school. Mourad and Ways (1998) identify community assets into three tiers. Figure 2.2 below classifies the community assets as three asset tiers:



**Figure 2.2: Asset tiers** (Adapted from Mourad & Ways, 1998)

These three tiers are considered mediators for schools to overcome their existing challenges (Myende & Chikoko, 2014). Naiker et al. (2014) agree that the leadership of the school principal is an important resource for any school, and the school principal should establish partnerships with the teachers by mentoring them and providing support. Myende and Chikoko (2014) confirm that such partnerships allow teachers to be regarded as assets; these authors found that over and above their duties inside the classroom, the teachers in their study initiated support schemes that included feeding and donating uniforms to vulnerable learners.

Eloff and Ebersöhn (2001), Khanare (2009), and Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) agree that school-community partnerships should be guided by the asset-based approach. According to Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006), the assets recognised in a school are the leadership capacities of teachers, learners, and parents. In the classroom, potential assets can include human resources, books, videos, audiotapes, furniture, blackboards, diversity, peer-group support, and teaching methods. It is important to highlight these attributes because they contribute to the learning and teaching practices found in African schools.

Understanding the idea of assets within the South African context, Chikoko and Khanare (2012) identify the school principal in leadership roles as being the people who can identify and mobilise assets within their specific contexts while. Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006) acknowledge the importance of peer-group support in providing learners with emotional support, functional support, learning support, motivation, sharing, communication, and trust. According to Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006), peer-group support is the most underutilised resource.

In light of the above resources identified, the school principals are identified as important assets. Scholars in the field of education such as Scanlan (2007) applied the asset-based perspective to language learning and indicated that the L1 of learners should indeed be recognised as a fundamental strength. Ovando (2003) concurs and states that purposefully grouping learners who are proficient in English can be an effective approach to educating others who are more fluent in the L1. Wong and Snow (2000) agree that such grouping should be flexible to allow for opportunities for growth and to provide support for language learning.

The school community can effectively contribute to the asset-based approach regarding the use of L1 and other languages in a parallel manner to support learners in classrooms that are diverse. The aim of this study was to use L1s as assets for learners to bring balance to their learning by identifying the need for L1 while being cognisant that many learners view themselves as deficient and lacking in knowledge and skills to solve their problems.

By recognising the skills of teachers and other learners in the school are central elements in ensuring the school's success in dealing with different challenges (Kamper, 2008; Khanare, 2009). Furthermore, the third tier of interested individuals and organisations not directly linked in the immediate community could include researchers in the field who have an interest in the development of learning. Translanguaging would, therefore, act as a mediator to recognise L1s as inherent assets within the community with a view to include L1s in the process of learning and teaching. Thus, it is crucial that firstly, the asset-based approach is used in school-community partnerships if sustainability and reciprocal benefits are to be achieved and secondly, scaffolded alongside the economic struggles in which South Africa is immersed in, by identifying the assets within the complexities and adversities of learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms.

Against this backdrop of knowledge, I integrated the above components to create a conceptual framework pertaining to translanguaging as a support strategy for learners' understanding. At the same time, close attention was paid to the way in which learning and teaching is facilitated in a classroom through employing L1 as a positive contribution to the domains of learning and teaching. The following section explains the conceptual framework.

#### **2.8.4 USE OF TRANSLANGUAGING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING**

The conceptual framework illustrated in this study explores the use of translanguaging for learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms. Education for diverse learners should seek ways of introducing and teaching learners how to use language for listening, speaking and creating knowledge, and understanding content of work by critically engaging in thinking skills. This can be implemented by focusing on the ZPD, mediation, and scaffolding to support and guide learners and to ascertain that the learning is a collaborative process in multilingual classrooms.

Mediated learning is guided by technological processes such as translated audio recordings of learners' L1 being pre-recorded before the commencement of the lesson and having a hard copy of the translated passages available to the learners. This places translanguaging theory into practice by implementing multiple languages to inform learning. The social context is equally important since it creates a space that encourages dialogue between learners and between the teacher and the learner, initiating collaboration, communication, and construction of knowledge in multilingual classrooms.

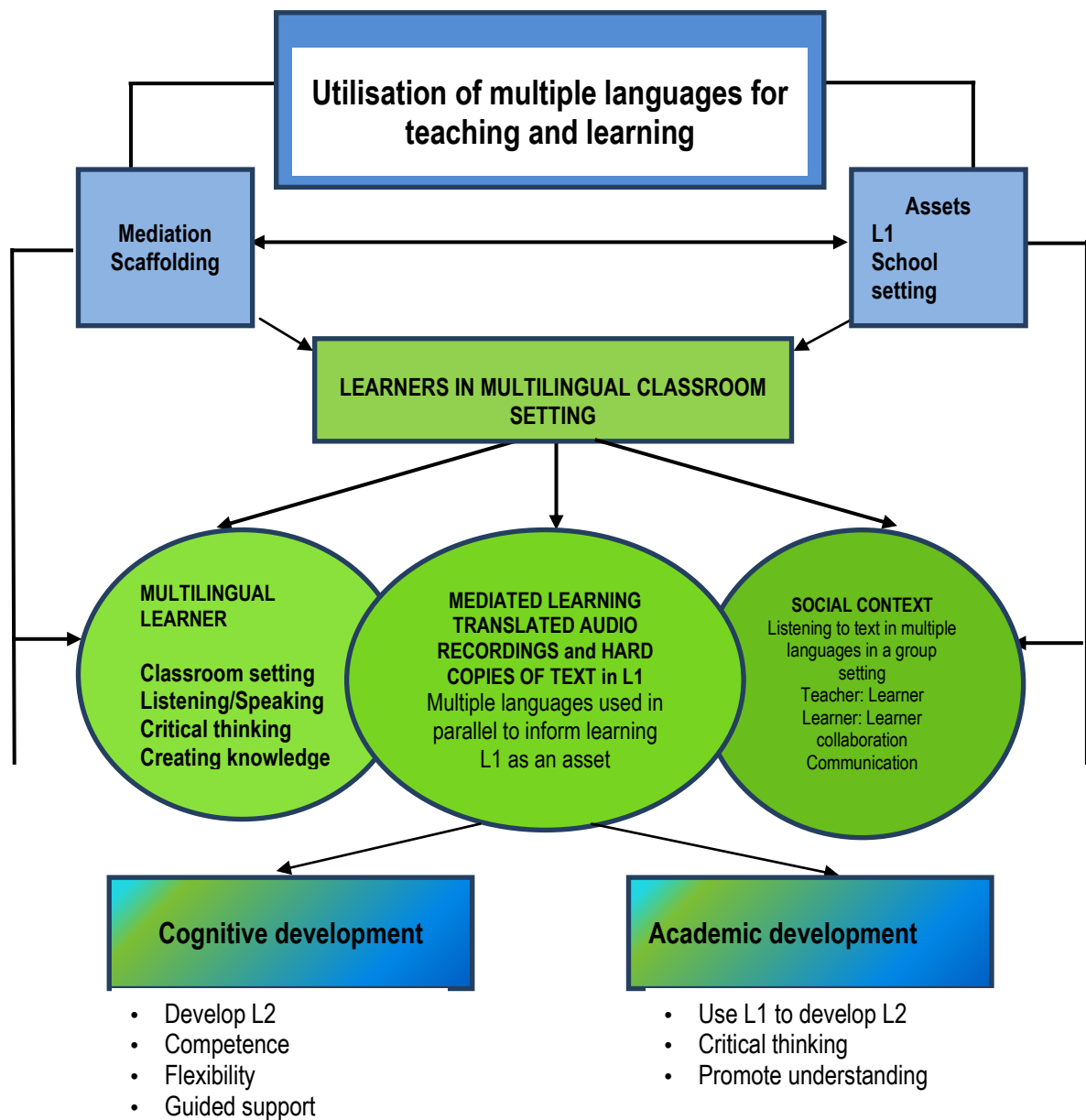
Vygotsky's main structures underpin three important aspects: ZPD, scaffolding, and mediation. These were used in my study in collaboration with the translated audio recordings to allow learners to learn under guidance and to receive assistance that supports their current competences and complements and builds on their existing abilities (Cole & Cole, 2001). According to Vygotsky (1962), once learners familiarise themselves with the content and begin to link L1 to fill in the gaps in L2, there is mastery of task.

The asset-based approach illuminates L1 as a potential asset for learners to make meaning of the content learnt in the classroom and encourages more than two languages to be practised inside multilingual classrooms, which promotes the idea of translanguaging in practice. Learners can become navigators of their own learning by listening to their L1 in a classroom set up with other learners and their teacher. It is hoped that the classroom will represent a positive and meaningful learning atmosphere in line with the potential and inherent assets in the learner's life world.

Consequently, the social environment becomes a translanguaging space that allocates a platform for L1 to be accessed for learning and teaching. I argue here that this platform is crucial for integrating the learning and teaching experience to promote an integrated understanding across the cognitive, emotional and social domains of the development of Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners in multilingual classrooms.

Figure 2.3 presents the conceptual framework of using multiple languages for learning and teaching in a classroom setting through the medium of the translanguaging approach. In the current study, the approach included translated audio recordings of comprehension texts played in both Sepedi and Isi Zulu, and included the hard copies of the texts available in three languages (English, Sepedi,

IsiZulu). This approach supported learners to make sense of a multilingual world by endorsing diverse learning and teaching where L1 was scaffolded and mediated into learning and teaching practice, creating an opportunity for learners to understand content that may have been lost in an English medium setting only. Incorporating L1 as a tool of accommodation provided learners with guided support to experience learning in a non-threatening way. During this process, the learners were also involved in collaborating with the class teacher.



**Figure 2.3: The conceptual framework of using multiple languages for learning and teaching**



## 2.9 SUMMARY

This chapter provided an extensive literature review of multilingualism and the effects of South Africa's socio-economic challenges on learning and teaching outcomes in multilingual classrooms. My study comprehensively questioned monolingual language hierarchies and highlighted the lack of access to education in the L1. Additionally, I reviewed the strategies used in multilingual education and addressed the use of translanguaging as an approach to inform our knowledge of learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms.

Consensus in literature confirms that the theoretical platform upon which translanguaging pedagogy has been built over the last decade is now being used in practice (Cummins, 2019). My study considered the great contribution made by Ofelia García's theorisation of translanguaging as an effective pedagogy for learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms around the world.

There is coherence in research globally regarding the impact of multilingualism in the educational sphere, resulting in different linguistic repertoires amongst learners in multilingual classrooms. Furthermore, the issue of language practices during the colonial era and apartheid coupled with the socio-economic challenges has had significant influence on learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms in South Africa.

Thus, the SCT and the asset-based approach were considered foundational in providing the framework for expanding my study to mediate and scaffold L1s into learners' and teachers' social contexts by means of technologically assisted support which includes the translated audio recordings. Generating opportunities for learners to understand content better by relying on their L1s and providing teachers with support strategies to enhance the pedagogical experiences was achieved through the use of multiple languages in a multilingual classroom.

Translanguaging implemented as a support strategy for learning and teaching and its practical implications in multilingual classroom settings were carefully considered in this study. The following chapter presents the research methodology employed in the study.

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### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology applied to the study. The meta-theoretical paradigm on which the study was based is initially discussed and the advantages, challenges, characteristics and criteria that exist within this paradigm are highlighted. The research design, research process, the research site, and selection of the participants of the study are explained. The chapter also encapsulates a detailed overview of the data-collection methods, the data analysis, and the quality criteria pertinent to this study. My role as the researcher was strongly acknowledged throughout the research process. The chapter concludes with the ethical considerations that were adhered to throughout the study.

### **3.2 EPISTEMOLOGICAL PARADIGM**

Epistemology is derived from the Ancient Greek word *epistēmē*, meaning knowledge (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). In research, epistemology is the study of knowledge and how one attains it (Nieuwenhuis, 2013a). Cooksey and McDonald (2011) maintain that epistemology is what counts as knowledge within the world; it is the foundation of knowledge, including its nature, its form, how it can be acquired, and how it can be communicated to other human beings. Epistemology focuses on the nature of the human knowledge and comprehension that is needed for one to be able to extend, broaden, and obtain a deeper understanding in a field of research (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

For my study, interaction, exploration, and active participation with others informed knowledge, resolutions, and evaluation. I share the convictions of Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) and Schwandt (1997) who define epistemology as the study of the nature of knowledge and its justification. I was interested to determine if knowledge is something that can be acquired or something that has to be personally experienced. I aligned my thoughts with Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) who placed great emphasis on the following question: What is the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the would-be known? This question seemed significant because it

anchored my position in seeking knowledge and placed my stance in wanting to explore the 'truth'.

### **3.2.1 META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM: INTERPRETIVISM**

A paradigm is a “set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which gives rise to a particular world-view” (Nieuwenhuis, 2007, p. 47) and allows individuals to interpret reality through systematic principles (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Nieuwenhuis, 2013a). The paradigm acts as the academic point of departure for a study and refers to the philosophical assumptions that a researcher makes when understanding the components of a study (Grix, 2004). I aligned my thinking to this view initially to understand the philosophical underpinnings that informed my choice of research questions, methodology, and methods and thereafter to understand how social reality and knowledge are viewed. This led me to reveal knowledge of a certain social phenomenon (Al Riyami, 2015) – for my study, understanding translanguaging from an educational perspective.

The interpretive paradigm is the understanding of the subjective world of human experience (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Guba & Lincoln, 1989) and how meaning is given to experiences (Jansen, 2016; Nieuwenhuis, 2016a). This view is shared by Scotland (2012), Crous (2011), and Nieuwenhuis (2013a) who elicit interpretivism as multiple and subjective realities existing for a particular phenomenon that vary across time and space. This approach is simply described by Fouché and Schurink (2011) and Kivunja, and Kuyini (2017) as gaining insight into interpreting how individuals develop meaning in the context that they are in.

For my study, the interpretive paradigm was preferred since it considers a single phenomenon to have multiple interpretations rather than a truth that can be determined by a process of measurement (Pham, 2018). Through the data-collection process, I explored the meanings created by the learners and the teachers during the translanguaging support strategies.

Interpretivism gave me a platform to regard the learners and the teachers as participants of my research study as opposed to labelled objects (Al Riyami, 2015). I followed the philosophy of Al Riyami (2015) by being open to encapsulate different perspectives while simultaneously examining the phenomenon from different angles by being present in the participants' natural setting and using a case study design.

The focus of my study was to understand the use of translanguaging as a practice in multilingual classrooms for learners to benefit from multiple languages and to allow teachers to teach by providing mediation to scaffold the learning experience.

I relied on the rationale of both Rapley (2017) and Wahyuni (2012) that clarifies an interpretive paradigm as being socially constructed, embracing subjectivity, acknowledging multiple realities, and having significant meaning and value. This seemed an appropriate choice because this paradigm involved the subjective experiences of the participants, enabling me to gain in-depth insight and understanding of the phenomenon from within the issues being researched. My focus during this research journey was through discourse to generate rich data regarding the use of translanguaging as a support strategy for learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (1994, p. 36) state that an interpretivist paradigm allows one to understand “the world of human experience”. This strong inclination towards subjectivity of reality steered me to look through an interpretivist lens in order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (translanguaging) and its complexity (parallel languages in one lesson plan) in its unique context (South African schools and the learners) instead of trying to generalise to the whole population (Creswell, 2007).

### **3.2.1.1 Advantages of using interpretivism**

Interpretivism led my inquiry towards subjectivity of reality because it advanced my thinking and approach to understand the subjective experiences of the learners/participants and their experiences. It comprehensively allowed me to gain insight into understanding a phenomenon from within the issues being researched. Upon this premise, my study aimed to provide a better understanding of the use of translanguaging for learning and teaching in primary school classrooms within the South African context. Multilingualism and diversity are some of the challenges that have influenced the South African and the global educational systems where learners lack proficiency in English (Brock-Utne, 2015; Hurst & Mona, 2017; Ngcobo et al., 2016), consequently affecting learning outcomes and learning development.

The interpretive paradigm was suitable because it aims to understand the phenomena through which meanings are made by participants in their natural

settings (in this case the classroom setting). In addition, the paradigm strives to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that the participants bring to a situation (the use of L1 and English in one lesson plan) and to everyday life. This is appropriate because I wanted to understand the real-world experiences of learners and their teachers in multilingual classroom settings.

I also found interpretivism a relevant choice because it assisted me in accommodating multiple perspectives and versions of the truth (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Interpretivists consider an understanding of the context in which any type of research conducted is valued and important to consider when interpreting the data gathered (Willis, 2007). According to Willis (2007), interpretivism appreciates a particular context, especially when the interpretive paradigm is believed to be a reality that is socially constructed. It was my goal to explore a phenomenon within a group of learners and their teachers at particular schools.

Interpretivism shares a space within the qualitative research paradigm. A link exists between the interpretive paradigm and qualitative methodology because both allow the researcher to seek the experiences, understandings and perceptions of individuals to uncover reality rather than rely on statistics (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). And certainly interpretivism and qualitative methods overlap in the field of education because interpretivism supports researchers in exploring their world by interpreting and understanding individuals (Creswell, 2009).

My study explored the experiences of South African learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds who are taught in more than one language in their school setting. The purpose of this research was to understand the reality of the learning development of South African learners and to provide support strategies that use both L1s and English to enable an understanding of the content that is taught.

More specifically, to explore the understanding of participants, an interpretive methodology provided a context that allowed me to examine what the participants in my study had to say about their experiences because interpretive research is more subjective than objective. This view point aligned with that of De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2011) and Willis (2007) who explained that interpretive philosophy is a relevant method of inquiry since it inclines towards subjectivity, departing from the idea of objectivity. My adoption of interpretivism was further

strengthened because emphasis is placed on understanding the individual and their interpretation of the world around them (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Interpretivism accepts multiple viewpoints of different individuals from different groups (Willis, 2007), making it more inclusive and thus applicable to my study. By accepting multiple perspectives in interpretivism led to a more inclusive understanding of the contextual situation (Morehouse, 2011). I gathered data for my study from a group of South African learners who came from different educational, social, linguistic and economic backgrounds to obtain more diverse and multifaceted information.

### **3.2.1.2 Challenges within an interpretivist paradigm**

Despite the key strengths mentioned above, the interpretive paradigm also presents certain challenges. The first challenge is that interpretivists' aim to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of a phenomenon within the complexity of its context rather than generalise the results to other people and other contexts (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Hence, there tends to be a gap in verifying validity and usefulness of research outcomes when using scientific procedures. The second challenge is that interpretivism falls towards an ontological view that favours subjectivity rather than objectivity (Mack, 2010). This can place limitations on the authenticity of data collected because the research outcomes are undoubtedly affected by the researcher's own interpretation, belief system, opinions or cultural preference, which results in preconceived notions. A third challenge raises the concern that interpretivism does not focus on the political and ideological impact on knowledge and social reality. The last challenge is that interpretivism embraces that knowledge generated has limited transferability (Scotland, 2012) and cannot be replicated (Wahyuni, 2012).

While these criticisms were taken into consideration when selecting a paradigm, they were not considered problematic for my study since I did not wish to transfer or generalise the findings or to create a study that could be replicated. Instead, I sought to understand the perceptions of the participants in order to gain deeper insight into the practice of translanguaging as a strategy to be understood in multilingual classrooms within the South African context. The above constraints were carefully considered during the research process and extreme care was taken in the course of this study to reduce and/or control any negative effects on the results.

### 3.2.1.3 Characteristics of an interpretivist paradigm

Table 3.1 explains the characteristics of research located within the interpretivist paradigm as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Morgan (2007). These characteristics suited the nature of my study and are discussed in more depth in the table.

**Table 3.1: Characteristics of the interpretivist paradigm**

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESEARCH LOCATED WITHIN THE INTERPRETIVIST PARADIGM	
ELEMENTS OF THE INTERPRETIVIST PARADIGM	RELATED TO THE PRESENT STUDY
1. The admission that the social world cannot be understood from the standpoint of an individual	Multiple case studies with many participants were used in this study. The perspectives of the participants who are a true representation of the sample were chosen for this study and who could provide meaningful and true sources of data because I am aware that social situations are better understood from the perspective of those who have directly experienced them.
2. The belief that realities are multiple and are socially constructed	De Vos et al. (2011) state that reality is socially and personally constructed, and participants should be actively involved in the research process. Similarly, Brown (2010) asserts that experience is powerful in that it allows people to view life. The participants were directly involved in the study by being part of the lesson plans, creating storyboards to ascribe meaning to their experiences and participating in the lessons guided by the class teacher.
3. The acceptance that there is inevitable interaction between the researcher and his/her research participants	I was present on both research sites throughout the research process, making notes of my observations and reporting on the events as they unfolded. I was aware of potential bias and, therefore, two video cameras and two audio recorders were placed in each of the classrooms being observed to ensure that the data were authentic. A research assistant joined me on the sites, and her observations were included as sources of data. My aim was to be a non-participating observer with an open mind.
4. The acceptance that context is vital for knowledge and knowing	Two research sites were chosen that were applicable to the study. The contexts were replicated but the perspectives of all the participants were considered. Everything was viewed through the eyes of the participants (Flick, 2014).
5. The belief that knowledge is created by the findings; knowledge can be value-laden, and the values need to be made explicit	Interpretivism was guided by a qualitative research design to ensure subjective experiences and rich and in-depth information. Value-laden findings allowed the research to be open to the findings as they unfolded during the research process, thus abstaining from quantifiable measures.
6. The need to understand the individual rather than universal laws	The research was guided by the participants' views, which were taken into consideration by observing their reactions, and their verbal and non-verbal gestures. An innovated form of collecting data such as the storyboard seemed ideal because it depicted the learner's feelings, which were noted. Classroom observations allowed a process where findings emerged over time, allowing the participants to immerse themselves fully in the experience of the study.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESEARCH LOCATED WITHIN THE INTERPRETIVIST PARADIGM	
ELEMENTS OF THE INTERPRETIVIST PARADIGM	RELATED TO THE PRESENT STUDY
7. The belief that causes and effects are mutually interdependent	My ontology was strengthened by the claim of De Vos et al. (2011, p. 309) that “reality ... can only be constructed through the empathetic understanding of the research participant’s meaning of his or her life world”.

### 3.2.1.4 Criteria for an interpretivist paradigm applicable to this study

Guba (1981) declares that trustworthiness and authenticity are key tenets within an interpretivist paradigm. Additionally, Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) emphasise that criteria, credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability are well accepted by many scholars in educational research (Bouma & Atkinson, 1995; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993; Merriam, 1998; Silverman, 2000) and should be adhered to in research. The aim of my educational research was to seek an understanding of the experiences of a group of learners and their respective teachers, which leaned towards a qualitative method (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Adopting the above criteria ensured that the research was not lacking in trustworthiness and authenticity.

## 3.3 METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM

### 3.3.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed a qualitative research approach within the interpretive paradigm to understand the subjective experiences of learners and teachers engaging in the support strategy of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms. A case study design was considered suitable for this study. I was drawn to the distinctive features of a qualitative inquiry to develop idiographic knowledge (Guba, 1981; Krefting, 1991). Qualitative research is aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of social phenomena of individuals or systems in their social and cultural contexts (Nieuwenhuis, 2010; Nziyane & Alpaslan, 2012). In line with Pulla and Carter (2018), the qualitative research process allowed me to collect data methodically through observations and being physically present in the school setting. Qualitative research permitted me to view participants’ subjectivity and ability to address the complexities



of understanding human behaviour in the context of their social and physical environments.

Willis (2008, p. 40) positions qualitative research as “naturalistic” because it focuses on real people in real situations and aligns itself to understand human beings in their natural settings. This research design facilitated me to explore the presence of translanguaging as a pedagogic tool in learning and teaching. This aspect of my study focused on the learners and teachers by placing emphasis on their distinctive personal experiences (Sutton & Austin, 2015). The aim of this study was to explore the L1s of the learners and the manner in which translanguaging was used in Grade 5 and Grade 6 classrooms in South Africa to acquire new perspectives of the role of L1 in education. My interest was not only in determining what happens in multilingual classrooms in terms of how teachers and learners interact with translanguaging and if it facilitates learning but also how their attitudes, skills, and experiences are reflected in what they do in these classrooms.

Qualitative research approaches are associated with many philosophical paradigms such as interpretivism, phenomenology, semiotics, ethnographics, ethno-methodology, feminism, constructivism, social realism, contemporary hermeneutics and critical theory, symbolic interactionism and others (Avramidis & Smith, 1999; Blaikie, 2010; Bryman, 2008; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As discussed in Section 3.2.1, my study adopted an interpretivist paradigm, which abstains from methods that present objective or precise information (Thanh & Thanh, 2015) and rather views the world through a “series of individual eyes” and chooses participants who “have their own interpretations of reality to encompass the worldview” (McQueen, 2002, p. 16).

Creswell (2009, p. 4) states, “qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem”. The most suitable way to conduct this study was through qualitative research since it involved understanding a practical situation (Creswell, 2007). This was achieved by using both the interpretivism paradigm and a qualitative research methodology to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of a group of learners and their teachers in multilingual classrooms. However, I was cognisant of the usefulness of qualitative research, which has been questioned on its generalisability of the research results to other groups (Voyer & Trondman, 2017). The current study is specific and context-based.

The intent of this study was to explore and encapsulate the subjective meanings and experiences of primary school learners regarding the practice of translanguaging. Furthermore my intent was to recognise and value language diversity and accept L1 as an enabler for learners to use parallelly with English to make meaning and learn in multilingual classrooms. Additionally, I anticipated exploring teachers' perceptions of translanguaging as a support strategy. A qualitative method of inquiry permitted me to conduct an in-depth exploration (Tracy, 2010) and attain data through the process of being engaged and having empathetic understanding (Punch, 2009). By using multiple data sources collected directly from the participants, rich, in-depth experiences from the participants were achieved (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014; Nieuwenhuis, 2016b; Sutton & Austin, 2015). McMillan and Schumacher (2010) describe qualitative research involving understanding and inquiry into meanings as well as the nature of the knowledge in line with a particular theoretical framework and field of study.

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) add that qualitative research pursues an emergent design, meaning it evolves and changes as the study unfolds. I followed an inductive approach to collect data to build concepts or theories (Babbie, 2013) by observing the participants in their natural setting and describing the events as accurately as possible. This is because qualitative research is distinguished by its focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings where there is no manipulation or control of behaviour or setting (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Multiple sources of data were used to ensure credibility and to avoid bias.

### **3.3.2 CRITERIA FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPLICABLE TO THIS STUDY**

Qualitative research is an iterative process of case selection, data collection, data analysis, and theory building (Charmaz, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 2015). Multiple sources of data such as text, pictures, and videos are a fundamental part of qualitative research and increase internal validity (Yin, 2014) and support data analysis. The information collected is analysed iteratively using guidelines from different qualitative research methods. The information can be classified into themes and can be developed as the researcher reads through the different evidences and generates theory (Strauss & Corbin, 2015).

I accepted the above viewpoints as worthy aspects to consider based on the magnitude of my study and thus, it was imperative for me to adhere to the standards by which researchers from various paradigms and backgrounds evaluate qualitative research (Tracy & Hinrichs, 2017). To conform to the reliability and trustworthiness of my research process, it was my responsibility to ensure that I followed the standards and guidelines by which qualitative research is evaluated. I specifically focused on the distinctive means, practices, and methods outlined by Tracy's (2010) eight 'big-tent' criteria as guiding principles to pursue when adopting the qualitative research methodology.

Table 3.2 explains the eight 'big-tent' criteria for qualitative research as described by Tracy (2010). The eight criteria for qualitative research are listed with the means, practices, and methods through which to achieve them and how I ensured that they were related to the present study.

**Table 3.2: Eight 'big-tent' criteria for a qualitative research methodology**

NO.	CRITERIA FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	RELATED TO THE PRESENT STUDY
1.	Worthy topic	Translanguaging is a worldwide topic which is gaining considerable interest. The aim of this research is to catalyze new contributions and understandings of the social world. Translanguaging looks at the learners whose learning has been compromised due to globalization, immigration, language policies, etc. Research in this field is unfolding at a fast rate.
2.	Rich rigour	Tracy and Hinrichs (2017, p. 1) state, "qualitative research is benefitted by a researcher who is widely read". In line with this, seminal theories and previous research studies have been explored (see Chapter 2). Tracy and Hinrichs (2017) highlight that researchers must specify the quantity of data collected, specify the length of time spent in the field, and disclose the various types of data which can contribute to the study. The research process, the selection of cases and context of research, the data collection and analysis, and theory building (Charmaz, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 2015) are important aspects to consider in obtaining rich rigour. In line with the recommendations of the scholars above, multiple case studies with a large group of learners from two research sites and from two grades at each site were selected as samples. The contextual situation of the adversities of South Africa and the challenges that accompany learners were taken into consideration, and multiple sources for data collection were used in the study.

NO.	CRITERIA FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	RELATED TO THE PRESENT STUDY
3.	Sincerity	<p>During the data-collection process, I used field notes to record my reaction to the research and to take notes of the shared accounts of the participants on site. I followed the suggestions of Tracy and Hinrichs (2017) and Flick (2010) of using the first person 'I' to remind readers of my presence, influence, and role within the research context while reflecting on my experiences in the field and being accountable to record the actual happenings as they presented at the research site. Tracy and Hinrichs (2017) assert that researchers must be</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">transparent about how they accessed the context of the study, their level of participation and immersion, field note practices, and level of detail in transcription, mistakes made in the access or data collection process, the extent to which those mistakes impacted data collection and analysis, and whether surprises were addressed and resolved along the way all contribute to the sincerity of a researcher and the final report, (p. 5)</p> <p>This is discussed in detail in Chapter 4, which highlights the findings from the study.</p>
4.	Credibility	<p>Qualitative researchers attain credibility through thick description, crystallisation of data, and collection of multiple sources of heterogeneous data (Costa, Patricio &amp; Morelli, 2018; Tracy &amp; Hinrichs, 2017; Yin, 2014).</p>
5.	Resonance	<p>Qualitative researchers immerse themselves in an in-depth, analysis of contexts, and situations in such a way where experiences are highlighted to allow readers to appreciate the study's findings and then apply, or transfer, those findings to their own situations. Resonance in qualitative research can be achieved through aesthetic merit, evocative writing, formal generalisations, and transferability. Through thick description, the researcher paints a picture of how life unfolds in a given context or how a concept can be better understood.</p>
6.	Significant contribution	<p>Practical contributions help people engage in practices and behaviours in a new, improved or more informed manner, given the findings of the study. Such contributions empower participants to see the world in new ways or help clarify, transform, or valuably reframe a problem.</p>
7.	Ethics	<p>Procedural ethics recognizes participants' privilege to confidentiality, anonymity, identity and privacy. Situational ethics refer to a researchers ethical behaviour, of adhering to rules such as when to record data by means of audio- or video recordings or which narratives and findings to include in an article and assessing if disclosing data can have negatively impacts for participants involved. Relational ethics addresses how a researcher should treat participants on site by employing fair treatment coupled with dignity, and acknowledging their values, voices, and beliefs, as being valid. Ellis, (2007) describes relational ethics as an ethical self-consciousness of a researcher to include his/her actions, and consequences upon others. A qualitative researcher must embrace qualities of acting kindly and being empathetic towards participants on the research site which sets the tone for exiting ethics which is a process as to how a researcher leaves the site and the manner in which results are shared with the scholarly community. Considering the present research, it is imperative to present the findings in such a way as to avoid unmerited or unintended consequences for their participants, especially when they represent marginalized populations.</p>

NO.	CRITERIA FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	RELATED TO THE PRESENT STUDY
8.	Meaningful coherence	Meaningful coherence places emphasis on the rationality of the study being consistent throughout. The comprehensive literature review should be able to answer the research questions related to the present study. A coherent study means that both literature and findings from the study achieve valuable insight which speaks to issues, questions, concerns, or controversies identified in the literature review.

### 3.4 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN – MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

The selection of a research design depends on the nature of the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2011), in particular the aim of the research and the research questions that guide the study. The interpretivist paradigm was applicable to my study and thus, a case study design was selected because this design presents an in-depth understanding of those involved in the research. Additionally, in a qualitative mode of inquiry, the case study design is one of the most frequently used qualitative research methodologies (Yazan, 2015). I identified with the above since my study allowed the opportunity to work closely with primary school learners, supporting implementation of translanguaging as a support strategy and generating a broader understanding of the participants (learners and teachers) involved in the study.

According to Harrison, Birks, Franklin and Mills (2017, p. 1), a case study is a “pragmatic, flexible research approach, capable of providing comprehensive in-depth understanding of a diverse range of issues across a number of disciplines”. The case study approach offers an opportunity to work closely with the learners, supporting the process of the translanguaging support strategy and observing its impact with the aim of gaining a broader understanding of parallel languages used in lessons in a classroom setting.

I was guided by an exploratory case study design because this type of design is used to explore situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes (Yin, 2009). In addition, I sought to gain insight into a specific social construct in order to contribute to the process of implementing translanguaging as a practice into multilingual classrooms to promote relevant learning and teaching

methods. As the name suggests, exploratory design promotes additional research methods such as extensive fieldwork and provides a strong theoretical basis before addressing the research questions (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

A case study is often used when the researcher seeks to understand the complexity of a phenomenon because it allows the researcher to interact with the participants in their context (Nieuwenhuis, 2010) and gain detailed information from them (Yin, 2014). For my study, I selected a multiple-case study design. Yin (2009) shares that single- and multiple-case designs should be considered as variations within the same methodological framework rather than distinctly different approaches. I spent an extended amount of time on both research sites with a view to gain the trust of the participants and at the same time to achieve a greater understanding of the participants' culture and context (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007).

Creswell (2013, p. 97) reaffirmed my choice by describing the characteristics of a case study method as one that “explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and reports a case description and case themes”. Furthermore, Simons (2009, p. 21) affirms that such a case study entails an “in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular ... system in a real life”. Table 3.3 presents my rationale for choosing a multiple-case study design.

**Table 3.3: Rationale for choosing a multiple-case study design**

No.	Rationale for choosing a multiple-case study design
1.	<p>Multiple cases permit an understanding of the comparable distinctions and similarities between the cases (Baxter &amp; Jack, 2008; Stake, 1995).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A case-study research method allowed me to capture multiple realities from two research sites (School A and School B) that were not easily quantifiable.</li> <li>– My focus was to study several individuals (learners and their teachers), environments (eight classrooms within two schools) and a programme (support strategy to explore multiple languages in classrooms) that exists as a bounded system (Nieuwenhuis, 2010).</li> </ul>
2.	<p>The researcher is able to analyse the data both within each situation and across situations (Yin, 2003).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– I captured the ‘real-world’ experiences of the participants in my study with similar contextual situations (Nieuwenhuis, 2010) to gather rich data.</li> </ul> <p>A multiple-case study design is defined as "a method involving systematically gathering enough information about a particular person, a social setting or an event or group to permit the researcher to effectively understand how the subjects operate or function" (Berg, 2004, p. 283). From an interpretivist perspective, there exists multiple realities and meanings which are co-created by the researcher (Lincoln, Lynham &amp; Guba, 2011; Yin, 2014). Thus, a case study is a “bounded system” (Stake, 2006),</p>

	"within its real-life context" (Yin, 2014), "with the aim of trying to see patterns, relationships and the dynamic that warrants the inquiry" (Henning, Rensburg & Smit, 2010, p. 32).
3.	<p>Multiple-case studies can be used either to predict contrasting results for expected reasons or to foresee similar results in the studies (Yin, 2003), determining whether the findings are valuable or not (Eisenhardt, 1991).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Boundedness refers to a common characteristic amongst the individuals or entities (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). In this study, the perceptions of Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners and of their English subject teacher regarding a specific phenomenon, namely the use of translanguaging, were explored.</li> <li>– The common characteristic amongst the participants were that learners came from similar contextual environments, English was their L2 of instruction; the learners were being taught in an English-medium school, and the learners' and teachers' L1s were one of the eleven official languages within the South African context. However, most learners in this study were fluent in Sepedi and IsiZulu. Grade 5 and Grade 6 classes were purposefully selected.</li> </ul>
4.	<p>Comparing case studies can provide important information for literature regarding the contrasts and similarities (Vannoni, 2015).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A case study is a valuable method to explore and understand complex issues in real-world settings (Harrison et al., 2017).</li> </ul>
5.	<p>Multiple-case designs allow for replication in data collection across sites, which can be beneficial in understanding the issue under study (Anderson. Leahy, DelValle, Sherman &amp; Tansey, 2014; Baxter &amp; Jack, 2008).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To understand the phenomenon of translanguaging in education in primary schools, I considered it necessary to collect rich, detailed and comprehensive information from two grades (Grade 5 and Grade 6) in two different schools.</li> </ul>
6.	<p>Multiple-case design includes representativeness and robustness (Gustafsson, 2017). Baxter and Jack (2008) emphasise that the evidence that is generated from a multiple-case study is robust and trustworthy.</p>

To be impartial, I considered the shortcomings of multiple-case studies, which include the need for the researcher to spend extensive resources and time on the research site, making the method extremely expensive (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Dyer, Wilkins and Eisenhardt (1991) claim that when scientific articles have many case studies, there is a chance that there was less observation time for the researcher to have studied the case studies. The above limitations were noted as worthy points, and all attempts were made to elicit valuable contextual data that were ethically sound.

### 3.4.2 RESEARCH SITE

The two schools selected for this study are referred to as School A and School B to maintain confidentiality. The two grades from each school included two Grade 5 classes (one control class [5C] and one support implementation class [5I]) and two

Grade 6 classes (one control class [6C] and one support implementation class [6I]). Table 3.4 below describes the abbreviations used in this study.

**Table 3.4: Abbreviations used in this study**

	Abbreviation		Abbreviation
<b>Research Site A</b>	School A	<b>Research Site B</b>	School B
Grade 5 control class	5AC	Grade 5 control class	5BC
Grade 5 support implementation class	5AI	Grade 5 support implementation class	5BI
Grade 6 control class	6AC	Grade 6 control class	6BC
Grade 6 support implementation class	6AI	Grade 6 support implementation class	6BI
Grade 5 teacher	Teacher 1	Grade 5 teacher	Teacher 3
Grade 6 teacher	Teacher 2	Grade 6 Teacher	Teacher 3

### 3.4.2.1 Placing the research into context

The map in Figure 3.1 highlights the location of the two schools that were selected for my study. Both schools are located within the City of Tshwane, Gauteng province, South Africa. School A is located in the township area of Laudium, and School B is positioned in the township area of Mamelodi.



**Figure 3.1: Location of School A and School B**



Table 3.5 provides a summary of the two sites selected for this study, with their distinctive features described in detail. This includes the school grades chosen for my study, the number of learners from each grade that participated, and the number of teachers who were involved in the study. Positive aspects and challenging features of the schools are described, followed by the specific L1s spoken by all the learners, their respective teachers, the Head of Department (HOD), and the School Principal.

**Table 3.5: Summary of the two school sites**

Data collection sites							
Research Sites: Two Schools							
Research Site A: School				Research Site B: School B			
School is situated in a township area. Learners commute by taxi from their respective township areas.				School is situated in a township area. Learners commute by taxi from their respective township areas.			
Both schools share commonalities such as learners living in township areas that lack basic resources, including electricity and water. Learners travel by taxi to come to school. Some learners travel from far distances. Poverty, unemployment, parental neglect, and lack of parental supervision are prevalent. Most learners' L1 is either Zulu or Sepedi. However, due to immigration, some of the learners come from neighbouring African countries, and these learners and some of the teachers have a different L1.							
Both schools share distinctive features:							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feeding scheme (breakfast, snack such as fruit, school lunch)</li> <li>○ School governing body includes many role players such as school principals, HODs, and subject teachers. The Department of Basic Education is involved in the functioning of the school. Textbooks and workbooks are available for most of the learners.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Challenging features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Overcrowded classrooms</li> <li>○ Lack of furniture in the classrooms</li> <li>○ Lack of resources and materials in classrooms</li> <li>○ Learners commute by taxi, which means that learners often leave their homes very early in the morning and return home reasonably late in the day</li> </ul> </li> </ul>							
School A				School B			
Two Grades				Two Grades			
Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 5		Grade 6	
Four classes each				Four classes each			
Grade 5C	Grade 5I	Grade 6C	Grade 6I	Grade 5C	Grade 5I	Grade 6C	Grade 6I
No. of learners 40	No. of learners 39	No. of learners 42	No. of learners 39	No. of learners 43	No. of learners 40	No. of learners 43	No. of learners 40

<b>L1s spoken by majority of the learners</b>			
English, Sepedi, Zulu	English, Sepedi, Zulu, Xhosa	English, Sepedi	English, Sepedi, Zulu, Urdu
<b>Additional L1s spoken by a few learners</b>			
Zulu, Venda, Xitsonga	Zulu, Venda, Urdu	Shona, Ndebele	Xhosa
<b>School Principal</b>		<b>School Head of Department (HOD)</b>	
School Principal's L1 English		HOD's L1 Zulu	
<b>Teacher 1</b>	<b>Teacher 2</b>	<b>Teacher 3</b>	
Teacher's L1 English	Teacher's L1 English	Teacher's L1 Shona	

### 3.4.2.2 Selection of participants

Henning et al. (2010) assert that the criteria for the selection of research participants are informed by the researcher's knowledge of the topic and how the theorising develops as the research progresses. I selected a sample from the population (Bryman, 2008; Strydom & Delpont, 2011). A sample represents a sub-group of the target population a researcher plans to study to generalise the research results to the target population (Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2008; Nieuwenhuis, 2010). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), a sample refers to individuals who voluntarily participate in an investigation and from whom the data are collected.

For this study, a sample was drawn from two Grade 5 and two Grade 6 classes at selected schools. My study made use of purposeful sampling. The level of diversity was deemed to have an effect on how language choices were made in the classrooms. Thus, each case was selected on the basis that it illustrated certain features that were considered of interest (Silverman, 2000). These included the location, the L1s of the majority of learners were isiZulu and Sepedi, and the subject of English was taught as first additional language. At School A, there are two teachers (T1 for Grade 5 and T2 for Grade 6) and the School Principal who is closely involved in the teaching process. School B has one teacher (T3) who teaches both grades, and the HOD is also involved.

I found it imperative to build rapport with all the participants (teachers and learners), to alleviate any apprehension they may experience and to ensure that they may feel comfortable with my presence at their school. I achieved this by being transparent with them and making sure they understood the purpose of the study. I provided them with a detailed explanation of my role at the school and informed them that participation is voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study, should they feel they are not willing to participate any further. Obtaining permission from them was considered a priority to ascertain their willingness to be part of the research process. Table 3.8 displays the research participants involved in my study.

**Table 3.6: Research participants**

Research site	Number of learners	Number of teachers	Number of HODs	Number of school principals
Site A School A	160	2	0	1
Site B School B	166	1	1	0

### 3.4.3 DATA GENERATION PROCESS

#### 3.4.3.1 Study timeline and procedures

Initially, I arranged meetings with several schools that I thought may be suitable for the study in the hope that I would receive a positive response from two schools. School A and School B were purposefully selected, and I began forming alliances with them by being transparent about the study and initiating a positive relationship. Table 3.7 explains the steps followed at both schools to ensure lucidity of what the study entailed.

**Table 3.7: Procedures followed at each school**

Step	Procedures followed at each school (School A and B) prior to data collection
1.	Introductory meetings held at each school after they agreed to be part of the research study: The meeting included my supervisor, the translator, the research assistant, the School Principal and/or the HOD, the teachers and myself. A discussion around my study ensued, covering information on the research project, languages spoken at the school, the ratio of learners per class, etc.
2.	During the initial meetings with the teachers, I discussed the procedures to be followed during

	<p>the research process which included taking video and audio recordings during the English periods in both the support implementation and control classrooms. The teachers were put at ease that these recordings are for the purpose of research alone and that ethical rules of confidentiality will be adhered to at all times. Subsequent meetings followed to discuss, decide on and finalise the comprehension texts to be selected from the prescribed English textbooks of the learners. The idea was not to disrupt the school procedures or the teacher's year plans but rather to facilitate their schedule into my research. With the assistance of the teachers, five comprehension texts for both Grade 5 and Grade 6 classes were selected from the prescribed English textbooks. Dates for data collection were also set.</p> <p>Appendix 12: Sample of one text for Grade 5</p> <p>Appendix 13: Sample of one text for Grade 6</p> <p>Appendix 14: Sources of the prescribed English textbook for grades 5 and 6</p>
3.	Consent forms were distributed and collected prior to the research. Permission was formally obtained from the School Principal (Appendix 1), the parents of the learners (Appendix 2), the teachers involved in the study (Appendix 3), and the learners (Appendix 4).
4.	Collection of all consent forms, followed by cross-checking the class lists for the grades involved in the study and allocating number tags for each learner who was participating in the study to maintain that confidentiality was carried out at all times.
5.	After obtaining permission, I met with the participating learners by visiting both schools again to build rapport with them.
6.	A subsequent meeting was arranged with the teachers involved from both schools to explain the process that would occur on the days the research was to be conducted. I explained to the teachers that video cameras and audio recorders will be positioned in the support implementation and control classes prior to the commencement of the lesson, and to promote translanguaging, the translated audio recordings of the comprehension texts in Sepedi and IsiZulu would only play in the support implementation classes. Additionally, hard copies of the translated comprehension texts in all three languages (English, Sepedi, IsiZulu) would be handed out to all the learners in the support implementation classrooms only. The control class routine would follow as a normal school period with no support strategies to be included, but would only include the video cameras and audio recorders to record the period to later compare the observations (if any).
7.	I met the teachers again to enquire if they had any questions and/or concerns regarding the progression of the data collection.
8.	I familiarised myself with the school and photographed the classrooms reserved for data collection to plan the positioning of the two cameras and audio recorders, to ensure that all angles inside the classroom were captured to avoid content being lost.
9.	I made it a priority to locate two translators fluent in Sepedi and isiZulu to translate all the comprehension texts selected for my study from English to Sepedi and isiZulu. I also ensured that the translated passages from the translators were exact to the English comprehension text. Thereafter, the translated passages were cross-translated to English to ensure credibility and to prevent loss of content and misinterpretation of the translated information in Sepedi and IsiZulu. The translated passages were pre-recorded by fluent Sepedi and IsiZulu speakers to ensure correct pronunciation of words.
10.	Hard copies of the prescribed English comprehension texts were printed for every learner, together with translated hard copies in Sepedi and isiZulu. These were sorted according to date order to ascertain that the chosen texts were used on the correct day. Additionally, I had

to make sure that the correct translated audio recordings of the comprehension texts in Sepedi and IsiZulu were available on the computer to play in the support implementation classes only.
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Prior to collecting data at the research sites (School A and School B), I needed to organise myself. I relied on standard operating procedures (SOPs) to follow my course of action (Wickler & Potter, 2010) by systematically listing detailed instructions to be carried out before entering the research site, when on the research site and upon leaving the site. Coordinating the processes ensured good preparation. This in turn provided reliable data since the research routine was systematic across all visits. Appendix 5 is an example of the SOP I used during the course of my visits.

The SOP comprised of every detail from a few days before the actual data collection on the sites to the time of leaving the research sites after data collection. This entailed familiarising myself with the cameras and audio recorders (Flick, 2014), charging the camera batteries for two video cameras and having additional batteries charged as back up. As an extra quality measure, the comprehension texts to be used in the lessons were counted out, coordinating the name tags according to the class lists as stipulated by Nieuwenhuis (2016a). For each class, I had a record of the number tag to identify each learner by writing out the number on the tag and ensuring that it corresponded to the learner's name on the class list that was provided by the teacher. This also ensured that at each visit, each learner was allocated the correct number tag. Additionally, when the learners had to answer questions, the worksheets provided had both their names and their tag numbers; this was necessary for the subsequent data analysis and to maintain confidentiality.

The SOP included the sequence of the events for the data collection. This included the manner in which I set up eight classrooms (four classrooms in School A and four classrooms in School B) on the stipulated dates outlined in Table 3.10. I adhered to the following:

- Two cameras and audio recorders were set up in the same positions during each visit, thus ensuring that the learners were observed in their entirety in an approximate 180° visual view.
- The speakers were connected to ensure surround sound in the classroom.

- The number tags were set out before the learners began the session and thereafter, the texts were handed out and subsequently collected.
- The correct translated audio recordings (Sepedi and isiZulu) were played from the computer when the teacher directed the learners to listen.
- At the end of the day, all equipment was packed up, ensuring nothing was left behind.

My organisational skills were guided by Nieuwenhuis (2016a) who stipulates that once data are collected, they should be sorted by placing them into folders, files, or boxes, which should be labelled for easy access. My data at both sites were filed in date order with subfolders that included all the content collected during each visit to all four classes per school site. The SOP served as a checklist to make sure that a systematic process was followed and that all data was collected justly.

### 3.4.3.2 Outline of the data-collection process

Table 3.8 is an outline of the data-collection process that was followed in both the control and the support implementation classes.

**Table 3.8: Outline of the data-collection process**

Process followed in the support implementation class	Process followed in the control class
1. Use the English period at school	1. Use the English period at school
2. Choose a comprehension text from the prescribed book (English)	2. Choose a comprehension text from the prescribed book (English)
3. Translate the text into both Sepedi and isiZulu and have it pre-audio recorded	
4. Print the text in English, isiZulu and Sepedi	3. Print the text in English
5. Hand out the English text and the isiZulu and Sepedi (translated texts) to the learners	4. Hand out the English text to the learners
6. The teacher teaches the class by either reading or asking the learners to read the text in English	5. The teacher teaches the class by either reading or asking the learners to read the text in English
7. The translated audio recordings of the English text is played in both Sepedi and IsiZulu	
8. The learners are encouraged to look at the translated text handouts in front of them	

<p>while listening to the translated audio recording being played</p> <p>9. The teacher continues the lesson in English and asks the learners to answer the questions that follow related to the comprehension text that they just heard in the prescribed book, and write down their answers on the worksheets provided</p>	<p>6. The teacher continues the lesson in English asks the learners to answer the questions that follow in the prescribed book by writing down their answers on the worksheets provided</p>
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### 3.4.3.3 Data-collection process

Table 3.9 displays the data-collection process and the procedures followed at both research sites. A description of the time spent at both research sites, the participants involved in the study, and the sources used to collect the data are included.

**Table 3.9: Data-collection process**

SITE VISITS					
SCHOOL A and SCHOOL B					
		Grade 5		Grade 6	
		Control class	Support implementation class	Control class	Support implementation class
<b>Day 1</b>					
Time spent on the research site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Classroom observations</li> <li>– Brief meeting with Principal</li> <li>– Brief conversation with class teacher / teachers to discuss the outline of the day</li> <li>– Camera and equipment set up</li> <li>– Handing out number tags to learners</li> <li>– Handing out the text in English (control and support implementation class)</li> <li>– Handing out the translated texts in both L1s (support implementation class only)</li> <li>– Setting up the class as the different classes come in</li> <li>– Collecting and filing process notes, learners worksheets systematically as the different classes come into the sessions</li> </ul>				
Participants on site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Researcher</li> <li>– Two research assistants</li> <li>– Class teacher/teachers</li> <li>– Supervisor</li> <li>– School Principal and/or HOD</li> </ul>				
Sources of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Semi-structured interviews</li> <li>– Classroom observations</li> <li>– Observation sheets</li> </ul>				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Field notes</li> <li>– Learners' worksheets</li> <li>– Storyboards</li> <li>– Audio recordings</li> <li>– Video recordings</li> </ul>
<p>Day 2, 3, 4, and 5 followed the same procedure as above.</p> <p>The participants at the site varied; however, the class teacher, one research assistant and I were constant throughout the data-collection visits.</p>	

### **3.4.4 DATA-COLLECTION METHODS**

In the following section, I describe the different sources of data used in this study. The data sources included semi-structured interviews, audio and video recordings, field notes of classroom observations, document analysis of worksheets, and storyboards. A variety of data-collection methods was appropriate for my study in order to obtain relevant, in-depth and contextually rich information (Rule & John, 2011).

#### **3.4.4.1 Semi-structured interviews**

A well-liked method of an interactive approach is an interview for the reason that it gives the researcher leverage into prompting and investigating things that cannot be observe directly (Al Riyami, 2015). Qualitative researchers directly engage in the data collection and must therefore have qualities of being sensitive and flexible to follow the thoughts of the person being interviewed to deeply understand the individual's experiences (Pulla & Carter, 2018). Yin (2011) points out that an interview creates a comfortable space between the interviewer and the interviewee that is not generated through a questionnaire with a list of questions imposed on interviewees. Furthermore, interviews follow a conversational mode, which leads to "a social relationship" (Yin 2011, p. 134). The semi-structured interview method was used when all three teachers, the School Principal, and the HOD were interviewed.

My role as an interviewer involved patience, open mindedness, the ability to listen, and to have an empathetic attitude (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2008). The semi-structured interviews were based on a few broad questions (Appendix 6B), but prompts and probes were used to enable expansion of certain ideas as the discussions unfolded with the respective teachers, HOD and School Principal. In addition, the order of the



questions varied and was dependent on the direction in which the conversation flowed with each interviewee (Wilkinson, 2004).

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009, p. 57) stated that the “[i]nterviewing [process] allows the researcher and participant to engage in a dialogue whereby initial questions are modified in the light of participants’ responses, and the investigator is able to enquire after any other interesting areas which arise”. Questions related to the teachers’ experiences of using multiple languages in the classroom, strategies utilised to cater for multilingual learners, the common challenges they encounter in multilingual classrooms, their understanding of translanguaging practises, and the enablers and constraints regarding this approach served as discussion points that guided the interview. Semi structured interviews were selected as it facilitated a flexible approach to draw information from the participants point of view. The interviews supported me to probe deeply into the experiences felt by the participants, and included their beliefs and attitudes (Creswell, 2008; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). This showed that the interviews were sufficiently flexible to meet the participants’ points of view. The interviews were recorded to identify gaps that could be explored in follow-up interviews if necessary (Dornyei, 2007).

A total of six interviews were conducted four interviews at School A and two interviews at School B. At School A, three interviews were held before the initial data-collection process began. These interviews included the School Principal and the Grade 5 and Grade 6 teachers. This was followed by an additional interview with Teacher 1 after the data collection. At School B, one interview was held before the initial data-collection process since one teacher (Teacher 3) facilitates English in both the Grade 5 and Grade 6 classes. This was followed by an additional interview with the HOD who sat in on some days when data were being collected.

English was the medium of communication to conduct the interviews. Individual face-to-face interviews were conducted for 20 to 30 minutes each. The interviewees were given a one-page biodemographic profile form to complete which included information such as their L1, years of teaching experience, subjects taught, and their age and gender (Appendix 6A) before the interview questions were posed.

### **3.4.4.2 Classroom observations**

Qualitative observations provide an in-depth understanding of the learners' interactions with one another and their behaviour (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Kothari, 2004; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Observations include everything that the researcher observes (Strydom, 2011). Observing is described by Yin (2011) as a very useful way of collecting authentic data because it allows one to be directly involved in seeing and perceiving the sequence of events with one's own senses. According to Yin (2011), significant categories include the participants' body language and nonverbal behaviour, their interactions with each other, the actions taking place being either human or mechanical; and being cognisant of the physical surroundings especially considering any visual and audio cues.

On this note, observation data may contribute in a unique way – observing the lesson plans directly by setting boundaries of not being involved but at the same time being able to obtain rich information that may not be obtained when asked to self-report (Morgan, Pullon & McKinlay, 2015). I spent time at both research sites to observe the lessons directly in both the control and the support implementation classes. The data of observation were recorded by handwritten field notes throughout the time that I spent in both grades in both schools (Huby, 2008; Nadeau, Jaimes, Rousseau, Papazian-Zohrabian, Germain, Broadhurst, Battaglini & Measham, 2012).

My role encompassed non-participant observation, viewing the research site as a mere outsider with no involvement (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). The process of collecting data through observations involved sitting in classroom lessons and taking detailed notes of the proceedings as they happened.

Learning and teaching in both Grade 5 and Grade 6 classes were observed to view the support strategy of translanguaging being used when teaching English L2 learners with diverse L1s. The observations were carried out as unobtrusively as possible so as not to disrupt regular classroom activity. I followed an observation protocol that included the following aspects: how the lessons were conducted in both the support implementation classes and the control classes; the teacher's role while teaching; the learners' reactions to the lessons being conducted; the participation in the classrooms; the learners' answers relating to the comprehension texts (worksheets); and the language/s in which the lessons took place.

It is important to point out that being a non-participant observer resulted in me not clearly understanding the situation that I was observing because I was not teaching the lesson (Nieuwenhuis, 2013b). Hence, I requested teachers to write down their observations of how they perceived the learners in both the control and the support implementation classrooms to reduce any unintentional bias on my side (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). An observation sheet (Appendix 15) was given to each teacher after each lesson to complete. This facilitated a broader view of translanguaging from the teacher's perspective. Since teachers are phenomenally the navigators to ensure that learning is happening, I felt it relevant to understand their observations and the comparisons and contrasts regarding the learners in both the control and the support implementation classes.

In addition to my presence at the research sites, I relied on audio and video recordings set up in the classroom to ensure that nothing was overlooked. My focus was on observing the translanguaging that was taking place during the lessons in order to experience the practicality of what exactly transpires in a translanguaging classroom when multiple languages are used in a single lesson plan. I observed the teacher-learner interaction, the manner in which both the learners and the teacher listened to the translated audio recordings, the manner in which the worksheets were completed after the lesson. After each day at the site, I spent time viewing each classroom video recordings and listening to the audio recordings. This permitted me to revisit the classrooms in a more relaxed space and to write additional field notes to ensure that the research site had been exhaustively interrogated.

#### **(a) Observation schedule**

Each day that I visited the research site, I observed four classes during the English first additional language period. These classes included both the control and the support implementation classes for Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners. Table 3.10 is an outline of the dates the lessons were observed, the name of the comprehension text selected, the duration of the specific lesson, and the number of learners who were present during the lesson. There were three lessons observed and recorded at both research sites (School A and School B), giving a total of six lessons. After each lesson, the learners completed a writing task which included a worksheet that contained questions relating to the comprehension text. On the fourth visit to each

school, the learners from the support implementation classes engaged in the storyboard, which is discussed in Section 3.4.4.6.

The support implementation classes differed from the control class, as explained in Table 3.7. The teaching methods, use of materials, and types of classroom interaction were observed in the support implementation lessons, which included two translated audio recordings of the comprehension text in isiZulu and Sepedi. Each translated audio recording was played immediately after the teacher read/or asked the learners to read the comprehension text in English. The learners had to listen to the translated audio recordings in both languages and have the hard copy of the comprehension texts in front of them. Thereafter, the learners from the support implementation classrooms at both schools took part in the storyboard activity, which is discussed in Section 3.4.4.6.

**Table 3.10: Observation schedule**

SITE A: SCHOOL A GRADE 5					
Date	Grade	Teacher	# of learners	Duration of lesson	Source of data used
<b>Lesson taught: Rubbish Dump, page 48</b>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom observations</li> <li>Audio and video recordings</li> <li>Learners worksheets</li> <li>Observation sheets from both the teachers</li> </ul>
10-05-2019	5C, 5I	Teacher 1	79	45–60 min	
<b>Lesson taught: Read about Games, page 58</b>					
15-05-2019	5C, 5I	Teacher 1	76	45–60 min	
<b>Lesson taught: The Story of Richard Simelane, page 88</b>					
24-07-2019	5C, 5I	Teacher 2	74	45–60 min	
<b>Storyboard design</b>					
26-07-2019	5I	Teacher 2	38	45–60 min	
SITE A: SCHOOL A GRADE 6					
Date	Grade	Teacher	# of learners	Duration of lesson	Sources of data used
<b>Lesson taught: Why Monkeys Have Flat Tummies, 54</b>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom observations</li> <li>Audio and video recordings</li> <li>Learners' worksheets</li> <li>Observation sheets from both teachers</li> </ul>
10-05-2019	6C, 6I	Teacher 1	79	45–60 min	
<b>Lesson taught: Paper, page 64</b>					
15-05-2019	6I	Teacher 1	78	45–60 min	
<b>Lesson taught: Giving Things Up, page 101</b>					
24-07-2019	6C, 6I	Teacher 2	80	45–60 min	

<b>Storyboard design</b>					
26-07-2019	6I	Teacher 2	32	45-60 min	
<b>SITE B : SCHOOL B - GRADE 5's</b>					
<b>Date</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b># of learners</b>	<b>Duration of each lesson</b>	<b>Sources of data used</b>
<b>Lesson taught: Rubbish Dump, page 48</b>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom observations</li> <li>• Audio and video recordings</li> <li>• Learners' worksheets</li> <li>• Observation sheets from the teacher</li> <li>• Storyboard</li> </ul>
22-05-2019	5C, 5I	Teacher 3	80	45-60 min	
<b>Lesson taught: Read about Games, page 58</b>					
23-05-2019	5C, 5I	Teacher 3	70	45-60 min	
<b>Lesson taught: The Story of Richard Simelane, page 88</b>					
25-07-2019	5C, 5I	Teacher 3	75	45-60 min	
<b>Storyboard design</b>					
29-07-2019	5I	Teacher 3	33	45-60 min	
<b>SITE B : SCHOOL B GRADE 6's</b>					
<b>Date</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b># of learners</b>	<b>Duration of each lesson</b>	<b>Sources of data used</b>
<b>Lesson taught: Why Monkeys Have Flat Tummies, page 54</b>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom observations</li> <li>• Audio and video recordings</li> <li>• Learners worksheets</li> <li>• Observation sheets from the teacher</li> <li>• Storyboard</li> </ul>
22-05-2019	6C, 6I	Teacher 3	83	45-60 min	
<b>Lesson taught: Paper, page 64</b>					
23-05-2019	6C, 6I	Teacher 3	79	45-60 min	
<b>Lesson taught: Giving Things Up, page 101</b>					
25-07-2019	6C, 6I	Teacher 3	80	45-60 min	
<b>Storyboard design</b>					
29-07-2019	6I	Teacher 3	67	45-60 min	

### 3.4.4.3 Audio/video recordings

Audio recordings were used to capture the verbal information that was discussed in the classrooms (Nieuwenhuis, 2013b). Audio recordings allow participants to express themselves freely without the researcher having to stop the process because of note-taking limitations (Yin, 2016). To add rigour to the study, I used video and audio recordings of 'real time' observations, recording methods that potentially allow for a more in-depth analysis than is possible using field notes alone (Latvala, Vuokila-Oikkonen & Janhonen, 2000).

It was important for me to use the audio and video recordings to capture the following:

- The lesson that took place in each class was audio and video recorded.
- The semi-structured interviews with the teachers, the HOD and the School Principal were audio recorded only.
- To write additional field notes, I reviewed the audio and video tapes a second time.
- Translated audio recordings of comprehension texts in both Sepedi and IsiZulu were pre-recorded and played in the support implementation classrooms.

To add more depth to the study and to adhere to triangulation, the audio and video recordings supplemented the observations and enabled me to analyse the classroom data systematically. Video recordings seemed acceptable; Heath, Hindmarsh and Luff (2010, p. 7) point out that “the permanence of video also allows data to be shared with colleagues and peers in different ways”. Sutton and Austin (2015) assert that audio/video recordings can serve as additional data. Upon viewing these tapes, field notes can be made to document overall impressions, the physical context, behaviours, and nonverbal cues that may have been missed during the initial data collection. The scholars further describe these notes as being handwritten and informal (Sutton & Austin, 2015).

I shared the recordings with my supervisor to acquire a fresh perspective in interpreting the data. This aligns closely with Heath et al. (2010) who state that video recordings enable scholars in the field to work on the materials together. Video recordings impart compliant ways of controlling, presenting, and distributing social scientific data (Heath et al., 2010).

#### **3.4.4.4 Field notes**

Field notes are produced by researchers during observation processes and during other data collection methods by documenting their findings, these often also include audio and video recordings. Andrew, Pedersen and McEvoy (2011, p.123) state that “field notes come in various types including scratch notes, detailed descriptions and analytic notes”. They explain that scratch notes and/or cryptic jottings or fly notes, are

brief statements generated by the researcher about various activities, interactions, behaviours or anything related to the research aims during the observation process (Andrew et al., 2011).

The dynamic of the learning and teaching environment was captured in the field notes. The observations of the learners' body gestures, facial expressions, moods, and overall learning experiences were all jotted down. Detailed field notes were taken of the interactions between the teacher and the learners in the classroom during the teaching/learning process and included my reflections of the lessons overall. I additionally relied on the field notes of my research assistance since she was also present during data collection.

Mercer (2010) state that field notes are suitable for studying a school context, a classroom or members of a community by writing down any comments, discussions and participants actions. Collecting field notes better informed my understanding of the strategy to integrate multiple languages into a single lesson plan (Merriam, 2009).

Field notes are the written notes of my observations of the research process (Yin, 2014) from initially meeting potential schools to finalising the study. I methodically recorded my observations at the two sites and everything that took place in both the control and the support implementation classes of both grades. This involved the entire lesson that was facilitated by the class teacher, the learners' participation during the lesson, the learners' reactions to the translated audio recordings (Sepedi and IsiZulu) that were played, and the behaviours that the learners displayed. Learners were identified in my notes by their number tags. These notes gave a detailed representation of my ideas and posed queries related to the research as I observed all the classes (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2017). Thereafter, the notes awarded me an opportunity for reflection.

I engaged in the process of field notes by acknowledging Luton's (2010) recommendation to focus my observations on the research context only and to record immediate observations and impressions, thus ensuring that generalisations were not made. I planned to use this method of data collection since my focus was on the learning and teaching environment of the classrooms in which the lessons took place and this may not have been captured by video recordings. The scope of field notes included the responses from the learners when interacting in the

classroom and the questions posed by the teacher during the lesson. The field notes also identified the learners who were immersed in the lessons and the learners who were not. This was achieved by writing down the tag numbers of the learners and their responses to use during the data analysis stage.

The field notes not only served as a detailed analysis of my time spent in the classrooms as the lessons unfolded, but they also included notes about the semi-structured interviews with all the teachers, the HOD, and the School Principal involved together with my thoughts on the document analysis of the collected learners' worksheets (Yin, 2014). Field notes enhance the rigour of the study while providing a space for the documentation of valuable contextual data (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2017).

Additionally, I observed the learners in their general contexts. For example, I observed the learners on break outside the classroom, their interactions with each other, and how they played or socialised outside the classroom. I also made a point of walking around the classroom as the learners engaged in the storyboard activity. This gave me insight into their experiences by observing their behaviour and engagement during the storyboard activity. My field notes were comprehensive so that persons outside the study would be able to follow the activities and relate to the decisions I made during the field work (Mulhall, 2003).

#### **3.4.4.5 Document analysis of learners' worksheets**

Documents are a valuable source of information in qualitative research (Creswell, 2008; Nieuwenhuis, 2010). Creswell (2008) agrees that the information from documents may provide valuable information to understanding the central phenomenon pertaining to any study. Documents also represent a good source of textual data for a qualitative study. For the purpose of this study, the learners' worksheets from the support implementation class were compared with the learners' worksheets from the control class after each lesson to determine if any differences existed in the quality of their work and their answering style.

My analysis of the worksheets that were completed by the learners (Grade 5 and Grade 6) followed the following steps:



*Step 1:* I scrutinised all the learners' answers and compared the number of questions answered correctly between the support implementation classes and the control classes to determine the level of understanding in both groups.

*Step 2:* I analysed all the written content of the worksheets and searched for difficulties relating to clarity of the learners' sentences, spelling skills, and grammar.

*Step 3:* Based on the aforementioned analysis, comparisons of answering styles were conducted to ascertain how the learners experienced the support sessions when L1 was included in their linguistic repertoire as opposed to the control class in which L1 was not included.

*Step 4:* To make meaning of the findings from both the control and the support implementation classrooms, a graphical representation regarding level of difficulty in literacy skills identified in the worksheets was compiled.

*Step 5:* I collectively displayed the results concerning the level of difficulty in literacy skills obtained from the worksheets of all the learners from both schools, followed by a graphical representation of the percentage of learners identified with difficulties in literacy skills.

The findings obtained from the analysis of the worksheets are discussed as results in Chapter 4.

#### **3.4.4.6 Storyboard**

According to Wikstrom (2013), the storyboard dates back to the 20th century when it served as a pre-visualisation tool for the film industry in a graphic storytelling and visual narrative form. Storyboarding is a technique used in the visual arts and has recently been adapted for use in indigenous research regarding community development (Simeon, Tracie, Api, Gane & Thomas, 2010) and in participatory research (Pittaway & Bartolomei, 2012).

I was drawn to this technique because I was interested in the processes of sense- and meaning-making, which were relevant to my research questions of establishing how multilingual learners experience learning through the medium of translanguaging. The storyboard technique seemed the most appropriate way to

draw meaning from the perspective of the participants with a view to gain an alternative understanding.

The storyboard technique is a creative method used in qualitative research. Within the South African context in which there are multiple languages amongst learners, the idea to use a storyboard was motivated by the aim of understanding the subjective experiences of the learners when exposed to their L1 during a lesson. As explained by Guillemin (2004), Mair and Kierans (2007), and MacGregor, Currie and Wetton (1998), the drawings/writings completed by the learners on the storyboard often include the meanings that participants attach to the drawing. Guillemin (2004) concurs with this and explains that drawings can be complemented by verbal research methods (Guillemin, 2004), which encourage mutual meaning-making and allow the drawer to give voice to what the drawing was intended to convey.

For my study, the predetermined questions in Figure 3.1 guided the learners in writing or drawing their feelings and/or comments on the storyboard after having the experience of listening to their L1s in the classroom. This collaboration is endorsed by MacGregor et al. (1998) who assert that drawings are vital because they are produced by a specific individual in a particular space and time, and are considered visual representations of the learner. Similarly, Burke and Prosser (2008) advocate that when children use drawings and other visual methods, they are in fact communicating and exposing their inner world and thoughts. Figure 3.2 illustrates the predetermined questions that each learner was required to answer on their own personal storyboards.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE ABOUT THE LESSON?	DID YOU ENJOY LISTENING TO THE STORY AGAIN IN SEPEDI ISIZULU? WHY?	HOW DID YOU FEEL LISTENING TO YOUR HOME LANGUAGE IN CLASS DURING A LESSON?
DID YOU UNDERSTAND THE STORY BETTER IN ENGLISH SEPEDI ISIZULU? EXPLAIN YOUR CHOICE.	WOULD YOU LIKE MORE LESSONS TO BE TRANSLATED INTO SEPEDI OR ISIZULU?	DRAW A PICTURE ABOUT HOW YOU FELT DURING THE LESSON.

**Figure 3.2: Predetermined questions on the storyboard**

### (a) Strengths of a storyboard

Table 3.11 indicates the strengths of the storyboard that I found applicable to my study (Wikstrom, 2013).

**Table 3.11: Strengths of a storyboard**

Motivation for using the storyboard technique for data collection (Wikstrom, 2013)	Applicable to present study
Creating several storyboards on the same case but from different contexts could generate a great deal of learning.	170 storyboards served as data.
Interpreting the different parts of the story and if and how they differ from one group to another could be beneficial.	Participants were from two different schools.
Using storyboarding in the field of briefing, framing and reframing is the core field in which this research contributes and adds new knowledge.	The learners' voices on the storyboards allowed the research questions relating to the field of translanguaging to be answered by gaining new knowledge of their experiences in relation to the topic of the study.
Storyboarding helps in shifting the mindset from divergent to convergent and influences the clustering of information in a concrete way.	Finding similar themes in the storyboard contributed to concrete and relevant information that was pertinent to my study.
The focus that comes with storyboarding could be a result of human centredness.	The life world of the learners was depicted in the storyboards and viewed as of paramount importance.
Storyboarding creates time for reflection.	Finding commonalities in the storyboards and digesting all the information collected.
The development of storyboarding in pre-brief activities seems to promote an emotional understanding of the situation of interest.	The learners' subjective experiences with regard to L1 were visually presented.
It is indicated that storyboarding supports an empathic approach towards the situation.	Learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds were given a platform to express themselves through an alternative medium of communication. The learners did not have to rely on language to express their feelings and emotions.

### (b) Rationale for using the storyboard

The choice of storyboards is supported by Andersson, Öberg and Eriksson (2011) who describe storyboards as narratives in which the learners play a crucial role since they are the roleplayers whose stories are being captured. I felt that the storyboard approach was appropriate since I wanted to explore how the learners experienced multiple languages and more specifically, how they experienced listening to comprehension texts in their L1 and if it enabled them to understand the content

better. My rationale was motivated by Chongo, Chase, Lavoie, Harder and Mignone (2018) who explored the life storyboard as a potentially rich interview tool for qualitative research. Additionally, Chase, Medina and Mignone (2012) contend that the storyboard can be a good method for eliciting lived experiences compared with the conventional interview. Medina, Chase, Roger, Loeppky and Mignone (2016) state that the storyboard can assist in 'breaking the ice' and in building trust and rapport between the researcher and the participant.

My rationale for including the storyboard for data collection was also influenced by Altunoğlu, Güler, Erdoğan, Menderis, Keskin and Beylik (2018) who claim that the creation of many storyboards representing the same case but from different learners can generate an opportunity for immense learning. These scholars maintain that it would be beneficial to interpret the different parts of the story, if and how they differ from one group to another, and what can be found in between (Altunoğlu et al., 2018). This view linked with my study, which sought answers regarding the implementation of translanguaging as a support strategy in classrooms to support learning and teaching.

Chongo et al. (2018) confirm that the storyboard can facilitate a reflective and in-depth narration of the lived experience of the participant. More specifically, Chase et al. (2012) describe this method as an alternative mode of engagement to a face-to-face conversation with a participant who may have cultural barriers. These views aligned strongly with my study and validated my choice to use storyboards.

### **(c) Qualitative analysis of the storyboard**

The analysis of storyboards is through an interpretative lens to perceive, describe, analyse, and interpret a specific situation or context, preserving its complexity and communicating the perspectives of the actual participants (Borko, Whitcomb & Byrnes, 2008). Borko et al. (2008) assert that interpretivism allows the participants' voices to be heard in their natural settings where meaning can be given to what is observed. In my study, I reviewed the written and pictorial storyboards.

Mertens (2009) advocates that drawings give easier voice to marginalised groups or groups who struggle to express themselves in English. I analysed the storyboards by adhering to ethical rigour and allegiance to positive ethics (Bush, 2010), which included (1) collecting, and (2) interpreting drawings while promoting beneficence,

respect, and justice. As described by Weber (2008), pictures (in this case storyboards) can be used to capture inexpressible data that need to be shown, not merely stated. Weber (2008, p. 44) further supports drawings by saying that “artistic images can help us access those elusive hard-to-put-into-words aspects of knowledge that might otherwise remain hidden or ignored”.

I also considered Fairclough (1995) who explains that an effective way to activate analysis is through developing questions that facilitate thinking and in turn, answering the questions in the form of expression, which can include drawings or writings. I analysed the storyboards of all the learners by revisiting the questions, which progressed my line of thinking towards relevant themes of my study.

The learners from the support implementation classes from both schools (School A and School B) and from both grades (Grade 5 and Grade 6) each created a storyboard, which included pictures, sentences, and drawings that demonstrated how they felt during the lessons that were presented using multiple languages.

The storyboard technique encouraged learners to use colour, text, and drawings as a platform to express their overall experience when multiple languages were used in a parallel manner to enhance the learning and teaching practices in their multilingual classrooms. The decision to use the storyboard was to elicit authentic and raw information in its original form from the learners in a non-threatening and fun way where language barriers were not assessed.

Cross and Warwick-Booth (2016) claim that this innovative method can serve as a platform where learners can non-verbally share their perceptions and experiences of the support implementation through the medium of a storyboard. Creative methods are increasingly used in qualitative research as a means of generating richer data and of promoting more meaningful participation.

#### **3.4.5 DATA DOCUMENTATION**

According to Merriam (2009), qualitative data analysis is an inductive process. Rabie (2004) explains that the process of qualitative data analysis brings meaning to a situation rather than searching for the truth. Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2010) assert that inductive thematic analysis presents the researcher with multiple realities more so than any other data analysis strategy. An inductive thematic analysis was

used to interpret the data for this study. The raw data gathered from the data-collection process were carefully prepared using transcription (Hayes, 2011). The transcripts were coded to define the significant themes and subthemes. The significant data obtained from the different modalities were analysed with inclusion and exclusion criteria. The data were thereafter categorised under themes. The themes were interpreted, and the results were documented.

#### **3.4.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

The findings of this study were established through an approach based on thematic analysis (Dainte & Lightfoot, 2004) aimed at extracting conceptual significance from the data by examining and observing emerging patterns (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). The analysis of data followed an inductive process, which is an ongoing and interactive process (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). Thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analysing, and reporting themes that have been identified from the data.

Creswell (2013, p. 193) advises that researchers should “develop a list of significant statements” as a foundation for understanding the phenomenon. These statements can come from interviews and other relevant research sources that are related to the experience that is being studied. Creswell (2013, p. 193) suggests that a researcher should “treat each statement as having equal worth, and works to develop a list of non-repetitive non-overlapping statements”. According to Creswell (2013, p. 193), after the development of these statements, researchers should “[t]ake the significant statements and then group them into larger units of information, called ‘meaning units’ or themes”. I acknowledged this suggestion and was open for new themes to emerge as the data unfolded by viewing all the data available (Jeong & Othman, 2016; Jones, 2010), subsequently creating subthemes (Padilla-Diaz, 2015).

Thematic analysis was helpful because it guided me in organising the data, writing a detailed report, and interpreting various aspects of the research (Flick, 2014). Through thematic analysis, I was able to identify emerging themes from the data captured (Alhojailan, 2012). I relied on Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six phases of thematic analysis to gain a more in-depth understanding of the data and the emerging themes. Preparing and transcribing the data allowed me to become familiar with the data. Coding the data enabled me to search for themes, which were defined and named appropriately. Lastly, I began to write a report to guide the data analysis

process. Table 3.12 shows the phases of the thematic analysis and how they were used in my study.

**Table 3.12: Phases of data analysis**

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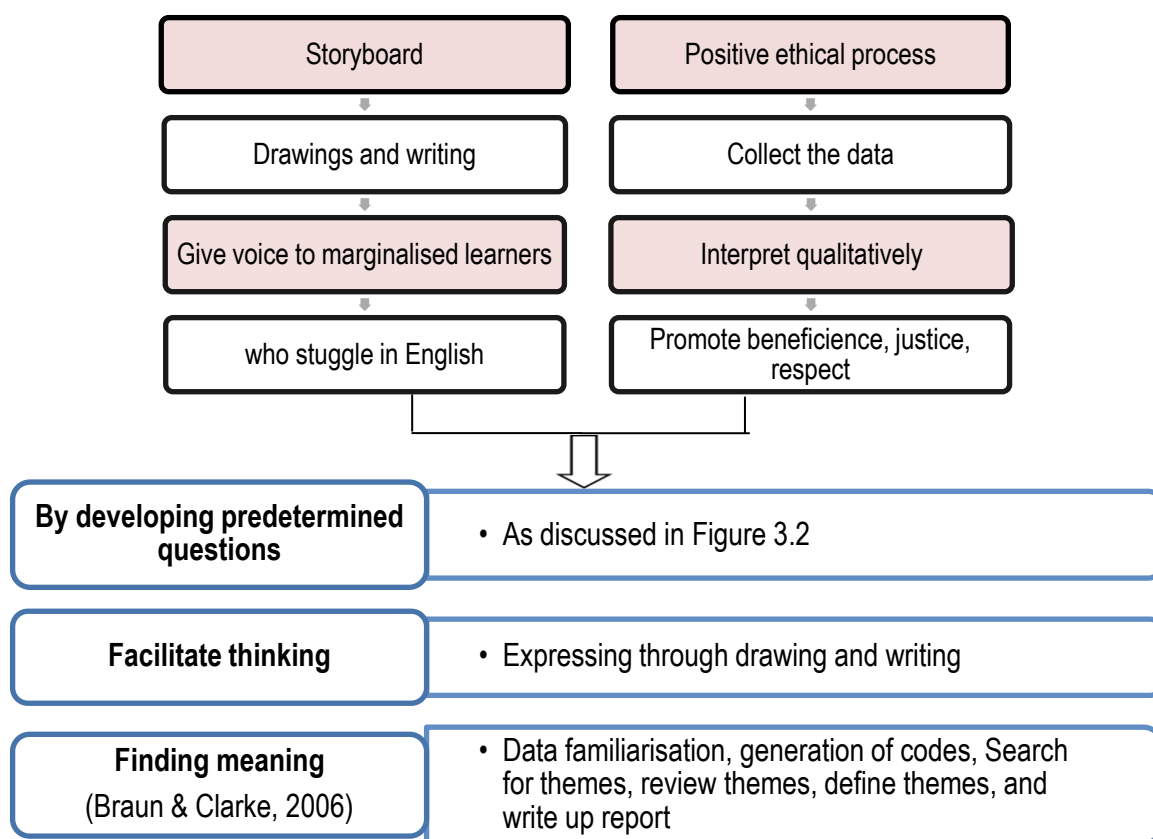
<b>Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data</b>
I familiarised myself with the data and important meanings and pattern notes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I began by studying both the case sites in their natural setting (the schools), describing the events as they occurred by writing down my observations as accurately as possible. Thereafter, I watched the video recordings and listened to the audio recordings that were made during the classes and the interviews with the class teachers and the School Principal from School A to make sure that nothing was missed. I carefully scrutinised the observation sheets received from all the teachers involved after every site visit and looked through the learners' worksheets, comparing and contrasting my findings. I also viewed the storyboards, which were visual representations of how the learners experienced the support strategy, and this led to identifying the themes that began to emerge as sources of data.
<b>Phase 2: Coding</b>
I began processing all the information by systematically working through the entire data set and identified aspects for potential themes. I manually coded the data into as many potential themes as possible through colour coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The cases were broad since I worked with many learners and their documents such as their worksheets and storyboards. In addition, the field notes and transcripts from the semi-structured interviews had to be considered in order to code the data with all the available content.
<b>Phase 3: Searching for themes</b>
I sorted codes into prospective themes or patterns. Furthermore, I drew on certain categories of information by coding the information into main themes followed by subthemes. The coded data were collated into the identified themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
<b>Phase 4: Review of themes</b>
I reflected on the themes and reviewed all the extracts from each theme to establish if there was a coherent pattern (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thereafter, I checked the validity of each theme in relation to the whole data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
<b>Phase 5: Definition and naming of themes</b>
I defined and refined the themes through identifying the essence of the specific theme.
<b>Phase 6: Writing the report</b>
I chose examples that captured the essence of the point (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and presented the argument in relation to writing a final report (King, 2004).

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### **3.4.6.1 Steps taken to analyse the storyboard qualitatively**

The learners expressed themselves by drawing and writing on the storyboard and by answering the questions that appear in Figure 3.3. The aim of the storyboard was to bring forth the learners' voices by giving them a creative platform to express their feelings and emotions regarding translanguaging strategies used in the classroom. I was guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework and applied it in a systematic manner to describe and explain the process of analysis within the context of learning

and teaching research. I was also influenced by the guidelines for thematic analysis indicated by Maguire and Delahunt (2017) in identifying themes that may be interesting and important to the research study. These guidelines also supported me in using the themes to find meaning and to answer my research questions while making sense of the interpretations. This is valuable because I analysed 170 storyboards. Figure 3.3 describes the data analysis process of the storyboard.



**Figure 3.3: Data analysis of the storyboard**

Similarly, I relied on Yin’s (2011) five qualities that should be the goal of all qualitative interpretations. Table 3.13 outlines the qualities identified by Yin (2011). This is followed by the applicability of storyboards in relation to my study.

**Table 3.13: Qualities for qualitative interpretations**

No.	Qualities of a qualitative interpretation (Yin, 2011)	Applicable to the storyboard analysis
1.	The interpretation should be complete. Readers should be able to see the beginning, middle, and end of how the interpretations were made.	The predetermined questions guided this study, linking similar answers to the same questions into relevant themes.
2.	The interpretations should be fair in that other researchers should reach the same interpretation if given the same data.	The storyboards were analysed together with my supervisor to determine if we were in agreement with the interpretations.



3.	The interpretations should be accurate and representative of the raw data.	The storyboards are authentic because they are the raw data that are visually represented.
4.	From the context of current literature, good studies will add value to our understanding of the topic.	I relied on an extensive literature review (as discussed in Chapter 2) to add value to my research study when interpreting the storyboards.
5.	Data methods and subsequent interpretations should be credible and gain respect from colleagues.	The use of storyboards was to understand the experiences of learners and to perceive their emotional journey during the support strategy lessons.

### 3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As outlined by Sinkovics, Penz and Ghauri (2008), various measures must be considered to ensure that the research is carried out ethically. Such measures were considered in this study. The protection of human participants in a qualitative research study has always been a sacred obligation of the researcher. My study involved human participants and, therefore, I had to adhere to a code of ethics (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; Strydom, 2005). I consider these guidelines to be a background to the ethical stipulations of the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee at the University of Pretoria.

Consent forms for the school principal (Appendix 1), parents (Appendix 2), teachers (Appendix 3), and learners (Appendix 4), all had to sign if they were willing to participate in the study. I explained the intent and the unfolding of the study to the participants because it is ethical for participants to be fully informed of the objectives of a study (Koshy, 2010). To ensure that the ethical criteria regarding flexibility and freedom of participation were observed (Hendricks, 2009; Silverman, 2014), I informed the participants that they had the freedom to choose whether or not they wanted to take part and that they could withdraw at any point of the study without conditions or repercussions (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Participants were given the option to join the study or not, thus ensuring that my inclusion of them as participants was ethical (Kumar, 2014).

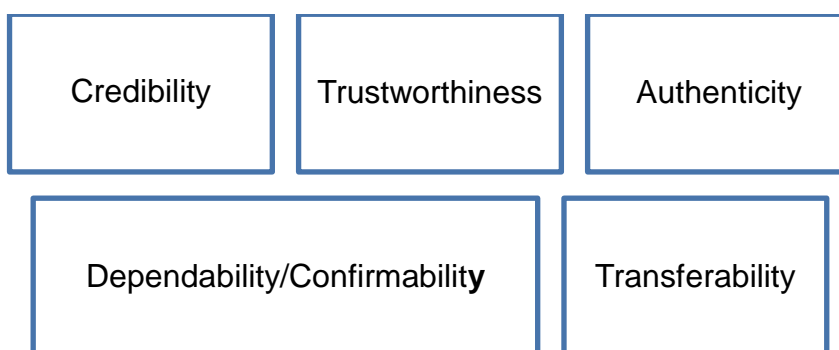
Throughout the study, I adhered to the ethical guidelines of autonomy (Magwa & Magwa, 2015; Punch, 2009), by obtaining voluntary written consent, informing the participants of the relevant details of the study and honouring confidentiality (Wiles, Crow, Heath & Charles, 2008). I refrained from practising malfeasance by not causing harm and not creating deception during the study (Fouka & Mantzorou, 2011; Struwig & Stead, 2001). I navigated the recorded data (written and audio

recorded) in a confidential manner and respected anonymity by using pseudonyms when reporting the results.

Debriefing of participants is usually conducted after the study when participants are given the opportunity to work through their feelings about what occurred or arose during the research process (Strydom, 2011). I conducted a debriefing session immediately after the data-collection process since the research was not a longitudinal study. I conducted a member-checking session with the teachers involved from both schools in order to clarify, verify, and expand on what had been discussed during the initial data collection.

### **3.6 METHODOLOGICAL NORMS TO ENSURE QUALITY CRITERIA**

The quality of the data collected in this study was enhanced by the use of different sources of data. Figure 3.4 highlights the quality criteria that this study employed, followed by a comprehensive explanation in the subsequent sections.



**Figure 3.4: Quality criteria**

#### **3.6.1 CREDIBILITY**

Multiple sources of data contributed to a greater understanding in my study. I relied on triangulation of data-collection methods to immerse myself fully in understanding translanguaging as a practice in multilingual classrooms (Bogdan & Biklen, 2010).

I adhered to using triangulation of data-collection methods and the participation of learners and teachers from two different schools, School A and School B. The multiple sources of data led to a fuller understanding of the phenomenon under study. Audio and video recordings enhanced the trustworthiness of the data generated through classroom observations and the interviews (audio recorded only) (Creswell, 2012; Kumar, 2014; Yin, 2014).

According to Tracy (2010), multiple types of data and data-collection methods together with strong theoretical frameworks are important to enhance the credibility of research studies that aim to understand phenomena. I thoroughly engaged with an extensive literature review to inform my understanding of translanguaging. In addition, validity was maintained to increase credibility (Hendricks, 2009) by the following:

- Debriefing the teachers of the strategy;
- placing two video recorders and two audio recorders on either side of the classroom;
- recording all the interviews and thereafter transcribing them; and
- making observations during each site visit.

I designed a methodical research methodology and research design with relevant research questions and followed up with a trail of evidence that added depth and insight into the themes that emerged (discussed in Chapter 4) from the integrated findings (Harding, 2013). According to Patton (1990), given the purpose of evaluation, the sample should be large enough to accommodate credibility but small enough to allow for adequate depth and detail for each case in the study. To avoid bias, the sample should represent all groups. My study included the School Principal, the HOD, the teachers, and the learners from two different schools, ensuring the representativeness of the sample and that the data were manageable (Babbie, 2013). The participants were selected based on being in Grade 5 or Grade 6.

### **3.6.2 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

Trustworthiness denotes quality, probability, dependability and being true as important attributes of a good qualitative research reflected through a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of reality (Tracy, 2010). To ensure trustworthiness, repeated visits to the sites enabled me to generate adequate and reliable data (Cypress, 2017; Yin, 2014). I used different data-collection methods such as observing the teachers and the learners, interviewing the teachers, the HOD, and the School Principal. During the data-collection process, video and audio recordings were used to capture the events as they unfolded, thus maintaining trustworthiness. I made certain to read and re-read the transcripts and view all concrete data visually,

discussing this with my supervisor to ensure nothing had been missed. The verification exercise was important to avoid misrepresentations (Kumar, 2014).

### **3.6.3 AUTHENTICITY**

The quality of the research data and the ability to verify and authenticate the data and findings of a research study are very important aspects in a qualitative research study. This demands not only reasonable conclusions and findings but also requires stronger commitments to data accuracy and transferability and verifiable research findings (Alase, 2017).

Authenticity refers to the neutrality of the research and the acquisition of a balanced view of all perspectives, values, beliefs, insights, experiences, cultures, and languages of participants reflected in the analysis (Andres, 2012). I was obliged to make sure that my role was neutral when reflecting on the Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners and when utilising all data sources to deepen insights into the research study. I included quotations as demonstrated through sufficient authentic citations, appendices, and tables to establish arguments for meaning, resulting in a carefully constructed and objective report (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

Furthermore, continuous data analysis and the use of multiple sources enabled contradictions to be clarified and conflicting evidence to be emphasised, thus ensuring a high level of trustworthiness (Endacott, 2008). The data and interpretations of my study were related to specific sourced documents produced by the research participants and are supported by my transparent audit trail in the attempt to limit researcher bias (Creswell, 2009; Endacott, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mertens, 2010).

### **3.6.4 DEPENDABILITY/CONFIRMABILITY**

Dependability refers to whether the findings of a study would be similar if the study were replicated (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Dependability involves factors of instability of design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and can be achieved by a critical audit or review of the data, findings, interpretations, and recommendations. Overlaps between the portrayals of the viewpoints co-create meaning (Chambers, 2012). I kept personal field notes of my data analysis in order to enhance the transparency of the process (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). To ensure dependability, member checking was done as a

way of ensuring that the data gathered were generated by the participants and not by the researcher (Carlson, 2010).

Confirmability indicates that data, interpretation and findings are strictly related to the data sources and emerge solely from data items, limiting researcher bias (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). My qualitative study is based on a sample of Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners who are all L2 speakers of English and who share the same L1, making the data neutral. I ensured confirmability by means of triangulation, which was used as a strategy to assure rigour.

### **3.6.5 TRANSFERABILITY**

Transferability refers to the extent to which descriptive understanding of issues can be transferred to other settings or groups in a clear description of culture, context, selection, and characteristics of participants, data collection and analysis (Bengtsson, 2016; Graneheim & Lundman, 2003). The findings are transferable to or representative of other broader communities after applying the strategy of thick descriptions.

Rich descriptions of the perceptions of research participants were provided in order to determine the applicability of the findings of the study to other or broader contexts (Mertens, 2010). This study aimed to reflect the reality of the research participants effectively and honestly. I made use of secondary data sources and reflected in my field notes to assess my personal responses and potential biases during the process of analysis (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2008; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

### **3.7 MY ROLE AS RESEARCHER**

My study adopted interpretivism and a qualitative research approach that was 'participant-orientated' (Goldkuhl, 2012). My role commanded me to be in a state of constant self-reflection. The nature of my study was an in-depth qualitative enquiry guided by exploration of the participant's world, understanding viewpoints from the perspective of the participant and subsequently moving away from statistics and hard-core evidence (Pulla & Carter, 2018).

I entered the field as an 'outsider' (Creswell, 2012) and aligned my position according to Marshall and Rossman (2010, p. 2) who explain that "qualitative research typically

is enacted in naturalistic settings, draws on multiple methods that respect the humanity of the participants in the study". I wanted to understand the learners' experiences of the phenomenon under study. When collecting qualitative data on the research site, I immersed myself in the participants' world (Bitsch, 2005).

My supervisor provided me with scholarly guidance to ensure I adhered to protocol, and I also had de-briefing sessions with my research assistant (Anney, 2014) to avoid bias or misjudgement. The research was such that it had to be understood from the perspective of the participants and thus, the study remained qualitative throughout (Harrison, 2014).

My role obliged me to provide a meticulous depiction of the research setting, the cases, the workings, and the emerging design of the study. This provided the readers with a step by step process through which the research could be reconstructed and explained (Nyaga, 2013). Morality and sincerity in reporting my findings and interpretation seemed necessary and drew me to the reflection statement of Alase (2016), which highlighted that it is important to note and record all the processes even before the data collection begins. In so doing, Alase (2016) reflects that the audience can see for themselves the journey that the research study has undergone and the hurdles that each study has overcome to reach the final destinations of truthfulness, trustworthiness, and credibility.

Smith et al. (2009, p. 42) advise that qualitative research methodology is a methodology that is "time-consuming, labour-intensive, and both imaginatively and emotionally demanding". Therefore, I strictly pursued the guidelines of Graneheim and Lundman (2003) regarding the data coding process. I began data coding by transcribing all interviews and thereafter read the interview transcripts several times to understand the research participants better and to comprehend what they were verbalising and how the research study had influenced them.

### **3.8 SUMMARY**

I provided a rich and detailed description of the context of the study for the purpose of determining its applicability to other contexts (Greene, 2010). Other details included a clear description of the data generation methods, the data generation process, the data analysis procedures, the duration of the study, and descriptions of the research sites. I hoped that these details would assist other researchers who

wished to replicate the study. The main purpose of this study was to determine how translanguaging pedagogies support learners in multilingual classrooms in their understanding and learning in school settings. The outcomes and conclusions of this study may differ if such a study were conducted at another time or with a different group of learners.

Chapter 3 outlined the methodology used to carry out my research. The interpretive philosophy guided me in understanding translanguaging pedagogies in multilingual classrooms. A multiple-case study was a feasible choice since I explored two schools with similar features. Qualitative data-collection methods such as semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, field notes, learners' worksheets and storyboards were used in my study. The data generated from these methods extended into a vigorous data analysis process that revealed the main themes and subthemes relevant to my study. I employed specific qualitative and ethical criteria to ensure the trustworthiness of the study findings. The results and the findings of my study that emerged from the processes and procedures described in this chapter are reported in Chapter 4.

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#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the results of the study are presented in two sections (Section 1 and Section 2). Section 1 presents themes 1, 2, and 3, which are the results derived from the semi-structured interviews, the classroom observations, the field notes, and the learners' worksheets. Section 2 presents themes 4, 5, and 6, which were derived from the analysis of the storyboards completed by the learners of the translanguaging classrooms. Table 4.1 outlines the sources of data used for both sections.

**Table 4.1: Outline of the sources of data**

<b>Sources of data for Section 1</b>
<p><b>Interviews</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• verbatim transcripts from the semi-structured interviews, which included               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Interviews with three teachers, one school principal, and one HOD</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Observations</b> (supported by my field notes and the audio and video recordings)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• classroom observations followed by               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ field notes of researcher</li> <li>○ field notes of research assistant</li> <li>○ observation sheets obtained from all the teachers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Document analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners' worksheets completed after each lesson</li> </ul>
<b>Sources of data for Section 2</b>
<p><b>Storyboards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of storyboards obtained from learners</li> </ul>

The chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings in relation to the relevant literature reviewed. Throughout, I aim to highlight similarities and explain any potential contradictions in the interpretations.

I present my results by considering the multiple sources of data used in the study to gain rich and meaningful information. The sources of data generated are cited as evidence. The abbreviations indicated in the table of meaning were used as



reference codes for the excerpts, quotations, and comments elicited from the participants and their samples of work (learners, teachers, School Principal, HOD, researcher, research assistant, storyboards, learners' worksheets). The table of meaning (Table 4.4) offers a detailed reference code drawn from the data sources. Table 4.2 describes the two sites (School A and School B) and documents the dates on which the data were collected at both sites.

**Table 4.2: Site visits and sources of data**

SITE A: SCHOOL A				SITE B: SCHOOL B			
Dates of site visits to the school				Dates of site visits to the school			
Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	Visit 4	Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	Visit 4
10-05-2019	15-05-2019	24-07-2019	26-07-2019	22-05-2019	23-05-2019	25-07-2019	29-07-2019
Translanguaging support implementation sessions with multiple languages being played via translated audio recordings in the classroom over a period of three lessons.		Storyboard activity		Translanguaging support implementation sessions with multiple languages being played via translated audio recordings in the classroom over a period of three lessons.		Storyboard activity	

## 4.2 RESULTS FROM THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS

### 4.2.1 OUTLINE OF THEMES IN SECTION 1 AND SECTION 2

Outlines of the themes that emerged are presented in Table 4.3, Section 1 is followed by the subthemes.

**Table 4.3: Outline of themes**

SECTION 1		
Theme 1	Subthemes	
<b>CONCEPTUALISING L1 AS AN ASSET IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS</b>	1.1	L1 facilitates understanding in multilingual learners.
	1.2	The enablers of translanguaging support strategies are identified.
	1.3	Positive experiences identified by the learners and teachers.
Theme 2	Subthemes	
<b>TRANSLANGUAGING SCAFFOLDS THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR LEARNERS</b>	2.1	Learners supported in the process of learning.
	2.2	Learners achieve greater understanding through use of multiple languages.

Theme 3	Subthemes	
IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS	3.1	Constraints of using multiple languages identified.
	3.2	External challenges affect the learning and teaching environment.
	3.3	The teaching experience with translanguaging elucidated.
<b>SECTION 2</b>		
<b>Theme 4</b> THE NEED FOR MORE TRANSLANGUAGING LESSONS IDENTIFIED		
<b>Theme 5</b> GREATER UNDERSTANDING ASSOCIATED WITH TRANSLANGUAGING		
<b>Theme 6</b> POSITIVE EMOTIONAL FEELINGS ELICITED WHEN LISTENING TO L1		

#### 4.2.2 TABLE OF MEANING

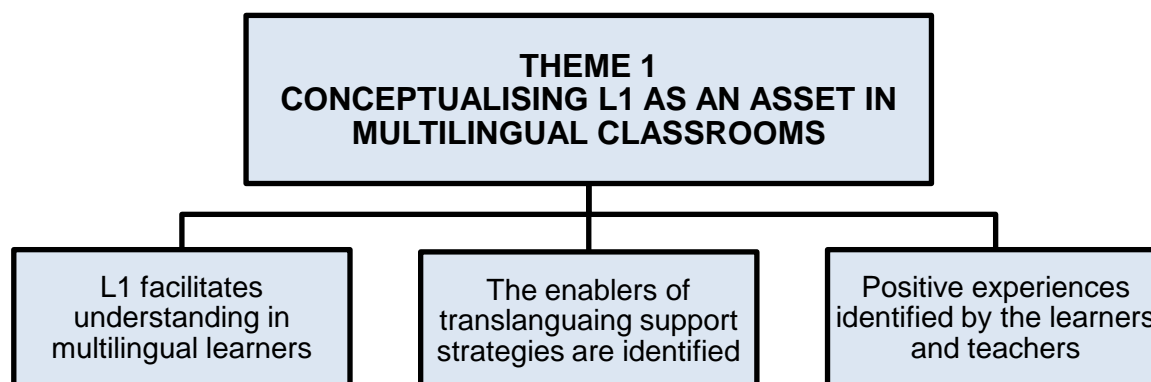
Table 4.4 illustrates the different abbreviations used when quoting from the different modalities of the collected data.

**Table 4.4: Table of meaning**

Abbreviation	Source of information	Appendix (Available on the flash disk)
IT 1.1	First interview with Teacher 1	A1
IT1	Second interview with Teacher 1	A2
IT2	Interview with Teacher 2	A3
IT3	Interview with Teacher 3	A4
IP	Interview with School Principal	A5
IHD	Interview with Head of Department (HOD)	A6
FN	Field notes: Researcher	B1
RFN	Field field notes: Researcher's reflection	B2
FNRA	Field notes: Research Assistant	B3
OSH1	Observation sheets from Teacher 1	C1
OSH2	Observation sheets from Teacher 2	C2
OSH3	Observation sheets from Teacher 3	C3
Worksheet	Learners worksheets from both schools	D1
Storyboard	Storyboards from both schools	D2
The teachers at both schools referred to the support implementation strategy as an intervention, expressing that it was a simpler term to use. For the purpose of this study, the word intervention used in the direct quotes will be left unchanged.		

### 4.3 RESULTS FROM SECTION 1: INTRODUCING THEME 1

Figure 4.1 graphically demonstrates Theme 1 and its subthemes.



**Figure 4.1: Graphical representation of Theme 1**

#### 4.3.1 THEME 1: CONCEPTUALISING L1 AS AN ASSET

Theme 1 describes the benefits of L1 and how L1 is identified as a resource when used in a classroom where there are multilingual learners whose L1 is not English. Table 4.5a represents the subthemes and the inclusion and exclusion criteria within Theme 1. The discussion of the findings regarding Theme 1 and the subthemes are integrated into the sections that follow, which directly quote from the sources of data that emerged from the data-collection sites.

**Table 4.5a: Representation of subthemes, and inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 1**

Theme 1: - CONCEPTUALISING L1 AS AN ASSET IN A MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS		
Subtheme	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria (Across both subthemes)
1.1 L1 facilitates understanding in multilingual learners	a) Reference made to a better understanding when L1 is present. b) Reference made to how learners experienced L1 in the classrooms during observations of the lessons by the researcher and the teachers involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference made to gender roles and which group performs better.</li> <li>• Comments made by the class teacher and/or HOD regarding unrelated personal views of the learners during the sessions.</li> </ul>
1.2 Enablers of translanguaging support strategies are identified	a) Reference made to translanguaging as a feasible option. b) Suggestions and/or recommendations from the participants involved in the study.	

1.3 Positive experiences identified by the learners and teachers	a) Reference made to a positive impact when L1 is present. b) Reference to words describing positive experiences from the learners and teachers perspective.	
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Table 4.5b provides an outline of the assessment of data that identified the relevant subthemes and the data sources from which the data regarding the said observations were obtained:

**Table 4.5b: Summary of data sources used for thematic identification**

Assessment of data	Transcripts of interviews with teachers/HOD	Transcripts of interview with Principal	Observation sheets from teachers	Researcher (field notes)	Research Assistant (field notes)	Learners' worksheets
Reading with understanding	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Clearer understanding with L1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Identification of enjoyment	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Positive association with L1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Resources to support translanguaging	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Reduced failure rate	✓	✓	✓			
Translated audio recordings are an enabler	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

#### 4.3.1.1 Subtheme 1.1: First language facilitates understanding in multilingual learners

The data obtained from the various sources of data modalities collectively identify that the learners from both grades reacted positively when L1 was used in the classrooms to inform learning. This is a central theme because it establishes the value of using translanguaging inside classrooms where multilingual learners exist. This theme sets the foundation for this section of my study. The data analysis displayed a common interest, important connections, noteworthy differences, and implications in and across the data. All the class teachers, the School Principal and the HOD appeared to have a predominantly positive view towards L1 since they all

agreed that the learners enjoyed the translanguaging experience and that L1 is an important contributor to understanding. The responses from the teachers, the HOD, the School Principal, and the researcher's observations suggest that L1 is an asset in learning and teaching environments where multilingualism exists.

Furthermore, the teachers' observation sheets suggest that the translanguaging support strategy lessons recognised the value of multiple languages and that such strategies lead to learning settings where all learners from diverse classroom settings are included. The results from the data identified L1 as a medium where multilingual learners are given the opportunity to develop their thinking and learning in all their languages with a view to scaffolding the learners to catch up and become competent across all school subjects (Axelsson, 2013).

The teachers were asked to comment on how the learners experienced the sessions and if there was evidence that the learners attained a better understanding when L1 was introduced in the classrooms.

Teacher 1 from School A expressed that the learners

- ❖ *“Enjoyed it.”* (OSH1, Box2)

In an interview after the support implementation, Teacher 1 additionally expressed,

- ❖ *“[T]hey enjoyed it more; you could see them looking through the text and finding the English words and the Zulu words. They were trying to code switch them themselves.”* (IT1, lines 31–33)
- ❖ *“They were okay; they were fine. They were understanding it, and they were engaging more in the text.”* (IT1, lines 50–51)
- ❖ *“It would be very useful because like, like, their vocabulary is very limited at school, and when they go home, they, they speaking their home language, so I think they do need their home language to guide them.”* (IT1, lines 66–69)

A similar response was received from Teacher 3 from School B who positively associated with L1 by quoting the following:

- ❖ *“They liked it. Most of them emphasises that they should never forget their home language. They managed to answer all the questions they were given.”* (OSH3, BOX 2).

This was followed by a written response from the observation sheet,

- ❖ *“Multilingualism definitely increases understanding. Most failures are due to language barriers. That’s why those who learn in their home language, e.g., the English, Germans and Chinese do better than Africans who have to learn in foreign languages.”* (OSH3, Box 31, p. 8)

Similar observations with regard to bringing L1 into the classroom were made by Teacher 2:

- ❖ *“Good. The learners were able to answer the questions and seemed to have a better understanding of the text.”* (OSH2, Box 5, p. 2)

In an interview session, the HOD from School B commented on how L1 allowed the learners to understand the English text better:

- ❖ *“But I saw learners understand because when that person was speaking in Zulu, they were having their story in front of them, neh? They were able to turn around the pages.”* (IHD, lines 67–69)
- ❖ *“Same time all of them turned the page; it means they were following.”* (IHD, lines 71–72)
- ❖ *“Ya, they were following. You could see they knew he was talking about this line, you know [HOD mimicking the learners following the text]. That is why they were able to turn the page because they were understanding. I was impressed.”* (IHD, lines 74–78)

The research assistant observed the following and commented in her field notes:

- ❖ *“[U]sed ruler to read each sentence as the Zulu recording being read. Learners opened to the next page as Zulu is being read.”* (RA, lines 42–44, p. 3)

During my observations in the Grade 5 and Grade 6 classrooms at both schools, I made a similar inference, which added value to L1 being recognised as an important asset for learning and teaching. My verbatim observation is as follows:

- ❖ *As the different languages were playing in the background, the learners in Grade 5 were responsive; they were listening to the lesson orally and following the text visually. I was amazed by this because most learners did this simultaneously. The teacher also commented on the manner in which learners were paying attention, and this was reflected by how they turned the page to follow the story. This was repeatedly*

*done in both languages, IsiZulu and Sepedi, and this observation was made across both grades.* (RFN, lines 3–8, p. 1)

- ❖ *During the Grade 6 intervention lesson, the learners were quiet. As the recordings played and again, the learners seemed to follow the story because they again turned the pages simultaneously whilst listening to the story. Again, I was very pleased with this because I experienced a translanguaging moment where learning and understanding and the learners comprehending was achieved and visually recognised. I was very pleased because I felt that the intervention of L1 was making a difference. The learners were engaged in the sessions; they were attentive; they were focused; they were paying attention.* (RFN, lines 38–45, pp. 1-2 )

It would seem that all the participants involved in this study acknowledged the effectiveness of L1 being played through the translated audio recordings as a scaffolding medium to support learners. The learners' actions of following the text demonstrated that translanguaging was indeed taking place and their reactions displayed understanding the text on a visual and an auditory level.

The teachers were asked to clarify the differences observed between the control class and the support implementation class in a question posed in the observation sheet. Teacher 1 from School A identified that the learners demonstrated a positive association with L1, writing down the following observation on the learners' behaviour:

- ❖ *“The control class did not look very excited, but the intervention class showed more interest once the lesson was done in Sepedi and Zulu.”* (OSH1, Box 6, p. 2)
- ❖ *“Intervention class showed more interest in the text when they were listening to it in different languages, i.e. Sepedi and Zulu.”* (OSH1, Box 22, p. 6)

Teacher 2 from School A similarly responded:

- ❖ *“The intervention class was more involved and more learners answered questions, where in the controlled class, fewer answered questions. However, they were able to answer the questions on the page.”* (OSH2, Box 22, p. 6)
- ❖ *“The learners in the intervention class understood better, and more learners raised their hands to answer.”* (OSH2, Box 6, p. 2)

Teacher 3 from School B expressed the following:

- ❖ *“Big difference. Home language facilitated better understanding.”* (OSH3, Box 6, p. 2)
- ❖ *“The learners enjoyed listening to the audio in their home language.”* (OSH3, Box 10, p. 3)

The School Principal from School A had a similar view in regard to bringing translanguaging into classrooms:

- ❖ *“[B]ecause your thought processes [are] basically in your home language, so if you speaking Sepedi to Sepedi you will understand easier.”* (IP, lines 77–78, p. 4)

The positive responses towards L1 display that the learners were encouraged to use their assets (their L1) as a personal resource and regard their L1 as an asset to be proud of in a multilingual class, subsequently creating a platform for clearer and deeper understanding of learning content.

#### **(a) Discussion of Subtheme 1.1**

Based on the results obtained from Subtheme 1.1, it was concluded that L1 is a resource to be used in a translanguaging support implementation classroom that facilitates understanding in multilingual learners. First language as an asset is echoed in the works of Angu et al., (2020); Kioko et al. (2008) and Stoop (2017), and translanguaging is recognised as a scaffold to facilitate learning (Rabab’ah & Al-Yasin, 2017).

It is favourably acknowledged that L1 facilitates understanding in multilingual learners. This is mirrored in the work of Hillman et al. (2019) who affirm that scaffolding L1 into a multilingual classroom can include explaining a text, translating a vocabulary word, relating an idea to a common L1 saying or checking comprehension. This technique was adopted in my study to enable translanguaging to take place. The results display that the learners were reading with understanding and that the learners experienced a deeper understanding when L1 was placed alongside English.

These results are supported by Mokolo (2014) who acknowledges the similarities between translanguaging and code switching as the natural manner in which multilingual speakers shuttle between languages. Mokolo (2014) continues that both are an approach that seeks to assist multilingual speakers in making meaning,



shaping experiences, and gaining deeper understandings and knowledge of the languages in use. This concurs with the results from my study in which the teachers' conclusive observations stated that the translanguaging support strategy was effective and met the objectives for which it was chosen. The strategy elicited deeper learning that resulted in greater understanding amongst learners, thus sharing the view of Makalela (2015a) of tapping into a learner's full linguistic system.

Furthermore, Magwa (2010) and Phiri et al. (2013) accept that when learning is entwined with both L1 and English in a classroom setting, a sound base for learning the latter language is created, acknowledging the valuable relationship between academic learning and L1. This was outlined as a major feature in the findings directly quoted in the section above. The following section discusses the second subtheme of the broader theme conceptualising L1 as an asset in a translanguaging classroom by identifying the enablers of translanguaging.

#### **4.3.1.2 Subtheme 1.2: The enablers of translanguaging support strategies are identified**

The multiple visits to both schools identified the translanguaging strategies as a supporting enabler to maintain a positive learning atmosphere for multilingual learners in a classroom. The widely held responses from the teachers who facilitated these sessions seemed to appreciate the use of multilingual resources in their classrooms such as the translated audio recordings of L1s to support the learners' understanding. The following comments demonstrate the teachers' perceptions of translanguaging, with L1 being identified as an enabler to support learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms.

Teacher 3 expressed the following:

- ❖ *“It is good to find out other ways of improving performance in schools. This might be one of them!”* (OSH3, Box 23, p. 6)

Teacher 1 identified L1 as an enabler for better understanding and proposed the relevance of L1 as subsequently generating confident learners:

- ❖ *“I think multilingualism helps our weakest of learners who cannot speak, read, or write English fluently. It gives them confidence.”* (OSH1, Box 24, p. 6)

Teacher 1 also suggested that the curriculum should cater for the different L1s spoken by the learners by including a CD in the prescribed textbooks to enable learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms:

- ❖ *“[S]o I think it would be very nice if the CD can have the Sepedi or the Zulu and other languages in there so when they doing the listening and speaking assessment, it plays in all the languages. That would work better.”* (IT1, lines 124–127)

In addition, Teacher 1 maintained that L1 should be introduced alongside English to serve as a resource for supporting learners with the difficult English words, which they can reference in their L1:

- ❖ *“[Y]es, the textbook comes with resources with only, only English. So I think each textbook and learning area should have not only for English, [but] the Maths, the Afrikaans, and everything.”* (IT1, lines 129–131)
- ❖ *“[S]o, if the whole lesson is translated or done for them in another language, I think it would really help them.”* (IT1.1, lines 124–125, p. 4)
- ❖ *“They’re reading with understanding. Like if you maybe have difficult words that they don’t understand what it means, if you tell it to them in their language and maybe give them an example in their language, they’d automatically know the, the word in English.”* (IT1.1, lines 128–130, p. 4)

The School Principal from School A expressed the following during the interview:

- ❖ *“[A]lthough after listening to you about what you saying that you going to pre-record and all the things like that, is an excellent idea and I hope it works. It’s just that if you looking at 42 children in a classroom ...”* (IP, lines 132–134, p. 5)

He further explained his understanding of translanguaging:

- ❖ *“[T]hen obviously, it’s going to make an impact in classroom, and the impact will be such that your results will improve and the learners will benefit because you know, if you look at certain of our language classes especially. Let’s look at language, specifically English in specific, how many children come from language at home? Very few. How many children actually speak English at home when they go home?”* (IP, lines 157–161, p. 6)

The School Principal also indicated some of the enablers already undertaken to support multilingualism:

- ❖ *“[T]hey’ve come up to our school, uuuhh, did some workshops with our teachers on how to do languages – first language – by using the word wall and getting the teachers to understand the languages and put up words in Sepedi and in English next to each other. But you must also remember at our school, we are fortunate in rolling out Sepedi as a second additional language.”* (IP, lines 181–185, p. 7)

The School Principal explained that translanguaging, if used according to the current research purpose, would highlight an important concern in most South African schools, the high failure rate. He clarified his concern as follows:

- ❖ *“If your learners at the bottom are equipped and their foundation is built strongly, then obviously when they go up to Grade 12, you not going to have such a high rate of failures.”* (IP, lines 207–209, p. 7)
- ❖ *“[A]nd how many actually go to Grade 12? You wonder what happens to the 5 000 other learners. Where have they gone to?”* (IP, lines 214–215, p. 7)
- ❖ *“Yes, what are they doing? Have they been employed? Are they the rogues of the country? Are they just loitering? So enablers in terms would be your matriculants’ results to see how they actually reach matric.”* (IP, lines 217–219, p. 7)

Teacher 1 ascribed to a very similar view:

- ❖ *“It was helpful to our weak learners who speak Sepedi and Zulu as this was a code switching strategy.”* (OSH1, Box 23, p. 6)

A way to motivate the learners to use L1 as an enabler from the perspective of Teacher 1 was expressed during an interview session:

- ❖ *“[B]ut they [they’re] children. They don’t know the importance of the language; they don’t know that they need to know English because English is a dominant language. But I think if they know that it is, I think that they can go far with the language [and] obviously, they would be more interested in learning. But I think an interesting way to motivate them is to bring in their home language. To say that your home language is going to help you learn another great language; they would want to do it.”* (IT1, lines 280–287)

The use of translanguaging as an enabler in multilingual classrooms was prominent in the findings relating to the teachers, the HOD, and the School Principal. All these participants indicated that if L1 (an enabler) is used in translanguaging classrooms, it would help to resolve the high failure rates amongst learners, which are conspicuous in the majority of South African government schools. Furthermore, the analysis showed that L1 facilitated development of the weaker language and employing the translanguaging method promoted a profound understanding of the lesson.

As a researcher, I observed L1 as an enabler in the following manner:

- ❖ *“My reaction was very positive towards the translanguaging intervention, and I was pleasantly surprised that L1 benefitted the learners positively. The learners, after every intervention session, always responded that listening to their L1 was good, and they enjoyed the lessons better when they had the opportunity to listen to the story in their L1.”* (RFN, lines 72–76, p. 2)

**(a) Discussion of Subtheme 1.2**

The results from Subtheme 1.2 are consistent with those of Wei (2011) who endorses translanguaging and its benefits.

TRANSLANGUAGING BENEFITS (Wei, 2011)	APPLICABLE TO THE FINDINGS FROM DATA ANALYSIS OF PRESENT STUDY
Empowering both the learner and the teacher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing multiple languages as a resource to the learners.</li> <li>• Providing a strategy for the teachers to use when teaching multilingual learners.</li> </ul>
Altering the landscape of monolingual teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bringing multiple languages into a classroom.</li> <li>• Accepting L1 as a language to be used in classrooms.</li> </ul>
Centralising the process of learning and teaching by creating a social space to incorporate making meaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L1 serves as a scaffold to promote deeper meaning and understanding. L1 acts as a mediator to enhance learning.</li> </ul>
Enhancing experiences and developing confident identities, values, and practices amongst learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners experienced understanding, which enhanced their confidence to learn and understand.</li> <li>• Rivera and Mazak (2017) and Makalela (2015a) share that integrating L1 can provide a greater sense of ownership within the learning process and foster a stronger sense of identity.</li> </ul>

The above is clearly replicated in the findings of the present study, where the benefits of translanguaging have been met during the discourse of the translanguaging lessons taking place at both research sites.

The identified enablers correlate with the educational advantages of translanguaging presented by Baker (2011), which include the following:

- enabling a fuller understanding of the learning content, followed by an in depth understanding;
- assisting the development of the L2 (in this case English), making it possible for learners to include L1 in their school system (bringing L1 into the classrooms via audio recordings and translated texts); and
- integrating the learning experience into the current lesson by including a strategy that supports all multilingual learners, including weaker learners who need additional support (playing the translated audio recordings in the classroom).

The enablers were reflected in the direct observations and interviews (discussed in Section 4.3.1.2) and are drawn from the perspectives of all participants involved in the translanguaging support strategies. The following section discusses Subtheme 1.3, which highlights the positive experiences identified by both the learners and the teachers.

#### **4.3.1.3 Subtheme 1.3: Positive experiences identified by the learners and teachers**

Based on the different data modalities, almost all the participants involved were in agreement regarding the positive experiences and the feelings of enjoyment during the translanguaging support strategies. Below are some of the viewpoints that were shared.

Teacher 1 commented on the support implementation lessons:

- ❖ *“A good experience, enjoyable”* (OSH1, Box 13, p. 4)
- ❖ *“Learners enjoy listening to texts in different languages.”* (OSH1, Box 16, p. 4)

Teacher 2 acknowledged the following:

- ❖ *“Learners were excited and followed when story was done in Sepedi and Zulu.”* (OSH2, Box 18, p. 5)

The observations of Teacher 3 corroborate those of the other teachers:

- ❖ *“They really loved it and most were stressing that they liked learning in their home language.”* (OSH3, Box 18, p. 5)

The reflection field notes of the researcher indicated a comparable finding:

- ❖ *“As I observed the learners in the classroom, I realised that the learners seem to enjoy it when their L1 is recognised in the classroom; many learners who share the same L1 look at each other and smile.”* (FN, lines 133–135, p. 3)

When asked how multilingualism affected the learners, Teacher 3 responded:

- ❖ *“The learners really liked it.”* (OSH3, Box 24, p. 6)
- ❖ *“All the learners enjoyed the lesson.”* (OSH3, Box 27, p. 7)

The positive experiences associated with L1 to scaffold the learning and teaching in the classroom were closely compared with the learners overall performance. Noteworthy comments were made by the teachers during their observations and interviews:

- ❖ *“All the learners enjoyed it. They were citing that it is good to listen to a comprehension passage in their home language.”* (OSH3, Box 35, p. 9)
- ❖ *“Learners showed enthusiasm and paid attention throughout, the objectives were met.”* (OSH3, Box 41, p. 9)
- ❖ *“They loved it. They were very attentive.”* (OSH3, Box 42, p. 9)
- ❖ *“They enjoyed it. All the learners showed a lot of interest using their mother language in English.”* (OSH3, Box 43, p. 9)
- ❖ *“They did enjoy the languages and umm, you could see they were enjoying the lesson itself, and they were more motivated to answer because they knew what they were going to say.”* (IT1, lines 76–80)

There is consensus amongst the direct quotations listed above regarding the feelings of enjoyment, pleasure, and delight, which supports the positive nature associated with translanguaging being used in classrooms. Similar observations were made in

my field notes as I reflected on my site visits at both schools and contemplated all the support implementation and control classrooms in which I was physically present:

- ❖ *During the intervention session with the Grade 5 class, the teacher asked the learners if they enjoyed the story better in L1, and most of them said 'yes'. I noticed how learners were initially surprised when the recording started to play and expressed shock and disbelief and then commented "Eish, Sepedi. I like it. This is fun."* (FN, lines 9–12, p. 1)

I also observed that there was a common thread of repetitive behaviour amongst the learners; they all seemed to follow the translated audio recordings in their L1 while reading the text in front of them. This action identified understanding, enjoyment, participation, and being involved in a lesson as positive contributors towards the translanguaging approach. The following is a direct quote from my field notes:

- ❖ *"Again, I was very pleased with this because I experienced a translanguaging moment where learning and understanding and the learners comprehending was achieved and visually recognised. I was very pleased because I felt that the intervention of L1 was making a difference. The learners were engaged in the sessions; they were attentive; they were focused; they were paying attention."* (FN, line 40-45, p.2).

In addition,

- ❖ *"[W]hen they heard the recording in their L1, they listened attentively, and when it was time to turn the page to follow the story, almost all the learners did so simultaneously. This action followed through throughout the sessions, and it was phenomenal to witness the translanguaging process in action and in movement. My reaction was very positive towards the translanguaging intervention, and I was pleasantly surprised that L1 benefitted the learners positively. The learners, after every intervention session, always responded that listening to their L1 was good, and they enjoyed the lessons better when they had the opportunity to listen to the story in their L1."* (FN, lines 68–76, p. 2)

### **(a) Discussion of Subtheme 1.3**

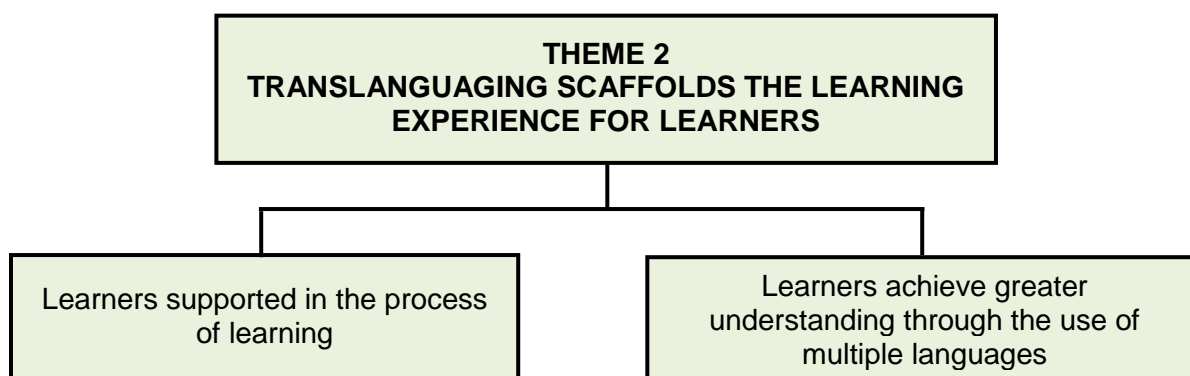
The method of incorporating translanguaging into the classrooms through multiple languages (translated audio recordings and hard copies of texts) was deemed valuable by both the learners and the teachers. This is supported by Rabab'ah and

Al-Yasin (2017) and Smith et al., (2020), these scholars validate the use of L1 as an effective method in translanguaging pedagogy because it scaffolds learning. The data analysis of the current study confirmed that learners experienced enjoyment during the support implementation class, reflecting positive emotions. The teachers' views seemed consistent with the views of the learners, revealing the positive impact of L1 in the classroom. This finding correlates with the findings of Ngcobo et al. (2016) who assert that the intended purpose of translanguaging is to place L1 alongside English to intensify beneficial values for multilingual learners.

A significant finding that emanated from this theme was the manner in which the teachers supported and employed the translanguaging strategy in their classrooms by accepting L1 into their teaching content. Their observations closely aligned with Hillman et al. (2019, p. 43) who allege that teachers often use students' L1s to build relationships, cultivate a shared identity, and create a positive classroom climate. This finding was well documented in this theme, which accepted mutually positive experiences from both the teachers and the learners and a reciprocal allegiance to translanguaging support implementation in multilingual classrooms.

#### 4.4 RESULTS FROM SECTION 1: INTRODUCING THEME 2

Figure 4.2 graphically demonstrates Theme 2 and its subthemes.



**Figure 4.2: Graphical representation of Theme 2**

##### 4.4.1 THEME 2: TRANSLANGUAGING SCAFFOLDS THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR LEARNERS

Theme 2 highlights translanguaging as a medium through which learners can optimally gain concrete learning experiences. The two subthemes identified reflect on



how translanguaging supports the process of learning and subsequently supports the process of achieving greater understanding through the use of multiple languages. Table 4.6a visually represents the subthemes together with the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Theme 2 and the subthemes are discussed in the following sections, directly quoting from the sources of data that emerged from the data-collection sites.

**Table 4.6a: Representation of subthemes and inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 2**

THEME 2: TRANSLANGUAGING SCAFFOLDS THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR LEARNERS		
Subtheme	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria (Across both subthemes)
2.1 Learners supported in the process of learning	a) Reference made to the strategies used to support multilingual learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reference made to gender roles and which group performs better</li> <li>Personal comments made by the class teacher and/or HOD not related to the learners during the sessions</li> <li>Comments and references relating to discipline and behavioural issues</li> </ul>
	b) Reference made to learning/ observations of activities that work well	
	c) Reference made to the multiple languages that support learning.	
2.2 Learners achieve greater understanding through the use of multiple languages	a) Reference made to understanding taking place b) Reference made to the L1 being associated with understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comments and instances of instruction made in reference to learners that were not linked to the translanguaging support implementation lessons</li> </ul>

Table 4.6b provides an outline of the different assessments of data and the data sources where data regarding the said observations were identified.

**Table 4.6b: Summary of data sources used for thematic identification**

Assessment of data	Transcripts of interview with teachers/HOD	Transcripts of interview with Principal	Observation sheets from teachers	Researcher (field notes)	Research Assistant (field notes)	Learners' worksheets
Listening in multiple languages creates better understanding	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Repetition supports learning	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Learning experience is scaffolded with translanguaging	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Assessment of data	Transcripts of interview with teachers/HOD	Transcripts of interview with Principal	Observation sheets from teachers	Researcher (field notes)	Research Assistant (field notes)	Learners' worksheets
Code switching/peer support is a familiar concept in multilingual classrooms	✓	✓	✓			

The data for Theme 2 linked to specific recurring comments. Initially, reference was made to listening to content in multiple languages, which subsequently initiated better understanding. Secondly, reference was made to repetition of a lesson in multiple languages supports learning, which in turn, scaffolded the learning experience for the learners involved in the study. Lastly, reference was made to addressing peer support and code switching as two important contributions used in a multilingual classroom. I drew on these findings interchangeably with a view to assess all the data that contributed to the emergence of Theme 2 and its underlying subthemes.

#### 4.4.1.1 Subtheme 2.1: Learners supported in the process of learning

Subtheme 2.1 draws on the idea that translanguaging supports the learners in the process of learning. Reference was made to how this support strategy can guide multilingual learners on a path where learning can be effective and valuable.

Teacher 1 expressed the following:

- ❖ *“I think it would be good and useful. We would also have a higher pass rate, and I think learners are more confident when they know that their home language will be used in the classroom. And even though English is the dominant language of the school and around of the world, it will help them a lot. It will make them more confident speakers, [and] it will help them write better in all aspects of English.”* (SIT1, lines 69–75)

The HOD commented on translanguaging as follows:

- ❖ *“What can I say? Learners improve a lot when we do multilanguages and performance improves a lot. I was very impressed. I couldn’t believe it; everybody turned the page and then I had to check if it was written in Zulu but it was in English and – Aaah, I said it is English.”* (IHD, lines 261–266, p. 6)

The motivation from the above quotes demonstrates that L1 can scaffold the learning experience of learning an L2, in this case, English.

Listening to multiple languages creates better understanding when the teachers were asked how the learners experienced learning in multilingual contexts:

- ❖ *“I think they would respond well to it. They would be motivated to learn, and I think it would make it more fun because they would actually understand what’s happening in the classroom.”* (IT1.1, lines 248–250, p. 7)

Teacher 1 was then asked, ‘What do you think they will achieve through understanding?’ The following response was received:

- ❖ *“Better results”* (IT1.1, line 252, p. 7)

The HOD from School B shared the same view:

- ❖ *“I think it, I think it – you know, I think it, you won’t experience failure. You know, too much failure. You know, learners who fail too much, like especially like Grade 4 because Grade 4 is still adjusting. They come from foundation phase, so there’s a lot of work. Some of them can’t cope, neh? But I think if we keep on code switching, we can cover the learners for that time. I think code switching is good for all, maybe all grades.”* (HD, lines 90–97)

It is clear from the analysis of the transcripts that translanguaging occurred and was used effectively as a pedagogical tool in these lessons. The translanguaging that occurred during the support implementation lessons was productive and the learners’ participation was greater when compared with the lessons that took place in the control classrooms.

Teacher 1 expressed that listening to the translated audio recordings in the learners’ L1 while reading the same text in English created an opportunity for the learners to navigate their own learning. The following is quoted from the reflection field notes of the researcher:

- ❖ *“The learners appeared to be enthusiastic and seemed to be very excited. The teacher begins the lesson in English and explains to the learners that first she will read the story to them in English and then, the audio recording of the same language will be*

*played in Sepedi and then IsiZulu. The teacher asked if the learners are excited, and this was followed by 'Yes' in a collective voice."* (RFL, lines 114–118 , p. 3)

Teacher 1 commented,

- ❖ *"[T]hey understood. They, they enjoyed it more. You could see them looking through the text and finding the English words and the Zulu words; they were trying to code switch them themselves."* (IT1, lines 26–28)

The observation field notes from the researcher's perspective concurred with the comments of Teacher 1 on how learning was in motion:

- ❖ *"During the Grade 6 intervention lesson, the learners were quiet as the recordings played. And again, the learners seemed to follow the story because they again turned the pages simultaneously while listening to the story. Again, I was very pleased with this because I experienced a translanguaging moment where learning and understanding and the learners comprehending was achieved and visually recognised. I was very pleased because I felt that the intervention of L1 was making a difference. The learners were engaged in the sessions; they were attentive; they were focused; they were paying attention."* (RFN, lines 38–45, pp.1-2)

Observations made by the research assistant in her field notes conclusively agreed with the above statements:

- ❖ *"Almost all of the learners concentrate on the text while the reader reads. All the learners were following the reader and turned to the next page."* (FNRA, lines 14–16, p. 1)

Observations from my field notes reflected on how the support implementation classes were more engaged in the sessions, and the repetition of the audio recordings in the learners' specific L1s added value to their learning experiences. I stated the following:

- ❖ *"Control class experienced less involvement and interaction during the teaching; it felt mechanical and like rote learning, On the contrary, the intervention classes had more engagement from [sic] the teacher, and the learners were participating more. They heard the lesson in three languages and when Zulu played, the learners were less engaged then/when Sepedi played. The teacher explained that the learners were*

*mostly Sepedi speaking and that there were Zulu learners in the classroom, but they were a handful.”* (RFN, lines 14–20, p.7 )

The rationale behind translanguaging and the acknowledgement of L1 as a medium to support understanding cannot be overemphasised. Translanguaging is a strategy that allows us to move away from the monolingual way of teaching to a multilingual approach where L1 is adopted as an asset in the development of transforming the learning and teaching landscape of multilingual classrooms. This inevitably leads to learners experiencing enjoyment and engaging in the learning process. This was identified from the observation sheets from Teacher 2 and is referenced below:

- ❖ *“Lesson went well. Learners were engaged and answered correctly.”* (OSH2, Box 1, p. 1)
- ❖ *“All learners enjoyed the lesson.”* (OSH2, Box 3, p. 1)

Similar observations were made by the researcher during the support strategy lesson in which the following was witnessed and confirmed that a process of learning was taking place:

- ❖ *“During the audio recording, most learners turned the page to follow the story. I am witnessing translanguaging where three languages are being used in a classroom to promote learning. I am happy with the audio recording because the teachers at this school are both English speaking and have voiced that they do not understand the L1 of the learners but encourage the learners to be guided by their peers who share the same L1.”* (RFN, lines 163–174, pp. 4–5)

In addition, the researcher found that the translated audio recordings and the hard copies of the translated text also scaffolded the learning:

- ❖ *“The audio tapes acted as a tool to support learning in multilingual classrooms, and this is observed because the learners are engaged in the lesson; they are paying attention; they are happy and excited; and they are most importantly, following the story by listening and visually seeing the passage in front of them. This demonstrates that there is learning taking place as well as understanding. I witnessed that when the teacher asked if the learners enjoyed the story better in Sepedi, most learners expressed by affirming a ‘Yes’”* (RFN, lines 163–174, pp. 4–5)

The question posed to the teachers was how they experienced teaching in multilingual languages. The responses are indicated as follows:

Teacher 2 stated,

- ❖ *“Good, the learners were able to answer the questions and seemed to have a better understanding of the text”* (OSH2, Box 5, p. 2)
- ❖ *“Lesson went well. Learners understood concepts and were able to answer questions”* (OSH2, Box 9, p. 3)

Teacher 3 concurred:

- ❖ *“It is a good experience. It’s like learners are given a second chance.”* (OSH3, Box 21, p. 6)
- ❖ *“They really enjoyed it. They showed understanding as [they] could follow the story read in their home language while they were looking at the text in English. They would be at the same page with the reader of the home language.”* (OSH3, Box 34, p. 9)

Teacher 1 agreed with the statements of Teacher 3:

- ❖ *“[T]hey did turn the pages.”* (IT1, line 41)
- ❖ *“They were okay; they were fine. They were understanding it, and they were engaging more in the text.”* (IT1, lines 50–51)

To the question of whether multiple languages are useful, Teacher 1 responded:

- ❖ *“Yes, it would, it would work. It would be very useful to the learners, and like I said, it would bring out. They would be different because they[are] more confident.”* (IT1, line 101)

The HOD responded to same question by asserting,

- ❖ *“[W]hat can I say? learners improve a lot when we do multilanguages, and performance improves a lot. I was very impressed. I couldn’t believe it; everybody turned the page and then I had to check if it was written in Zulu, but it was in English and – Aah, I said it is English.”* (IHD, lines 261–266)

The researcher noted her agreement with the above comments in her observations during the lessons:

- ❖ *“The multiple languages running parallel together in one lesson plan demonstrated that the learners are able to understand their L1 as well as link it to English and follow the story in two languages alongside each other. The learners are attentive and not disruptive. There is absolute silence in the class as the Sepedi audio recording is being played.”* (RFN, lines 227–231, p. 6)

#### **4.4.1.2 Subtheme 2.2: Learners achieve greater understanding through the use of multiple languages**

The rationale behind this subtheme linked closely to the learners being given the opportunity to learn in their L1 and to use multiple languages to make meaning of ideas that may be initially difficult to comprehend. Since L1 is seen as a resource and based on the experiences of the learners and how the teachers perceived the lessons, it can be assumed that there is an urgent need to integrate L1 continuously to support the development of the learners’ L2.

I begin this subtheme by drawing on the view of Teacher 1:

- ❖ *“Intervention class showed more interest in the text when they were listening to it in different languages, in Sepedi and Zulu.”* (OSH1, Box 22, p. 6)
- ❖ *“It was helpful to our weak learners who speak Sepedi and Zulu as this was a code switching strategy.”* (OSH1, Box 23, p. 6)

Teacher 3 concurred:

- ❖ *“There was better understanding for learners who listened in both languages.”* (OSH3, Box 22, p. 6)

Additionally, Teacher 3 commented on the observed differences between the control and support implementation class:

- ❖ *“There is a huge difference. Teachers are always discouraged from code-switching but listening to the text in both languages aided understanding.”* (OSH3, Box, 30, p. 8)

The researchers’ field notes concurred with Teacher 1 in that the support implementation class demonstrated more engagement:

- ❖ *“The intervention lessons are longer and there is more engagement when compared to the control class where there is brief teaching time followed by questions to be answered.”* (RFN, lines 179–181, p. 5)

The support strategy lessons that included the translated audio recordings were positively viewed as increasing participation in the learners and demonstrating more engagement and motivation. The lessons were considered a successful transition in adopting translanguaging as a feasible option to employ in schools that embrace multilingualism.

In regard to strategies currently employed at the two schools, code switching and peer support were highlighted as important in multilingual classrooms. In an interview, Teacher 1 explained that these strategies are used frequently in their school as resources to support multilingual learners:

- ❖ *“Because sometimes the learner doesn’t understand me, I ask them what language do they speak. And not knowing their language, I ask another child if they know that language. So, if it’s a child that speaks Northern Sotho, I ask a child who is really good in English and fluent to translate it; translate the questions for her and help the child with the keywords.”* (IT1.1, lines 60-63, p. 2)

Similarly, the HOD identified that peer support is used in their school as a strategy to support learners from similar backgrounds and L1s:

- ❖ *“[S]o learners from Zimbabwe, especially Zimbabwe, we will hear them speak in their Shona language but you, they help each other, especially last year’s Grade 7 class. They will speak in their Shona and we will say, ‘Hey, you are making noise’, and they say they are explaining each other in their home language* (IHD, lines 117–122, p. 3)

The Principal from School A agreed and included the school’s dynamics with regard to peer support:

- ❖ *“[O]therwise, they asking a learner who sits next to the pupil to code switch and help the pupil understand what is happening. But because there are more and more children who are speaking the black languages, it becomes difficult.”* (IP, line 85–87, p. 4)
- ❖ *“[W]ell when somebody is teaching in English, then you trying to change that in your mind into Sepedi. It will take you more time of course to comprehend and to work out*



*what exactly is required. So as much as to say the motto of our school is English, there is at times code switching, but that is also if the teacher knows the language.”*

(IP, lines 80–83, p. 4)

When asked how multilingualism influenced the learners, teachers responded as follows:

- ❖ *“Some learners were confused by the high level of language but a lot understood it and it helped them answer oral questions.”* (OSH2, Box 8, p. 2)
- ❖ *“Learners understood the story and easily answered the questions.”* (OSH2, Box 24, p. 6)
- ❖ *“It is good and gives those learners who find English difficult an opportunity to understand better.”* (OSH3, Box 16, p. 4)
- ❖ *“The ones who listened to both languages understood better. Parts of the text they didn’t understand in English were grasped in home language.”* (OSH3, Box 38, p. 10)
- ❖ *“Generally, people think in their mother tongue, so given the opportunity to listen to it will definitely have positive results.”* (OSH3, Box 47, p. 12)
- ❖ *“Yes, they, the control class, did the activity, but they needed more time and they were asking me questions. And then, the intervention class, they [sic] were a few that asked me a few questions but they got done quicker because I think they understood it better.”* (IT1, lines 46–50).

Based on these responses, it is assumed that the teachers agree and share the same conviction that L1 is viewed through a positive lens and indeed scaffolds the learning experience in a positive way. First language supported the learners in making meaning. Learners became their own mediators for learning by effectively using L1 as a resource to enhance better understanding.

It is worthwhile and significantly important to consider whether the learners understood the lessons better when L1 was included in the learning and teaching practice. The learner’s point of view is central to this theme because it is essential for learners to elicit their true feelings with regard to the translanguaging approach.

The need to implement translanguaging pedagogy seemed to be consistent across all the participants involved in the study. This is encouraged by Teacher 1 who explained the need for translanguaging to be implemented in Grade 4:

- ❖ *"I think you should start from Grade 4 but the recordings should be on a really low level because we have like majority of the learners fail in Grade 1, in Grade 3, Grade 7. So I think Grade 4 because Grade 4 is like a whole new dimension for them; it's a whole new phase. They very lost, and they mostly fail English, so I think that would really help."* (IT1, lines 185–190)

The observation from my field notes below concur with the above comments. An urgent need for a support implementation such as translanguaging is identified and motivates for it from the perspectives of what emerged at both research sites:

- ❖ *"These learners struggle to articulate and explain and seem to rote learn by quoting directly from the text and not adding their own voice. This was identified in both schools where the learners relied greatly on their workbooks to provide an answer when recall questions were posed. I observed that when more higher-order thinking questions were posed, the answers were not directly available in the text, and the learners struggled to answer the questions and at times, even got the answers wrong."* (RFN, lines 195–214, p. 5)
- ❖ *"There is a lack of understanding identified when I observe as a non-participant, and I am more drawn to the idea that an intervention is necessary and that L1, if it is utilized as the language of communication, then why can it not be used to support learning. I found that the learners were happy that L1 was included in the lesson plan."* (RFN, lines 195–214, p. 5)
- ❖ *"Change has to be accepted and adopted and more time needs to be spent on these research sites to understand and implement translanguaging strategies. However, based on my initial findings, there is a need for translanguaging because the learners are not fluent in English and for that reason, they need to scaffold their learning with something they know and understand. L1 was identified in both schools as the language of communication. The learners were comfortable and were able to express themselves."* (RFN, lines 195–214, p. 5)

#### 4.4.1.3 Discussion of Theme 2

There is agreement in research that the literacy skills possessed in one language can advance the literacy skills in another (Hillman et al., 2019; Makalela, 2015a, 2015b; Stoop, 2017). Using resources in a language in which the learner has a better repertoire increases the learners' literacy performance. Similarly, by allowing learners to read in both languages implies that access is provided to resources in both languages.

The results obtained from a reasonable sample were scrutinised exhaustively and suggest that there is a difference when L1 is included as a resource to support understanding of literacy concepts, which in turn enhances a deeper commitment to learning. Listening in multiple languages creates better knowledge, which is guided by the repetition of different languages to support the learners' education. Furthermore, translanguaging practices are linked to strategies such as code switching (Madonsela, 2016; Moodley, 2010; Singh & Sharma, 2011) and peer support (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011; Gobingca & Makura, 2016), which are familiar concepts recognised in multilingual classrooms and identified as strategies used by teachers in the current study.

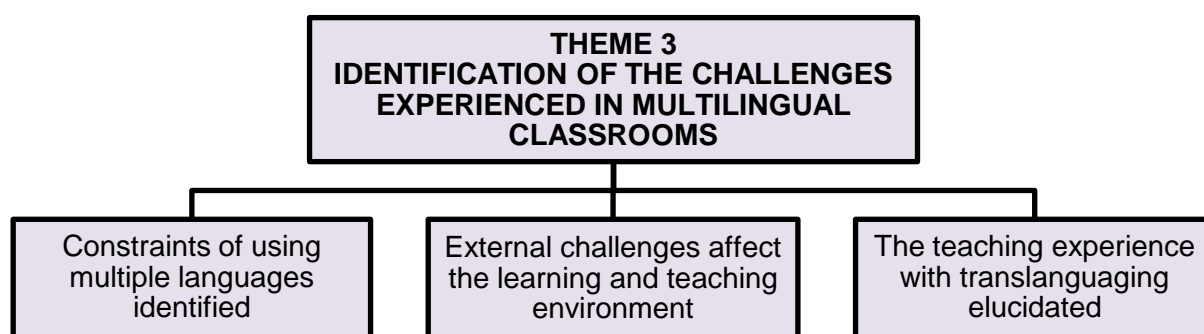
Moreover, Tian and Macaro (2012) maintain that learners who receive input in their L1 benefit more than learners who only receive input in one language, as identified by the current study in the control and support implementation classes. Based on the analysis of the results in the current study, L1 is viewed favourably where literacy skills of reading with understanding and listening skills of input seem to be highlighted from the results. By integrating L1 into the classrooms, learners who are struggling to understand English are able to listen to the content in their L1, thus scaffolding their understanding and/or comprehension. This positively relates to the literacy skills needed for listening and reading with understanding.

Similarly, Cummins (2009) considers L1 as a foundation upon which new knowledge can be built while being mindful that South Africa boasts 11 official languages, making the role of L1 in education to support the process of learning highly valued. Furthermore, the study of MacSwan (2017) is consistent with this research. MacSwan (2017) suggests that code switching should be recognised as an affirmative strategy where learners' multilingual ability is more likely to be viewed as a

resource than a deficit in educational settings. This is similar to translanguaging, which in this study is viewed an asset and thus supports the view of MacSwan (2017).

#### 4.5 RESULTS FROM SECTION 1: INTRODUCING THEME 3

Figure 4.3 graphically demonstrates Theme 3 and its subthemes.



**Figure 4.3: Graphical representation of Theme 3**

##### 4.5.1 THEME 3: IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS

Theme 3 identifies the limitations that are prominent when translanguaging support strategies are used in multilingual classrooms and includes the teacher's view regarding the practical application of the translanguaging approach. The three identified subthemes explain the constraints of using multiple languages, the external challenges that influence the learning and teaching environment, and the teaching experience using translanguaging from the teacher's perspective. Table 4.7a visually represents the subthemes and the inclusion and exclusion criteria within Theme 3. The discussion of the findings of Theme 3 and the subthemes are integrated into the sections that follow, which quote directly from the sources of data that emerged from the data-collection sites.

**Table 4.7a: Representation of subthemes, and inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 3**

<b>THEME 3: IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS</b>		
<b>Subtheme</b>	<b>Inclusion Criteria</b>	<b>Exclusion Criteria (Across both subthemes)</b>
<b>3.1 Constraints of using multiple languages identified</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reference made to the challenges being discussed during the translanguaging support implementation lessons.</li> <li>b) Reference made to any difficulty encountered with the L1 language being played with the audio recorder.</li> <li>c) Reference made to the time constraints of using multiple languages or learners not paying attention during the lessons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference made to gender roles and which group performs better.</li> <li>• Comments made by the class teacher and/or HOD regarding unrelated personal views of the learners during the sessions.</li> <li>• Comments and references relating to discipline and behavioural issues.</li> <li>• Comments made regarding challenges of the country not related to this study.</li> <li>• Comments and instances of instruction made in reference to learners that were not linked to the lesson plans with translanguaging being used as a support implementation.</li> <li>• Comments made by the teachers regarding their opinions of other teachers in the system.</li> <li>• Comments that criticise work ethics.</li> </ul>
<b>3.2 External challenges affect the learning and teaching environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reference made to the socio-economic conditions of the country.</li> <li>b) Reference made to poverty, lack of family involvement, impediment of basic resources affecting learning outcomes.</li> <li>c) Reference made to lack of literacy skills identified in the learners work.</li> <li>d) Reference made to barriers to learning that affect the learner in the educational context.</li> </ul>	
<b>3.3 The teaching experience with translanguaging elucidated</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reference made to teachers' experience during the translanguaging support implementation lessons, both positive and negative</li> <li>b) Reference made to teachers' views regarding translanguaging and/or their impression of the implemented lesson plans</li> </ul>	

Table 4.7b provides an outline of the assessment of data and the data sources in which data regarding the said observations were identified:

**Table 4.7b: Summary of data sources used for thematic identification**

Assessment of data	Transcripts of interview with teachers/HOD	Transcripts of interview with Principal	Observation sheets from teachers	Researcher (field notes)	Research Assistant (field notes)	Learners' worksheets
Dependency on L1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Time constraints	✓	✓	✓			
Lack of resources and skills	✓	✓	✓			
Socio-economic challenges	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Absenteeism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Visibility of lack of literacy skills (vocabulary, spelling and comprehension)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Audio recording quality	✓		✓	✓	✓	
No family involvement	✓	✓	✓			
Overcrowded classrooms	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Transport and arriving late	✓	✓	✓			
Teachers reflection on translanguaging	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Table 4.7b encapsulates the main ideas that inform Theme 3. The time constraints of implementing translanguaging strategies in a multilingual classroom and the predominant socio-economic challenges that are visibly present in the South African context are indicated. These socio-economic challenges are further broken down into the lack of resources and skills, absenteeism, no family involvement, overcrowded classrooms, transport problems for learners travelling long distances to school, and the visibility of lack of literacy skills related to writing skills (vocabulary, spelling, and comprehension). Furthermore, the teachers' reflections on how they experience translanguaging pedagogy to support learners were also closely analysed from the relevant data sources.

The problems relating to the translated audio recordings include technical problems and accounting for the difficulty in understanding a specific L1 spoken by a few learners. The above assessment of data was considered repeatedly across the

subthemes while critically engaging with all the sources of data obtained from the research sites.

#### 4.5.1.1 Subtheme 3.1: Constraints of using multiple languages identified

The limitations of using multiple languages in a classroom were identified during the data-collection process by drawing on direct quotations from the transcripts of the semi-structured interviews with the teachers, the HOD, the School Principal, field notes, and learners' worksheets. It was imperative to pose the question to the teachers as to how many learners did not enjoy the sessions where L1 was included.

Teacher 1 from School A stated,

- ❖ *“Maybe two as they did not understand Zulu or Sepedi.”* (OSH1, Box 3, p. 1)
- ❖ *“I don't think there were any. I think it was just that, that handful. Maybe the two or three that were bored because it was not their language.”* (IT1, line 209)

Teacher 2 from School A responded,

- ❖ *“All the learners enjoyed the lesson.”* (OSH2, Box 3, p. 1)

Teacher 3 from School B agreed with Teacher 2:

- ❖ *“Not at all. They all enjoyed it.”* (OSH3, Box 3, p. 1 )

Of the three teachers involved, Teacher 1 identified a few learners who did not enjoy the sessions:

- ❖ *“There are two or three that don't understand any of the languages because they are from Zimbabwe or Pakistan or something like that but [the] majority of the learners are from here and they understand.”* (IT1, lines 150–153)
- ❖ *“[A]nd there were one or two who said they didn't understand it because none of it is their home language.”* (IT1, lines 160–161)

As explained by Teacher 1, the reason that two learners expressed indifferent views towards translanguaging was that their L1 was neither Sepedi nor isiZulu. Being in a minority position, these learners seemed bored and did not pay attention to the different L1s being played. In my field notes, I observed a few learners who were not interested in the translated audio recordings:

- ❖ *“I also identified some learners who were not paying attention and were not focused. I immediately noticed that some of these learners were of Indian origin and their L1 did not resonate with the African L1 language. The diversity became prominent for me upon this realisation, and I immediately thought of the apartheid laws previously where Indian learners were placed in schools with Indian learners only. The Group Area Act prevented Indian learners to integrate into schools where there was diversity, an effect of past historic[al] policies. These learners were not disruptive but seemed to not understand the audio recordings. However, they participated in the English lesson where they understood the lesson.”* (RFN, lines 262–271, pp. 6-7)

However, amidst this indifference towards translanguaging amongst learners whose specific L1 was not included in the classroom (depicting a constraint), the mere demand for the strategy in another L1 revisits Theme 1, which acknowledges L1 as an asset to be used in multilingual classrooms.

Considering the constraint identified above, Teacher 1 highlights the constraint as an enabler for translanguaging. Teacher 1 asserts that the L1s played in the classrooms should be accepted by the minority learners with a view to enhancing the learning of a new language, which can present benefits at a later stage in life. Teacher 1 advocates the following:

- ❖ *“I think also it’s a good thing for children who can speak English and English is their home language to listen to these languages because they can use it [sic] in their work space. Also, if someone is speaking in Sepedi at a work place, then they will pick it up because you learn better when you are younger. So I’m sure they could learn another language; we could give them an opportunity to learn another language.”* (IT1, lines 173–179)
- ❖ *“I think we could motivate them and tell them that even though it’s not your language, try and listen, and learn; it’s an opportunity to learn another language. I think that was the only problem, but I think it is something we can deal with and they can overcome very quickly because if you motivate learners, they would do it.”* (IT1, lines 210–216)

Teacher 1 advocates by illuminating the advantages to embrace a foreign language in a translanguaging classroom to the minority learners which can subsequently support them to learn a new language which can ultimately give them the skills which they can use on a different platform in life as they progress and grow older.



A constraint in relation to a technical glitch affected the quality of one translated audio recording in the isiZulu language. The problem resulted in background noise, which according to one teacher, possibly distracted the learners during the lesson. Another constraint resulting from a technical error involved a particular isiZulu recording that was mistakenly not the same as the comprehension text chosen on that day. This occurred once at both schools, raising the following comments:

Teacher 1 stated,

- ❖ *“The recordings should not have a background noise. It will be better if there was silence.”* (OSH1, Box 7, p. 2)
- ❖ *“The audio clip in Zulu as there is background noise at times, and this disturbs the learners’ attention span.”* (OSH1, Box 12, p. 3)

This was followed by a plea from Teacher 1 who expressed exasperation:

- ❖ *“Please be more organised with the audio clips as it causes confusion to learners when it is played multiple times and stopped.”* (OSH1, Box 15, p. 4)

This problem was not unnoticed by the researcher and mention was made in the field notes:

- ❖ *“School A: The other research assistant’s role was to make sure that the audio recordings play on time, in the right order as well as the correct recording for the specific lesson plan. The first session on the 10<sup>th</sup> ran smoothly; however today, I felt we experienced challenges. The Zulu recording played was not the correct one. Myself, being English speaking, I did not detect this but found that the learners were distracted and not paying attention. The research assistant then stopped the recording and said it was not the correct one being played. A few minutes later, the correct recording played. I was very upset by the unprofessionalism of this as I had repeatedly asked the research assistant to please place the recordings in folders and to be correctly labelled. This constraint made me realise that my own language barrier, not being able to speak Zulu, left me to be incompetent to the learners involved.”* (RFN, lines 3–8, p. 1)

The same glitch was experienced a second time. Although this technical problem was rectified within minutes, it was worth mentioning to avoid it from happening again. My field notes stated,

- ❖ *“A similar shortfall of a wrong audio recording being played was identified by the learners where they all shouted out this is not the same. My research assistant was unable to be there, so the learners assisted me in finding the correct audio recording to be played that was the same as the English story. I made a note that this needs to be addressed more professionally because it is not fair to have problems such as these to occur on a research project that was in the planning phase a year in advance. I felt helpless because the language was one I did not understand and my second researcher’s L1 was neither Sepedi nor IsiZulu.”* (RFN, lines 76–86, pp. 2–3)

Another identified constraint was obtained directly from the teachers’ observations of a few learners. The learners expressed that the isiZulu translation of some words was difficult to understand because according to the teacher, the translator spoke in ‘high’ isiZulu and thus, the translation of part of the audio recording was not easy to comprehend:

- ❖ *“The learners found some of the words too difficult, so it can be simplified.”* (OSH2, Box 4, p. 1)
- ❖ *Some learners were confused by the high level of language but a lot understood it and it helped them answer the oral questions.”* (OSH2, Box 8, p. 2)

Another important revelation that stemmed from the implementation of the support strategies of translanguaging in classrooms was the time constraints and the expensive nature of such resources. This was highlighted by Teacher 3:

- ❖ *“It is good to teach in multilingualism but [it] takes more time and needs more resources.”* (OSH3, Box 15, p. 4)
- ❖ *“It is a good venture though time consuming and expensive.”* (OSH3, Box 32, p. 8)
- ❖ *“It’s good, but a lot of translation has to be done and might be very expensive.”* (OSH3, Box 40, p. 10)

Teacher 1 gave a similar response:

- ❖ *“[T]ime is an issue. Like I said, we teach, I have nine assessments for the term. Sometimes there is [sic] only eight or seven weeks and a test week. So, you have nine assessments and less weeks to do it. And then, they always, sometimes, they absent. You have to play catch up, so that takes up, that[’s] a lot of challenges.”* (IT1.1, lines 48–51, p. 2)

- ❖ *“I think the time, because like, I have 30 minutes with them ... so if I’m speaking in English and the other language and then I’m using more time for my introduction of the lesson, making less time for the body and the conclusion of the lesson. So, at the end of it, of the last period, when I go to them, I have to recap what I am saying. So that would take more time because you using more languages.”* (IT1.1, lines 236–244, p. 6)

Time constraints are identified as important factors and seem to be a prominent source of data elicited from the teacher’s point of view. It would seem that despite the teachers being aware that the learners are not understanding or comprehending learning content with monolingual methods, and would like multiple languages to be implemented, the issue of time constraints appear to rule against their favour to give the learners that extra support to compliment their learning with a vision to create a space for inclusivity of catering for all learners.

#### **(a) Discussion of Subtheme 3.1**

The common narrative from the data sources identifies the constraints that were relevant within the classrooms when the translanguaging practice was initiated. This reality is clearly displayed as a real problem that occurs in the learning and teaching environment despite efforts to implement support strategies that scaffold the majority of learners in multilingual settings. I appreciated being able to witness the detected constraints. These limitations can and will occur and must be considered and controlled to enable translanguaging practice to be implemented more effectively.

The constraint that identified certain words in the isiZulu L1 as being difficult to understand was also observed in previous research studies. Deumert (2010) identified that isiXhosa speakers prefer to use English in texting because isiXhosa is considered a complicated language to understand. This view is shared by Mgijima and Makalela (2016); the isiXhosa L1 group in their study expressed that using their L1 is complicated and does not simplify their understanding.

#### **4.5.1.2 Subtheme 3.2: External challenges affect the learning and teaching environment and Subtheme 3.3: The teaching experience with translanguaging elucidated**

Subtheme 3.2 and Subtheme 3.3 are discussed concurrently since the narratives obtained from the data analysis seem to overlap. The external challenges that affect

the learning and teaching environment also affect the teaching experiences viewed from the perspective of the teachers involved.

South Africa is viewed through a pervasive lens. The country's landscape is the result of the continuing ramifications of the challenges affecting the learning and development of learners. The narrative associated with these challenges is the overarching drawback of the socio-economic challenges that ripple into poverty, unemployment, lack of family involvement, low education systems, and the lack of basic resources. These challenges also apply to the school system, evoking overcrowded classrooms, high failure rates, and poor literacy skills. Transport-related difficulties and living in impoverished settlements characterise deficits such as lack of basic resources, for example, electricity and water. Furthermore, these challenges filter into the teaching context, affecting the teacher's ability to teach the content efficiently. The aforementioned challenges were identified in the data as the external challenges that affect the learners and teachers in the classroom environment and are discussed collectively below.

Comments relating to the aforementioned challenges are presented. Teacher 1 mentioned the difficulties that confront learners in arriving every morning at school:

- ❖ *“Yes, township areas. They come from far places. It's not only Atteridgeville; it's really far like Shoshanguwe. And they leave early. They leave like at 4am in the morning; they here by 6am, half six. By then, they tired; they hungry. And I think that also plays an important part in their development.”* (IT1, lines 314–318)

Some learners are often tired and demonstrate a lack of energy very early in the morning, which can affect learning outcomes. The learners sometimes experience fatigue, inattention, and loss of interest due to the manner in which they arrive at school and the distances they need to travel.

Teacher 1 from School A expresses her concern and views transport issues as a constraint because learners cannot stay after school, which concurrently affects the learners from receiving extra support from the teacher. This places a burden on the teacher who cannot fulfil her obligation to learners who are already experiencing linguistic challenges. This results in poor quality of work, together with the external factors which further impedes the learners.

- ❖ *“[A]nd then other constraints are like you try. Even if you like doing intervention, there is limited time. Because today, I plan a lesson but it be like maybe five of those weak children that are supposed to be in the intervention class are not present, so I can’t really go on. I can help the few, but five out of them is maybe the majority and they not there, so that also plays an important part. And the children come from far away, so transport plays a[n] issue. So even if you want to keep them in after school, to help them like just give them like more time in doing stuff, they can’t stay due to transport issues.”* (IT1.1, lines 78–84, p. 3)

The narrative of the HOD describes the living conditions of the learners at her school, revealing the poverty, living arrangements, and lack of basic resources. These conditions exacerbate the academic and linguistic challenges that these learners experience:

- ❖ *“[S]ome of the parents are from squatter camps. Especially when a child has problem with teacher, parent involvement is a serious problem. And another challenge is that our children come from, they come from squatter camps. There is no electricity, and they will tell you [they] did not have electricity to do homework or to study. All those excuses, so we intervene 30 minutes before school knocks off to at least try to help them. I will give them revision and take them to the library to help them study, to do intervention.”* (IHD, lines 240–249)

The HOD from School B indicated a similar concern to that of Teacher 1 from School A, identifying the magnitude of the learning difficulties related to literacy skills in South African schools. These challenges are the result of past apartheid laws and colonialism, which are very much a part of the education system that is still struggling. Carstens (2016) compares this teaching legacy with a pendulum, constantly changing between strategies that are purely monolingual on the one extreme and strategies that accommodate L1 in the classroom on the other. These ‘shifting-back-and-forth’ strategies associated with the language of teaching together with the external challenges discussed above have in turn, affected the majority of South African learners who also experience the challenges of inadequate literacy skills such as reading, writing, and spelling.

Teacher 1 identifies external challenges such as the lack of family involvement as affecting learning outcomes:

- ❖ *“[A]nd huh, grandparents are too old to check on the child. Sometimes, the child doesn’t even do class work leave alone get to do homework. So parents play no part in their lives at all.”* (IT1.1, lines 102–104, p. 3)

There is consensus in the data sources that highlights the learning challenges associated with the external factors within the learners’ family system as being the repercussion of the government system, which subsequently affects learning outcomes for learners.

Another important external challenge was identified as overcrowded classrooms. The School Principal at School A statistically asserted the following:

- ❖ *“On an average, there are 42 learners in a classroom.”* (IP, line 57, p. 4)

The HOD from School B acknowledged the number of 42 learners per class, stating that she has a similar challenge at her school. According to the HOD at School B, this high number of learners per class could result in learners going unnoticed in the school system.

- ❖ *“[I]t is true. It is a challenge because we take long to, we identify a learner who is struggling or we don’t know he is copying until exams when he does bad. Overcrowding is a problem, and we don’t have enough classes. Grade 7 is 102 use a hall; the whole Grade 7 is in the hall.”* (IHD, line 232–236)

Teacher 3 from School B concurred with the above:

- ❖ *“... some of the challenges overcrowding so sometimes, it’s difficult to give individual attention for the learners.”* (IT3, lines 26–27)

The following external challenges that affect the learners during the process of learning were elicited from the field notes:

- ❖ *“Despite the adversities, challenges, classroom structure, broken equipment, etc.”* (RFN, lines 5–6, p. 1)
- ❖ *“No desk, only chair for one learner.”* (RFN, line 52, p. 9)
- ❖ *“... classroom windows broken.”* (RFN, line 69, p. 1)
- ❖ *“... lots of background noise outside school.”* (RFN, line 55, p. 2)

- ❖ *“... lots of noise outside classroom, taxis honking, people speaking loudly and shouting.”* (RFN, line 53, p. 3)

These external factors largely affect schools that are in low-income and poverty-stricken areas and that typically exhibit the observations discussed above. The lack of a desk or a chair for a learner in addition to being in an overcrowded classroom could affect a learner negatively. Teachers in overcrowded classrooms cannot cater for learners who are struggling with certain work content or who cannot individually meet the demands of the class and thus, these learners are sidelined. This overwhelming reality is further affected by the multiple L1s of the learners in the classroom together with the teacher’s L1, which places additional strain on the dynamics of learning and teaching.

Teacher 3 was asked to identify his L1:

- ❖ *“[Laughs] ... Uuuh, it’s Shona actually.”* (IT3, line 40, p. 2)

Shona is a local language in Zimbabwe, a neighbouring country of South Africa.

Both the HOD and teacher 3 from School B feel that they cannot give learners individual attention due to the high number of learners per class. This challenge together with limited time is of great concern.

The HOD extended the overcrowding concern to insufficient resources that support the learners’ learning experience such as dictionaries (used to learn the English words). This creates a barrier to learning in a multilingual setting:

- ❖ *“... another problem is that they don’t have dictionaries. Like we are overcrowded, so you can’t have all the dictionaries for 103 learners. The learners who are not shy will come and ask, ‘Ma’am, explain me this word.’ Most of the time, I don’t like to explain.”* (IHD, lines 135–140)

With regard to how the teachers experienced the translanguaging support strategies, the general responses were positive. Teachers sincerely felt that L1 needed to be incorporated into the classrooms to scaffold the learning experience for multilingual learners. The teachers also accepted that the learners are very disadvantaged, which was evidenced by literacy problems in the learners’ worksheets and limited vocabulary skills, many spelling errors, and sentence construction difficulties in the

sentences written. Furthermore, the teachers expressed that the external challenges of the country impede their ability to teach. The following responses emerged when asked to give their views regarding translanguaging as a medium to support the learning and teaching environment:

Teacher 1 expressed,

- ❖ *“Was a good experience. Interesting to see how learners react to different languages in the classroom.”* (OSH1, Box 21, p. 6)

Teacher 2 observed that translanguaging allowed the learners to be more involved in the lesson plan and thus, they gained better understanding:

- ❖ *“Learners seemed more involved and were able to understand better.”* (OSH2, Box 21, p. 6)

Similarly, Teacher 3 from School B responded:

- ❖ *“It was a good challenge. The experience is good and enables learners a second chance.”* (OSH3, Box 5, p.8 )
- ❖ *“Learning never ends. So it is worth trying. It might yield great results in schools.”* (OSH3, Box 7, p. 2)

According to Teacher 3, translanguaging provides learners with a second chance, that is, they can use L1 to reinforce concepts that they may not have understood in English, possibly generating better results for the learners. Teacher 3 asserts that translanguaging needs to go deeper than simply listening and understanding; translanguaging needs to allow learners to write their answers in their L1:

- ❖ *“But then, I thought also maybe they could have written the answers in their home languages and compare the answers written in English and compare to the answers written in their home language.”* (IT3, lines 99–102, p. 3)
- ❖ *“The learners should have the opportunity to answer the questions in both languages.”* (OSH3, Box 12, p. 3)

The HOD emphasises the need for support implementations such as translanguaging to cater for the needs of multilingual learners. She notes that the learners at the school are already experiencing literacy problems:



- ❖ *“You know, many children who leave the primary school still can’t read and write and that [is] one of the issues we have [that] I’m trying to address at my school. I have children who are sitting in Grade 5 and 6 and started Grade R at this school and they cannot read. My question is, ‘What are we doing with these children?’”* (IP, lines 221–224, pp. 7–8)
- ❖ *“I think that multilingualism helps our weakest learners who cannot speak, read or write English fluently. It gives them confidence.”* (OSH1, Box 24, p. 6)

The School Principal at School A and the HOD at School B identify the literacy challenges experienced by learners as a deep-rooted concern. Recognising that learners who are already in Grade 5 and Grade 6 are not able to read or write is concerning since it highlights the magnitude of the poor literacy rates of the country as a whole. This was reflected in their worksheets.

Translanguaging as an approach is one way to scaffold the learning experience for multilingual learners. However, translanguaging needs to be enforced in the foundation phase by including two or more languages into a single lesson plan to cultivate learning and teaching from an early age. Teacher 2 stated the following:

- ❖ *“At a Grade 6 level, learners understood the text in English and most were able to. Multilingualism will help a lot in the foundation phase.”* (OSH3, Box 15, p. 4)

The HOD condemns the policy that does not recognise L1 as the language of learning but rather excludes it entirely from the school curriculum from Grade 4 onwards, resulting in learners experiencing literacy challenges:

- ❖ *“Government, you are killing our children to only learn African language in foundation phase. It delays learners to catch up to English.”* (IHD, lines 195–197)

Similarly, Teacher 1 voiced her grievance with the department:

- ❖ *“... it stops then at the department because then they don’t get back to us with it. So, we do the paperwork and then it gets forgotten and at the end, the child suffers. So, we do everything we can that’s necessary, but then from the department, it’s their job.”* (IT1, lines 112–116)

On the contrary, Teacher 3 asserted that lessons that include translanguaging are time consuming:

- ❖ *“It’s exciting but also time consuming as you have to do the same thing twice.”* (OSH3, Box 13, p. 4)
- ❖ *“It’s interesting though it’s like double effort.”* (OSH3, Box 45, p. 12)

From a different point of view, the School Principal stated that translanguaging practices require teachers to be able to teach in multiple languages. This implies that teachers need to acquire skills in order for this type of strategy to be used in classrooms. However, this is not possible due to lack of funding for a platform for teachers to develop themselves continuously in order to become equipped to deal with multilingualism:

- ❖ *“[V]ery difficult. So if the teacher is able to parallel teach, and know[s] the language, obviously you need re-skilling and up-skilling of teachers.”* (IP, lines 170–171, p. 6)

Teacher 3 concurred with the financial constraints and further acknowledged that translanguaging is an expensive way to accommodate learners, especially in schools where there are financial constraints already present:

- ❖ *“It is a good idea but an expensive exercise to African governments, which are already poor.”* (OSH3, Box 48, p. 12)
- ❖ *“... and I don’t know if our government has that type of money.”* (IP, line 173. p. 6)

It is evident that the lack of basic literacy skills is a significant concern in South African schools and can be attributed to the ramifications of past apartheid laws that are currently still affecting learners’ literacy skills.

- ❖ *“Ya, one out of ten would be, and that’s the children who are good or fluent; the weak ones are probably. They, they are weak because they not doing anything at home like you. Some of the children don’t even have a book to read at home besides their textbook, and there’s no one checking up on them. Parents are working till late. Umm, some of them stay with their grandparents and not their parents.”* (IT1.1, lines 96–100 p. 3).

When asked if the weaker learners are identified by the teachers, the School Principal answered,

- ❖ *Teachers picked it up. Unfortunately, we don’t have sufficient time to do remedial and enrichment. And you must also remember, the system allows to fail a phase once. So,*

*if you fail Grade 1 and let's say, even if you can't read or write, you going to Grade 2. If you still can't read or write, you still going to Grade 3 despite you putting in programmes to help the child. But if a child passes, you can't fail him in Grade 3 because he has already failed a phase, so he goes to Grade 4. He does the same thing in Grade 4, 5, and 6. [He] can fail anywhere along the line and move along. Eventually, when the child reaches high school, he is unable to do anything and he drops out.” (IP, lines 228–235, p. 8)*

Teacher 1 observed similar challenges relating to the learners' literacy skills; learners read without comprehending what they are reading, making the teacher's job difficult because the teacher and the learners do not share the same L1:

- ❖ *“And sometimes, if they read, they read with no understanding. They just reading. They know the words [but] they don't know what they reading. And also, they can't really read the questions from like if you give them an assessment, you have to help them and explain them the question again. So then you basically trying to teach them keywords like the who, what, where. You have to start from there all the time and keep doing repetition with them.” (IT1.1, lines 41–46, p. 2)*

Teacher 1 made the following recommendation to support multilingualism when a language barrier exists between the teacher and the learner:

- ❖ *“Because sometimes the learner doesn't understand me. I ask them what language do they speak and not knowing their language, I ask another child if they know that language. So, if it's a child that speaks Northern Sotho, I ask a child who is really good in English and fluent to translate it, [to] translate the questions for her and help the child with the keywords.” (IT1.1, lines 60–63, p. 2)*

It is clear from the comment above that peer support is a strategy employed by teachers when they cannot intervene and guide the process of learning.

Teacher 1 explains that translanguaging can scaffold the learning process for the learners and suggests the following:

- ❖ *“They're reading with understanding. Like if you maybe have difficult words that they don't understand what it means, if you tell it to them in their language and maybe give them an example in their language, they'd automatically know the, the word in English.” (IT1.1, lines 128–130, p. 4)*

- ❖ *“So they need to know how to speak it, and that’s my job – to make them speak it fluently, understand it with comprehension, to help them and guide them. I think it’s good, but I don’t want them to be too dependent on it.”* (IT1.1, lines 150–152, p. 4)

Teacher 1 also attests to the challenge where learners enter School A from another school, and the L1 of these learners is not recognised. This causes a barrier to learning, and the teacher has to return to the basics of alphabet recognition to try and bring the learner onto an equivalent plane to the other learners:

- ❖ *“It starts usually with the Grade 4s and Grade 3s. When they come into the intersen [phase], they are quite familiar with it. What happens is the challenge we have now is that they come from other schools that isn’t [sic] English medium. So if a new learner comes from say they were in Grade 4 in a Zulu-speaking school, and they come now in Grade 5, then that becomes a challenge because you have to teach them from the alphabets again because they don’t even know that. They can’t spell three letter words.”* (IT1.1, line 26, p. 1)

The following section is a breakdown of the worksheets completed by the learners during the data-collection process. The worksheets vividly display the magnitude of the literacy challenges identified from the written work of the learners. The worksheets of both the grades were analysed individually per school (School A and School B) and then collectively (all the Grade 5 classes from both schools and all the Grade 6 classes from both schools). The analysis process closely examined how the learners completed the worksheets by answering a number of questions related to the lesson. The number of correct answers in the support implementation classes and the number of correct answers in the control classes were compared to determine if translanguaging promoted better understanding. The number of questions incorrectly answered was documented.

Furthermore, the literacy skills related to the quality of the learners’ writing skills, specifically focusing on spelling skills, vocabulary, and/or mechanics were closely considered for this study. Samples of some worksheets were included to display the quality of the learners’ writing skills. Lastly, the percentages of all the worksheets collected for this study were calculated to display a tentative number of learners who appeared to experience literacy challenges with their writing skills. It must be noted that these worksheets formed part of the lesson for the learners (participants)

involved in the study. The results displayed below do not serve as evidence of the overall impact of the learners' achievement but rather afford insight into the learners' competencies and indicate if the translanguaging support strategies provided some benefit to the learners' overall experience.

The worksheets analysed for the purpose of this study served as a baseline to assess the learners by comparing the results of the control classes and the support implementation classes. The results displayed below should be read in the context of this study only.

#### **(a) Results of the worksheets completed by the learners**

This section presents the results of the worksheets completed by the learners at both schools as follows:

- Table 4.8a and Table 4.8b display the results of the worksheets for all the Grade 5 learners involved in the study.
- Table 4.9a and 4.9b display the results of worksheets for all the Grade 6 learners involved in the study.
- Figure 4.4 shows the level of understanding by comparing the number of questions answered correctly in the support implementation classes with the control classes.
- Figure 4.5a displays the results of the worksheets by considering the literacy difficulties related to writing.
- Figure 4.5b highlights the percentage of literacy challenges related to writing skills from the sample population included in this study.

The learners' worksheets from both schools are considered important sources of data because they form the basis of the learners' development in literacy skills. Literacy skills pertaining to how the learners comprehend and explain themselves on paper in addition to considering the clarity of their sentences, spelling skills, and grammar seem to be a significant concern for the teachers, School Principal, and HOD.

Table 4.8a displays the results of how the learners from Grade 5 answered the questions in the worksheets that were completed after every session at both schools

(School A and School B). Furthermore, the table displays two categories for the results of the literacy skills from the written content obtained from the worksheets: the number of questions incorrectly answered and the specific difficulty with literacy skills (i.e. spelling errors, poor sentence construction, poor grammar, lack of vocabulary, inappropriate use of vocabulary, and/or mechanics).

**Table 4.8a: Results of worksheets for School A: Grade 5**

SCHOOL A: GRADE 5									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of questions related to the comprehension text were given to the learners to answer on paper after each lesson.</li> <li>• A total of three lessons took place weekly and were completed by the support implementation and control classes as follows:</li> <li>• <b>CONTROL CLASSES</b> (Read the lesson in English from the prescribed books. Complete the worksheet relating to the lesson.)</li> <li>• <b>SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION CLASSES</b> (Read the lesson in English from the prescribed books and then listened to the translated version in two L1s being played via audio recordings. Complete the worksheet relating to the lesson.)</li> </ul>									
CONTROL CLASS									
112 worksheets completed by approximately 40 learners. The results are indicated below.									
An average of 40 learners completed over 112 worksheets. This was due to absenteeism.									
	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED INCORRECTLY BY THE LEARNERS						NUMBER OF LEARNERS IDENTIFIED WITH LITERACY SKILL DIFFICULTIES		
	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	ALL CORRECT	SPELLING/GRAMMER /SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION DIFFICULTIES	NO DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFIED	TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKSHEETS
Lesson 1	17	10	0	2	2	5	20	16	36
Lesson 2	Completed recall questions guided by teacher only						28	10	38
Lesson 3	18	5	4	2	4	5	21	17	38

<b>SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION CLASS</b>									
<b>113 worksheets completed by 39 learners. The results are indicated below.</b>									
<b>An average of 39 learners completed over 113 worksheets. This was due to absenteeism.</b>									
	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED INCORRECTLY BY THE LEARNERS						NUMBER OF LEARNERS IDENTIFIED WITH LITERACY SKILL DIFFICULTIES		
	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	ALL CORRECT	SPELLING/GRAMMER /SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION DIFFICULTIES	NO DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFIED	TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKSHEETS
Lesson 1	9	16	2	3	0	8	22	16	38
Lesson 2	12	7	2	0	4	12	20	17	37
Lesson 3	12	6	5	1	1	13	24	14	38

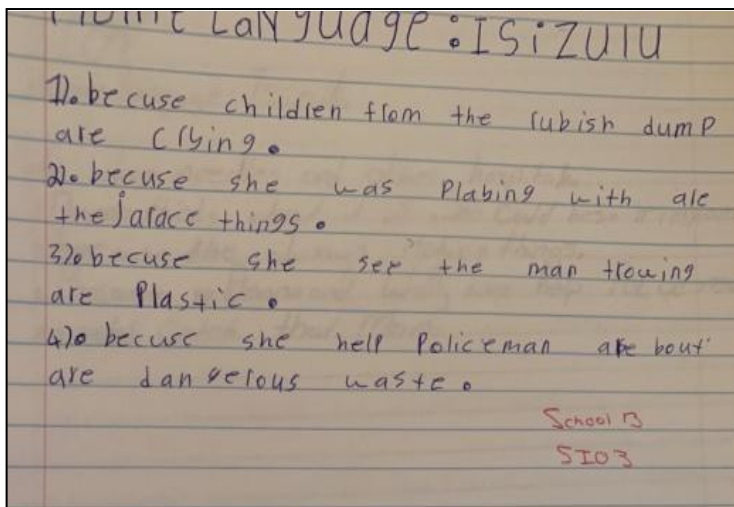
**Table 4.8b: Results of worksheets for School B: Grade 5**

<b>SCHOOL B: GRADE 5</b>									
<b>CONTROL CLASS</b>									
<b>106 worksheets completed by approximately 43 learners. The results are indicated below.</b>									
<b>An average of 43 learners completed over 106 worksheets. This was due to absenteeism.</b>									
	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED INCORRECTLY BY THE LEARNERS						NUMBER OF LEARNERS IDENTIFIED WITH LITERACY SKILL DIFFICULTIES		
	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	ALL CORRECT	SPELLING/GRAMME R /SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION DIFFICULTIES	NO DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFIED	TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKSHEETS
Lesson 1	7	4	6	2	0	17	26	10	36
Lesson 2	Completed recall questions guided by teacher only						12	22	34
Lesson 3	13	5	3	2	0	13	22	14	36

SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION CLASS									
100 worksheets completed by approximately 40 learners. The results are indicated below.									
An average of 40 learners completed over 100 worksheets. This was due to absenteeism.									
	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED INCORRECTLY BY THE LEARNERS						NUMBER OF LEARNERS IDENTIFIED WITH LITERACY SKILL DIFFICULTIES		
	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	ALL CORRECT	SPELLING/ GRAMMER /SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION DIFFICULTIES	NO DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFIED	TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKSHEETS
Lesson 1	5	4	0	0	0	22	27	4	31
Lesson 2	Completed recall questions guided by teacher only						18	18	36
Lesson 3	10	4	0	0	0	19	15	18	33

Below are samples of the worksheets completed by the Grade 5 learners.

Worksheet 1 highlights the identified literacy difficulties



Worksheet 1:  
Learner's L1 is IsiZulu

**Literacy difficulties identified**

“becuse”

“rubbish”

“because she see the man trowing are Plastic”

**The correct format**

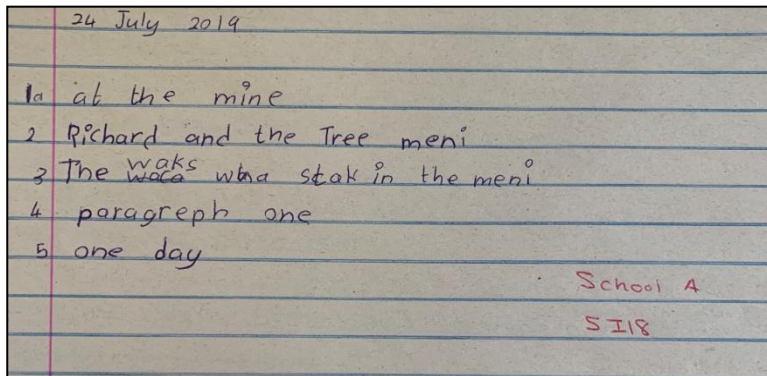
because

rubbish

Because she saw the man throwing plastic

Similarly, Worksheet 2 highlights literacy challenges.





Worksheet 2:  
Learner's L1 is Sepedi

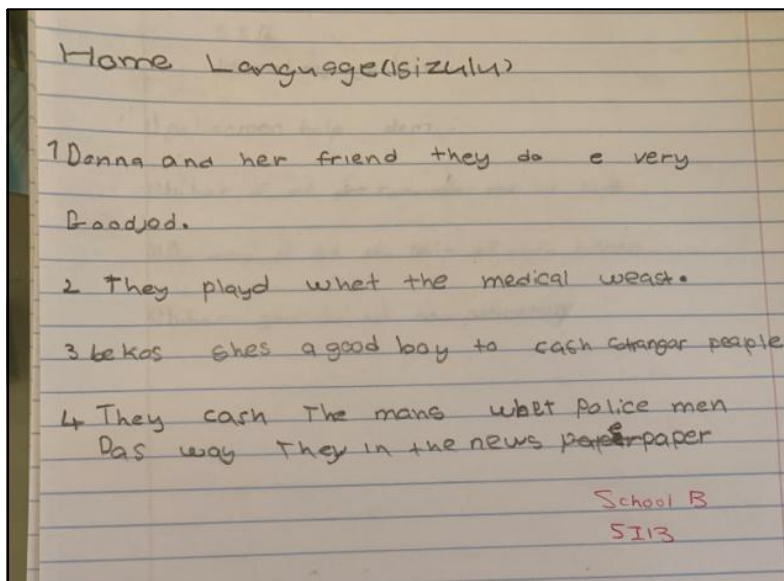
**Literacy difficulties identified**

- “Richard and the Tree meni”
- “The waks wna stak in the meni”
- “paragreph”

**The correct format**

- The three men and Richard
- The men were stuck in a tunnel/cave
- paragraph

Worksheet 3 is an example that demonstrates difficulty with sentence construction, spelling mistakes, and poor grammar.



Worksheet 3:  
Difficulty with spelling words and formulating comprehensive sentences identified by a learner from School A whose L1 is IsiZulu

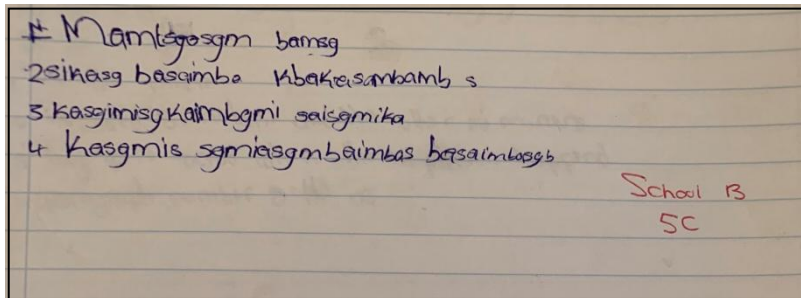
**Literacy difficulties identified**

- “They plad whet the medical weask”
- “tekos shes a good boy to cash stonger people”
- “They cash The mans whet polic men Pas way they in the news paper”

**The correct format**

- They played with the medical waste
- Because she is a good girl to catch people
- They catch the man who the policeman are trying to catch and become heroes in the newspaper

Worksheet 4 depicts how one Grade 5 learner from School B preferred to answer the questions in his/her L1. There were a number of such worksheets in the sample of data collected.



Worksheet 4:  
IsiZulu learner answered the  
questions in his L1

The above sources of data demonstrate the literacy challenges experienced by the Grade 5 learners at both schools. The samples are significant because the learners seem unable to construct proper sentences. Their spelling skills and grammar is concerning, especially at a Grade 5 level where these basic skills should have been met. These learners should be focusing on higher-order thinking and comprehension skills. The samples seem to be a representation of the standard and quality of the literacy levels related to writing at both schools.

**Table 4.9a: Results of worksheets for School A: Grade 6**

<b>SCHOOL A: GRADE 6</b>										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of questions related to the comprehension text were given to the learners to answer on paper after each lesson.</li> <li>• A total of three lessons took place weekly and were completed by the support implementation and control classes as follows:</li> <li>• CONTROL CLASSES (Read the lesson in English from the prescribed books. Complete the worksheet relating to the lesson.)</li> <li>• SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION CLASSES (Read the lesson in English from the prescribed books and then listened to the translated version in two L1s being played via audio recordings. Complete the worksheet relating to the lesson.)</li> </ul>										
<b>CONTROL CLASS</b>										
<b>96 worksheets completed by approximately 42 learners. The results are indicated below.</b>										
<b>An average of 42 learners completed over 96 worksheets. This was due to absenteeism.</b>										
	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED INCORRECTLY BY THE LEARNERS						NUMBER OF LEARNERS IDENTIFIED WITH LITERACY SKILL DIFFICULTIES			
	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	ALL CORRECT	SPELLING/GRAMMER /SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION	NO DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFIED	TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKSHEETS	
*Lesson 1	13	8	1	1	0	12	17	18	35	
Lesson 2	7	2	0	0	0	20	13	16	29	
Lesson 3	8	0	1	0	0	27	15	17	32	
<b>SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION CLASS</b>										
<b>91 worksheets completed by approximately 39 learners. The results are indicated below.</b>										
<b>An average of 39 learners completed over 91 worksheets. This was due to absenteeism.</b>										
	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED INCORRECTLY BY THE LEARNERS						NUMBER OF LEARNERS IDENTIFIED WITH LITERACY SKILL DIFFICULTIES			
	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	SIX	ALL CORRECT	SPELLING/RAMMER /SENTENCE CONSTRUCTIO DIFFICULTIES	NO DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFIED	TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKSHEETS
Lesson 1	1	4	2	0	1	1	13	11	19	30
Lesson 2	7	2	0	0	0	0	20	13	16	29
Lesson 3	5	0	0	0	0	0	27	15	17	32

**Table 4.9b: Results of worksheets for School B: Grade 6**

<b>SCHOOL B: GRADE 6</b>									
<b>CONTROL CLASS</b>									
102 worksheets completed by approximately 43 learners. The results are indicated below.									
An average of 43 learners completed over 102 worksheets. This was due to absenteeism.									
	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED INCORRECTLY BY THE LEARNERS						NUMBER OF LEARNERS IDENTIFIED WITH LITERACY SKILL DIFFICULTIES		
	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	ALL CORRECT	SPELLING/GRAMMER /SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION DIFFICULTIES	NO DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFIED	TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKSHEETS
Lesson 1	13	5	1	0	0	17	18	18	36
Lesson 2	7	5	0	0	0	20	9	23	32
Lesson 3	4	5	0	0	0	25	18	16	34
<b>SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION CLASS</b>									
101 worksheets completed by approximately 40 learners. The results are indicated below.									
An average of 40 learners completed over 101 worksheets. This was due to absenteeism.									
	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED INCORRECTLY BY THE LEARNERS						NUMBER OF LEARNERS IDENTIFIED WITH LITERACY SKILL DIFFICULTIES		
	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	ALL CORRECT	SPELLING/GRAMMER /SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION DIFFICULTIES	NO DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFIED	TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKSHEETS
Lesson 1	9	1	0	0	0	24	24	10	34
Lesson 2	14	2	0	0	0	18	24	10	34
Lesson 3	4	0	0	0	0	29	9	24	33

Below are samples of the worksheets that were completed by the Grade 6 learners.

Home language: Sepedi

1. They are Topo and his father
2. He read and take her beds
3. He saw eggs of birds
4. He feel happy
5. He give him that don't go every day there because the bird will go to crooked tree

School B  
61030

Worksheet 5:  
Grade 6 Sepedi-speaking learner demonstrates literacy difficulties

A similar sample of work from a different learner is displayed in Worksheet 6.

1. The people in the story is Topo, father and

2. He likes to spend his time at the tree. He spend his time by read a book.
3. The bird did come and put the eggs in the tree.
4. He feel so very bad when it happened.
5. Move out of the tree they will not sat.

School A  
61025  
GR6

Worksheet 6:  
Sample of the work of a Grade 6 Sepedi-speaking learner with spelling difficulties, poor grammar and poor sentence construction

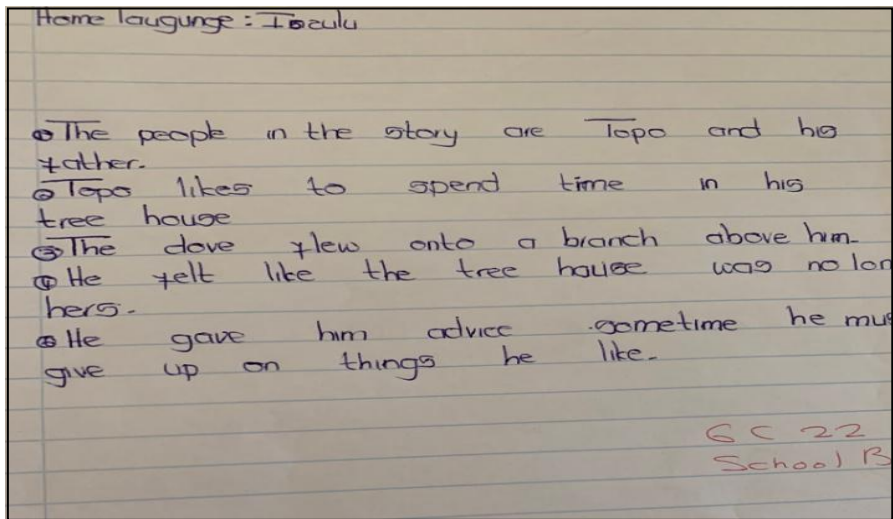
On the contrary, some learners were able to complete their work with no literacy difficulties. Worksheet 7 and Worksheet 8 are examples of two fine writing samples.

Home language: Isizulu

1. Topo and his father.
2. Topo like to spend time at the tree house. And read books.
3. The mother bird flew onto his tree house.
4. Topo felt angry.
5. Topo's father said you must give up on things we like.

School B  
6C24

Worksheet 7:  
An IsiZulu learner displays work with no literacy difficulties



Worksheet 8:  
Another IsiZulu learner displays work with no literacy difficulties

The findings of the learners who experienced the support implementation sessions when L1 was included in their linguistic repertoire were compared with the findings of the learners in the control class where L1 was not included. Tables 4.8a, 4.8b, 4.9a, and 4.9b present the data that were used to compare and contrast the number of correctly answered questions after the support implementation lessons (lessons 1–3) with the control classes that completed the same lessons but without L1 included as an additional language. The sum of all the correct answers on the worksheets completed by the learners for lessons 1 to 3 is included as a source of data. Figure 4.4 displays a comparative graph to view the outcomes.

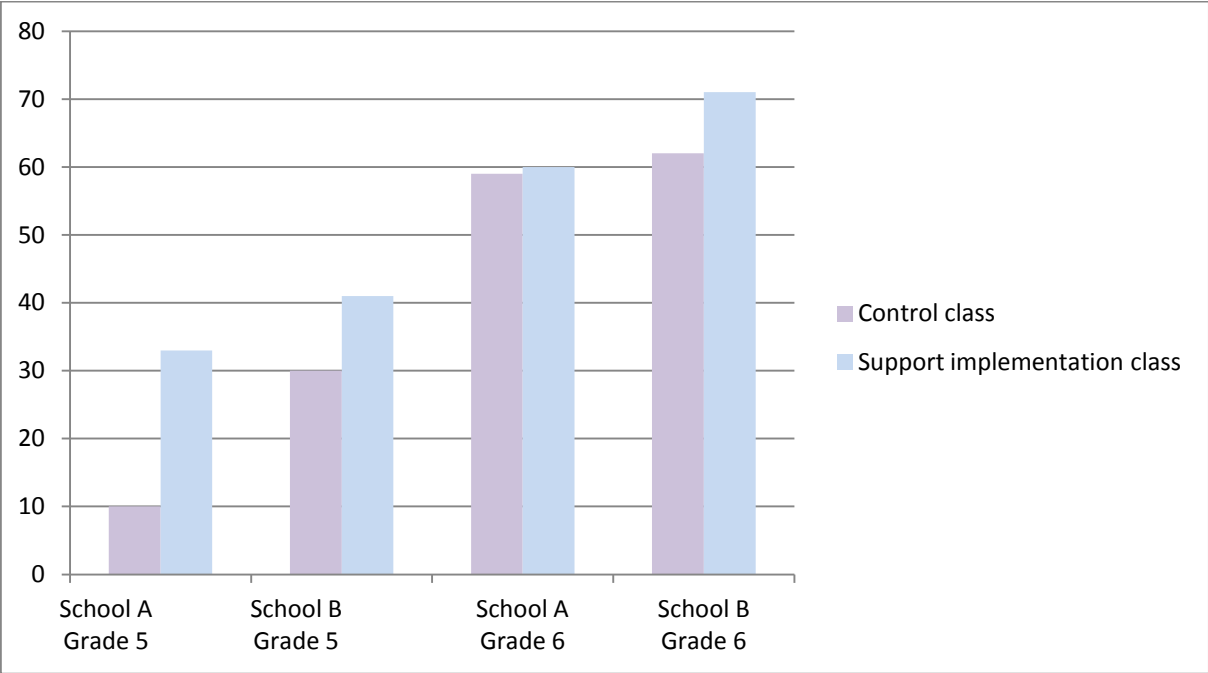
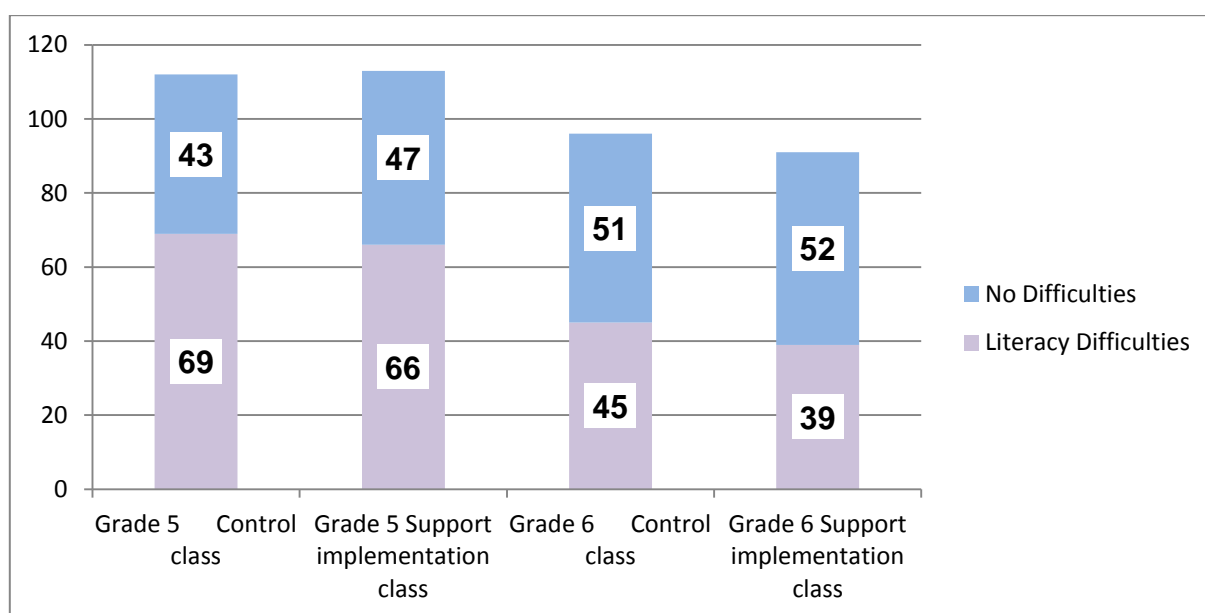


Figure 4.4: Comparison graph

The results displayed in Figure 4.4 demonstrate a marginal improvement in the Grade 6 support implementation classrooms of both schools, thus indicating a better understanding of the lessons when L1 was included to scaffold learners' understanding. However, the results from the Grade 5 classrooms at both schools demonstrate greater benefits when L1 was included alongside English. This could indicate that a greater understanding was gained when multiple languages supported the learning and teaching dynamic in the classrooms, subsequently resulting in most questions being answered correctly in the support implementation classrooms.

In contrast, the worksheets of all the learners were analysed to assess the learners' writing skills. Figure 4.5a is a graphical representation of all the learners' worksheets from School A (Grade 5 and Grade 6 classes). Three worksheets were completed by each learner after the lessons in both the control and the support implementation classes.



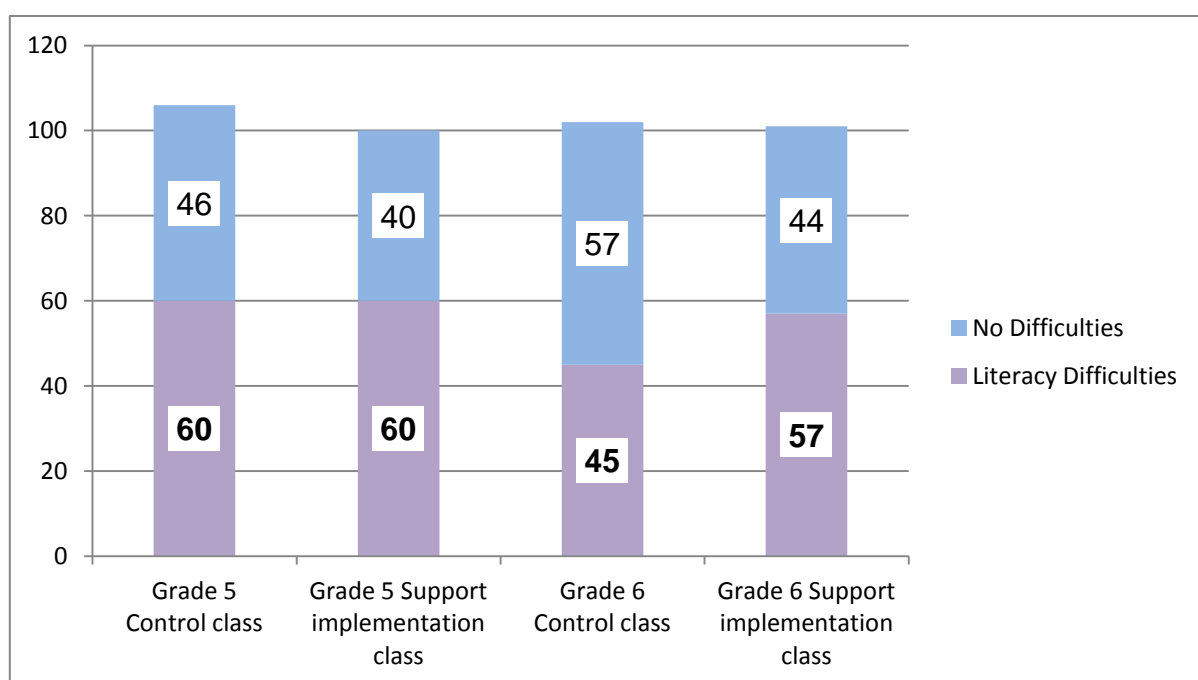
**Figure 4.5a: Graphical representation of literacy skills identified in the worksheets of learners at School A**

The results displayed in Figure 4.5a indicates the literacy challenges that the learners experienced while completing the worksheets relating to the lesson. The analysis of these worksheets considered one or more of the following literacy difficulties related to writing: spelling errors, poor sentence construction, poor grammar, lack of vocabulary, inappropriate use of vocabulary, and/or mechanics. The results are as follows:



- Grade 5 control class: 69 of 112 worksheets, implying that 23 of 37 learners experienced difficulty
- Grade 5 support implementation class: 66 of 113 worksheets, implying that 22 of 37 learners experienced difficulty
- Grade 6 control class: 45 of 96 worksheets, implying that 15 of 32 learners experienced difficulty
- Grade 6 support implementation class: 39 of 91 worksheets, implying that 13 of 30 learners experienced difficulty

The same analysis was repeated for School B. Figure 4.5b is a graphical representation of all the learners' worksheets from School B (Grade 5 and Grade 6 classes). Three worksheets were completed by each learner after the lessons in both the control and the support implementation classes.



**Figure 4.5b: Graphical representation of literacy skills identified in the worksheets of learners at School B**

The analysis of the School B worksheets (Figure 4.5b) was consistent with that conducted for School A. The analysis considered one or more of the following literacy difficulties related to writing: spelling errors, poor sentence construction, poor grammar, lack of vocabulary, inappropriate use of vocabulary, and/or mechanics. The results below demonstrate the identified literacy challenges related to writing:

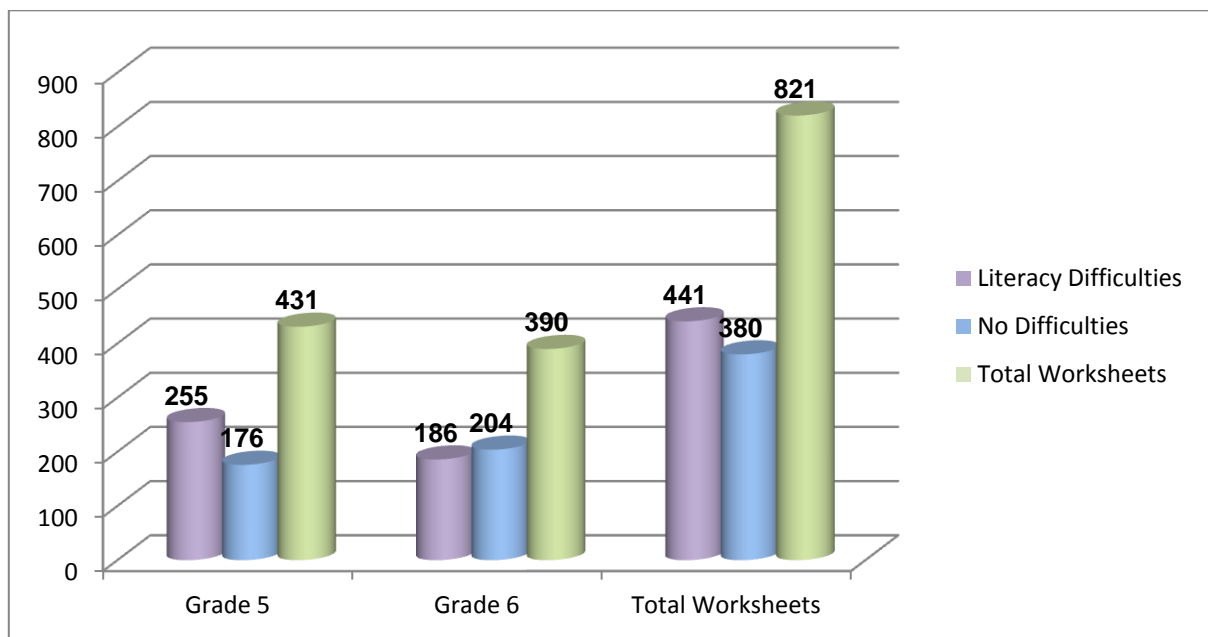


- Grade 5 control class: 60 of 106 worksheets, implying that 20 of 35 learners experienced difficulty
- Grade 5 support implementation class: 60 of 100 worksheets, implying that 20 of 33 learners experienced difficulty
- Grade 6 control class: 45 of 102 worksheets, implying that 15 of 34 learners experienced difficulty
- Grade 6 support implementation class: 57 of 101 worksheets, implying that 19 of 33 learners experienced difficulty

The results displayed above do not show a significant difference regarding an improvement in the learners' writing skills between the control class and the support implementation class. The results from both (control and support implementation) classes are similar. The translanguaging strategy related to assessing learners' writing skills did not yield positive results, thus indicating that the translanguaging support implementation did not make a significant contribution to these learners' writing skills.

It should be noted that the findings relating to writing skills were not considered in the research questions of this study. However, these findings seem to be an important contribution that manifested in the study, highlighting the theme of external challenges contributing to the learning and teaching of multilingual learners. This valuable information is discussed in Chapter 5.

Figure 4.6a is a graphical representation of the analysis of all the learners' worksheets (a total of 821) from both schools (School A and School B) based on the results displayed in figures 4.5a and 4.5b above.



**Figure 4.6a: Collective results of literacy skills identified from the worksheets of learners from both schools**

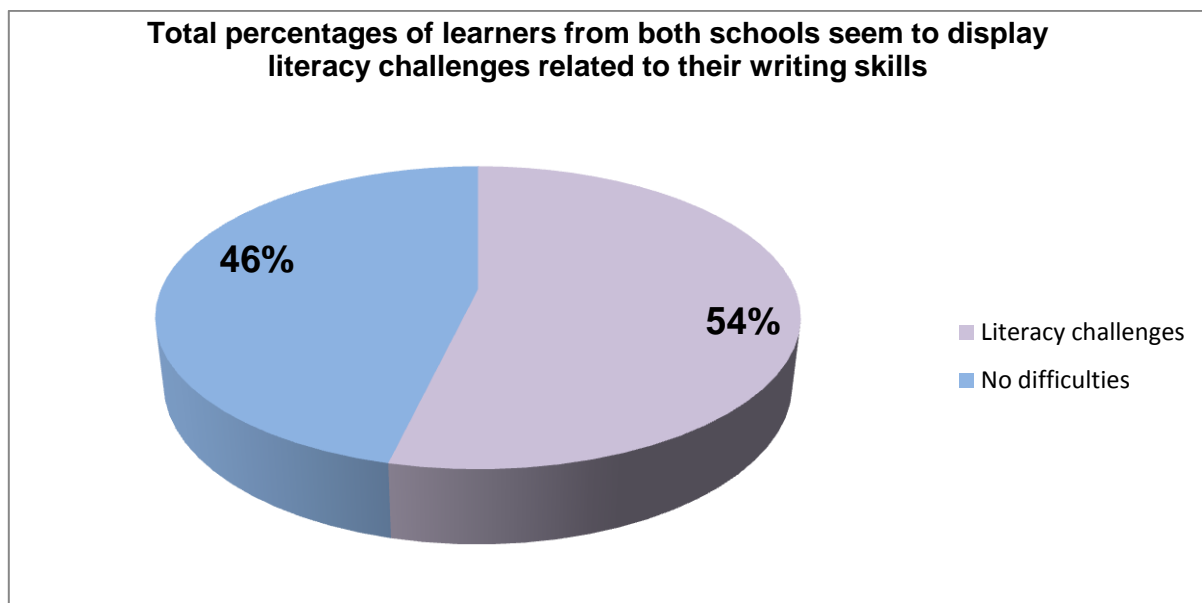
The summary of the results of the worksheets obtained from both School A and School B highlights that the literacy difficulties related to writing skills, particularly in English, are considered a challenge in most South African schools. The samples of work display substandard results.

A total of 821 worksheets were completed by 273 learners of which 143 learners were Grade 5 learners. The 255 completed worksheets from Grade 5 showed that 85 learners experienced literacy challenges relating to writing skills and 58 learners did not. Similar findings emerged from the Grade 6 classes. From the sample of 130 learners, 62 learners experienced literacy challenges relating to writing skills and 68 learners did not.

Most learners experienced difficulty with writing tasks that involve important skills for language production. It is equally important to be aware of challenges that have magnified over time in addition to those currently identified. This clearly identifies with the external challenges of the country and the language choices made in the past that have yielded these concerning results regarding learners in Grade 5 and Grade 6.

The difficulties displayed in the samples of the worksheets included lack of competence in syntax, unable to write coherent thoughts, and difficulty in expanding

on an idea. These learners also lacked mechanics and vocabulary, which in turn resulted in an inappropriate use of vocabulary that made sentences difficult to understand. Writing skills are considered a cognitive process that facilitates the ability to think logically and to express thoughts on paper. Nickerson, Perkins and Smith (2014) assert that proficiency in formulating text indicates successful learning of an L2. Figure 4.6b displays the total percentages of learners from both schools with and without literacy challenges relating to their writing skills.



**Figure 4.6b: Graphical representation of the percentage of learners with difficulty/no difficulty in literacy skills identified from the worksheets**

The pie graph in Figure 4.5b demonstrates that 54% of the learners experienced difficulty in expressing themselves in writing. This and other challenges can be attributed to the fact that the L1 of these learners is not English. Previous studies have shown that South African learners are influenced by the socio-economic conditions of the country (Ebersöhn et al., 2017; Krause & Prinsloo, 2016). Education that is subsidised by the government cannot succeed with the external challenges that are confronting the schooling system. Poverty (Biyase & Zwane, 2017), unemployment, lack of basic resources (Ebersöhn et al., 2017), L1 challenges (Daly & Sharma, 2018), etc. result in learners who cannot meet the demands of school and fall behind. This is clearly displayed in their writing samples; Grade 6 learners who are two years away from high school education cannot formulate simple sentences

and their phonetic grounding is not secure enough to see them through their schooling career.

#### **4.5.1.3 Discussion of Theme 3**

Theme 3 encapsulates the challenges experienced in multilingual classrooms and provides evidence that maintains and confirms the predicament in which the majority of South African learners find themselves. These learners are not proficient in English as the language of instruction because it is not practised or reinforced at home. As a result, the learners encounter major challenges, as indicated in research studies. First language falls away from Grade 4 onwards when English is embraced as the LoLT in public schools. This affects learning outcomes, as displayed in the findings above (Collins, 2017; Krstic & Nilsson, 2018; Makalela, 2018a).

The social concerns relating to poverty, unemployment, poor living conditions, and lack of basic resources are identified in the works of Ebersöhn et al. (2017) who consider limited access to adequate electricity, transportation, and education as significant challenges that affect learning outcomes. This was also indicated in the present study.

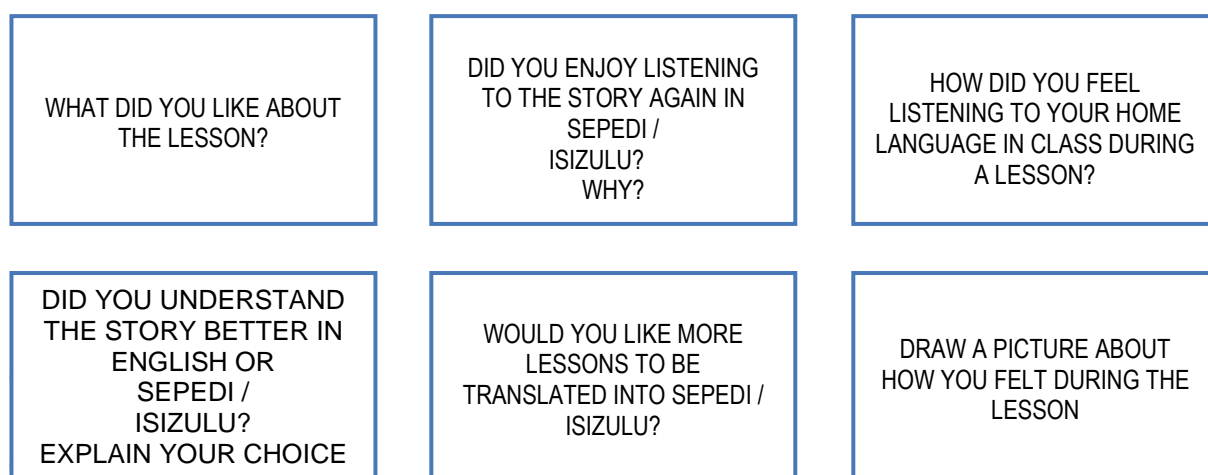
Subtheme 3.3 elucidates the teaching experience with translanguaging where teachers feel overwhelmed by deplorable conditions such as overcrowded classrooms. An overcrowded classroom does not give the teacher the opportunity to meet all the needs of the learners. These findings closely align with the findings of Gobingca (2013), Mokolo (2014), and Myende (2014) who consider these educational configurations as being under resourced and lacking basic facilities such as sufficient classrooms, electricity and water. These schools often lack furniture such as desks and chairs for the learners, the classrooms are overcrowded, and the teacher–learner ratio is concerning.

It is clear that all the teachers involved in multilingual classrooms are aware of the literacy challenges that learners are experiencing. However, the teachers are frustrated by the fact that they are unable to provide these learners with the knowledge and skills due to literacy challenges coupled with socio economic factors that impede on these learners. Teachers, therefore, embrace the implementation of translanguaging to support and guide the learners in developing literacy skills, thus acknowledging the need for L1 to be included in the school curriculum. However,

teachers are also concerned about the time constraints of a support implementation that brings in multiple languages to guide the learning experience, which leads to apprehension in meeting the deadlines stipulated by the department.

#### 4.6 RESULTS FROM SECTION 2: STORYBOARD ANALYSIS

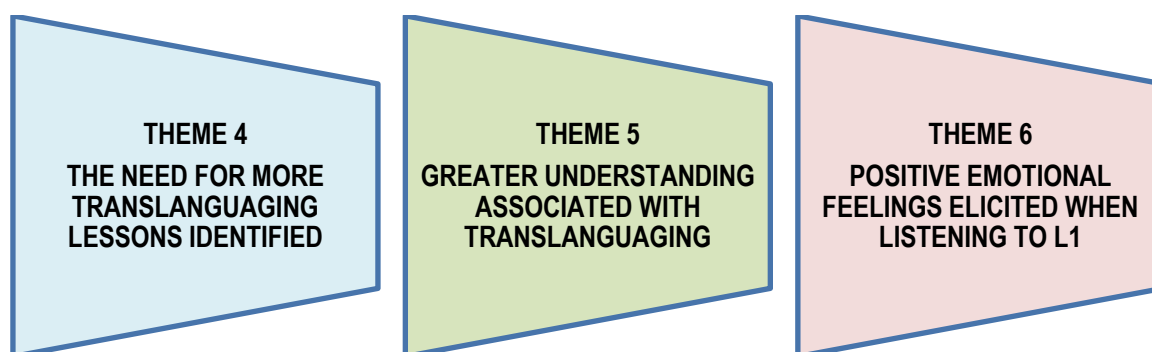
In total, 170 storyboards were identified as data sources from both School A and School B. Figure 4.7 displays the six questions that were written on the chalkboard in the classrooms for the learners. The learners from both schools who experienced the translanguageing support implementation strategy were each given an A3 sheet of paper with six quadrants to answer the questions. The questions are displayed in Figure 4.7



**Figure 4.7: Questions posed on storyboard**

##### 4.6.1 THEMES ELICITED FROM THE STORYBOARD TECHNIQUE

Figure 4.8 identifies the three main themes that emerged from the storyboards by means of qualitative data analysis.



**Figure 4.8: Themes elicited from the storyboard technique**

#### 4.6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE STORYBOARD TECHNIQUE

A summary of the findings from the analysis of the storyboards is presented in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10: Summary of the findings of the storyboards**

Total of 170 storyboards collected from both research sites							
School A				School B			
70 storyboards				100 storyboards			
Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 5		Grade 6	
38 storyboards		32 storyboards		33 storyboards		67 storyboards	
Positive response	Other response	Positive response	Other response	Positive response	Other response	Positive response	Other response
30	8	27	5	31	2	56	13

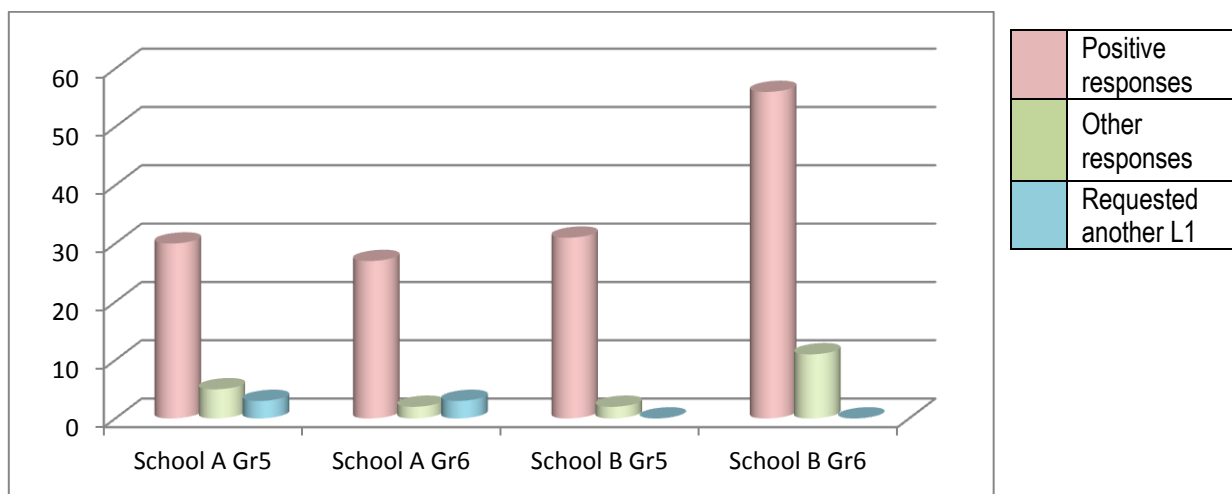
Table 4.11 provides an in-depth understanding of how the learners experienced the translanguaging strategies employed in the lessons. The learners' experiences, both positive and less optimistic, are listed in the table.

**Table 4.11: Learners experiences of translanguaging support implementation strategies**

POSITIVE ASPECTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation evoked feelings of happiness and enjoyment.</li> <li>• Learners understood the content of the work better in their L1.</li> <li>• It felt good to hear L1 in the classroom.</li> <li>• L1 is better than English because there is more understanding in L1.</li> <li>• There was better understanding of the lesson after listening to the story in L1.</li> <li>• L1 and English together gave a more in-depth understanding of the lesson.</li> <li>• There was a sense of pride when L1 was played.</li> <li>• When a learner could not read or understand the content in English, the translated audio recording supported the learners' understanding.</li> <li>• Repetition of the story in L1 was very good.</li> <li>• Translator voice in audio recording was clear, pronunciation was good, and understanding was easier.</li> <li>• Understanding was better in lessons with both English and L1.</li> <li>• L1 in the classroom resonated with learners' home environment.</li> </ul>

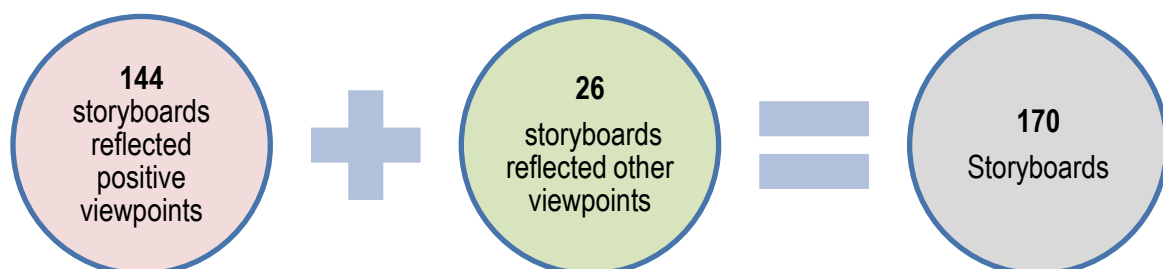
OTHER ASPECTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some learners preferred English to their L1.</li> <li>• Boredom with translated audio recordings was experienced.</li> <li>• Difficulty in understanding isiZulu occurred.</li> <li>• IsiZulu narration was not clear.</li> <li>• Some learners preferred another L1 to be played because their L1 was not Sepedi or isiZulu.</li> <li>• There were feelings of sadness when learners heard their L1.</li> </ul>

Figure 4.9 graphically illustrates the responses elicited from the storyboards.



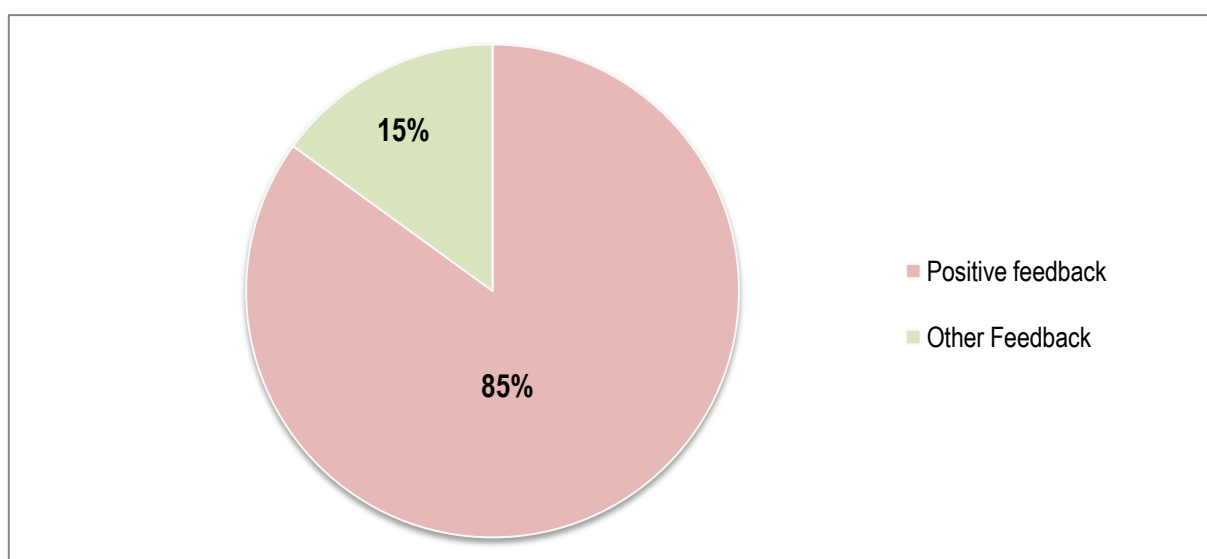
**Figure 4.9: Graphical representation of the data obtained from the storyboard**

It is evident from the bar graph above that Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners from both the schools displayed more positive than negative responses associated with the six questions posed to all the learners. In addition, more learners from School A requested another L1 to be used than from School B. Based on the analysis of the storyboards, Figure 4.10 demonstrates how many storyboards in total reflected positive viewpoints. The figure also indicates the number of other viewpoints that were identified in the Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners from both schools.



**Figure 4.10: Demonstration of positive vs other viewpoints**

In view of the findings from the storyboards demonstrated in Figure 4.10, Figure 4.11 is a graphical representation of a pie chart illustrating the need for translanguaging from the perspective of the learners involved in the study. It appears that these learners are aware of their linguistic challenges and thus, they voiced their opinions clearly in their storyboards. The learners experience of listening to their L1 inside a multilingual classroom was an important contribution to their learning environment where such mediation and support is essential and central to their overall learning experiences.



**Figure 4.11: Need for translanguaging in multilingual classrooms**

The pie chart highlights the positive responses from the learners who experienced the translanguaging support strategy lessons. Of the 170 learners, 85% enjoyed listening to the lessons in their L1 and would like more of these lessons in the future. There was consensus that better understanding was achieved when learners were given the opportunity to listen to their L1 alongside English. However, 15% of the learners indicated other (less optimistic) feelings, the most prevalent being incorrect L1 played, a few learners experienced difficulty in understanding the IsiZulu translation, and some learners wanted another L1 to be played. The responses are discussed in detail in the following section.

#### **4.6.3 IDENTIFICATION OF THEMES ELICITED FROM THE STORYBOARD TECHNIQUE**

Theme 4 describes the learners' need for more translanguaging support strategies to be integrated into their learning and teaching development. This is an important



theme because it sets the foundation for this section of my study, which identifies translanguaging as an important contributor of academic success for learners who come from diverse multilingual settings. Theme 4 links to Theme 5, which highlights that greater understanding, is simultaneously attained when translanguaging strategies are employed. This subsequently feeds into Theme 6, which associates positive feelings to emotions when L1 is identified as a scaffolding tool to support learning and understanding.

Based on this premise, themes 4, 5, and 6 are discussed collectively as I identify quotes from the storyboards and highlight the pictorial images displayed by the learners. The learners' collective experiences in the classroom are displayed in their unique storyboards, each a creation and reflection of their inner world, providing an understanding of the reasoning they attach to the translanguaging approach.

There is ample confirmation obtained from the storyboards that gives insight into themes 4, 5, and 6. However, due to the enormity of 170 storyboards collected from the sample population, I extracted information from a sample of 26. I identified certain extracts from the storyboards to emphasise the collective themes that emerged from the subjective perspectives of the learners involved in the translanguaging support strategy lessons. Learners' autonomy and confidentiality were maintained, and a code name with a number was used to identify each learner, for example, the code B6C12 means:

**B** ..... Learner is from School **B**

**6** ..... Learner is in **Grade 6**

**C or I** ..... Learner is in the **control class (C)** or Learner is in the support **implementation class (I)**

**12** ..... Number for the **specific learner**

The responses obtained from the learners' storyboards are reproduced verbatim in this chapter to link them to themes 4, 5 and 6. Additionally, the learners' responses appear in their original form, and no corrections of spelling and/or grammatical errors have been made. In this way, the authenticity of the responses has been retained.

#### **4.6.3.1 Themes 4, 5, and 6 identified from the storyboards**

The results from the storyboards in relation to themes 4, 5, and 6 are explained in two sections. Section (a) displays the results regarding the learners' experiences

from a positive point of view, while Section (b) highlights the less optimistic views based on learners' different experiences. Both viewpoints are discussed comprehensively in Section 4.6.4.

**(a) Results of the storyboards that reflected positive viewpoints**

Storyboard 1 from data source School A (5103) commented on the positivity of listening to the lessons in his/her L1 and expressed that it was interesting:

- ❖ *"I feel good! When they played for us Sepedi and isiZulu, because it was intesing"*
- ❖ *"Yes because they replay the languages"*
- ❖ *"Yes because my home langauge is Sepedi"*



Storyboard 1:  
Storyboard with six quadrants

Storyboard 1 identifies with Theme 6 in which positive emotional feelings are highlighted while listening to L1. Storyboard 1 also identifies with Theme 5 as greater understanding is experienced when translanguaging support strategies are employed inside classrooms.

Storyboard 2 depicted below similarly identifies a learner from School A (5107) who expressed that there should be more lessons in his/her L1, resonating with Theme 4:

- ❖ *"Yes I would love for they to be more isiZulu and Sepedi lessons"*

This would provide a deeper understanding of the lessons, as described in Theme 5:

- ❖ ***“Yes because we could know what we were writing”***

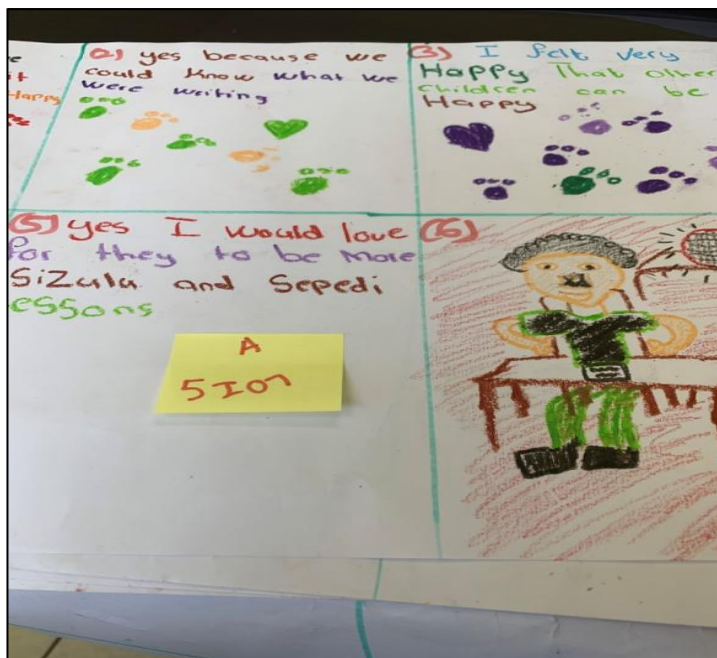
And this would make his peers happy:

- ❖ ***“I felt very happy that other children can be happy”***

And make him/her happy:

- ❖ ***“I like that we could understand it and we could be happy.”***

In addition to drawing images of hearts and footprints, this storyboard aligns closely with Theme 6, which recognises the positive emotional feelings of happiness towards L1.



Storyboard 2:  
Positive meaning attached to translanguageing

The above view is shared by Storyboard 3 School A (5134) in which the learner quotes that he/she feels very happy because more meaning is created when Sepedi is brought into the classroom lesson:

- ❖ ***“HAPPY!!! because it made more mining”***
- ❖ ***“Yes more in Sepedi Because I feel so opened”***
- ❖ ***“Yes in SEPEDI, because it is more easy”***



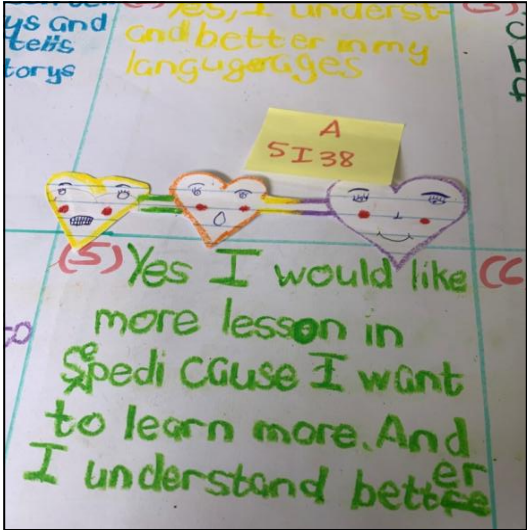
Storyboard 3:  
Visual display of being happy

It would seem that all three themes are identified in Storyboard 3.

In Storyboard 4, the theme of greater understanding associated with translinguaging was reiterated by a learner from School A (5I38):

- ❖ *“Yes I understand better in my languages”*
- ❖ *“I felt very happy cause I remember home siting with my family”*
- ❖ *“Yes I would like more lesson in Sepedi cause I want to learn more and I understand better”*

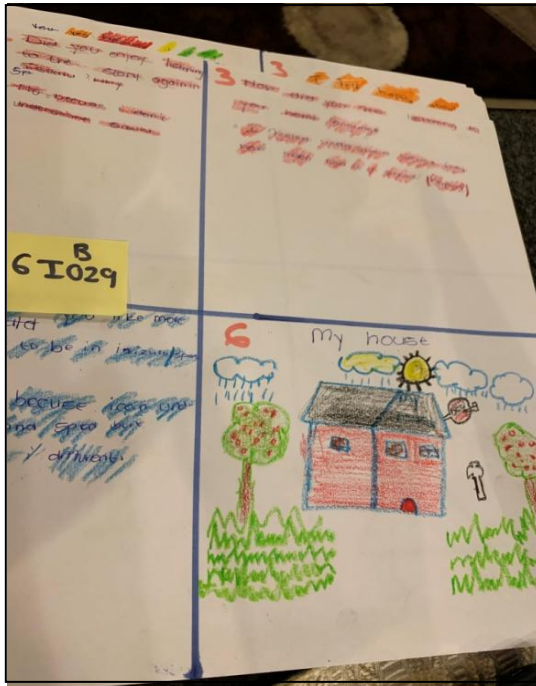
This learner encapsulated all three themes in his/her storyboard. Simply explained, translinguaging is seen through a positive lens; translinguaging incorporates the essence of greater understanding and positive emotional feelings; there is a need and a desire for translinguaging to take place in multilingual classrooms.



Storyboard 4:  
Motivation for translinguaging to be used in classrooms

Storyboard 5 identifies a learner from School B (6I029) who associated listening to L1 as a link to his/her home and family. This was depicted in the drawing in the last quadrant. This learner also expressed the following:

- ❖ *“I feel understood because they have been read it in Sepedi (happy)”*
- ❖ *“I understand it in both of them”*



Storyboard 5:  
L1 linked to home

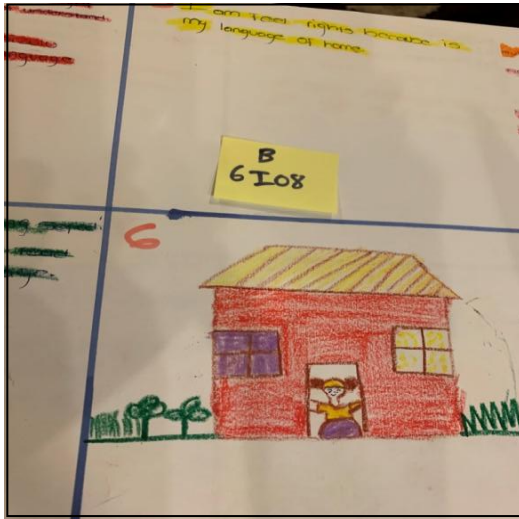
It appears that the learner feels understood when using his/her L1 and that multiple languages are perceived positively. When asked during observations the reason for drawing a house, the learner expressed that there is happiness in his/her heart and happiness is at home and now at school.

Another learner from School B (6I08) concurred:

- ❖ *“I am feel rights because is my language of home” “I am understand on Sepedi”*

Storyboard 6 also depicted a home.

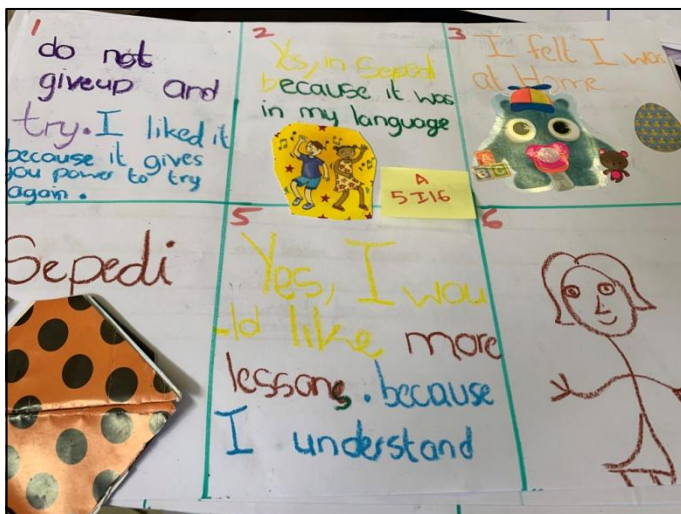




Storyboard 6:  
L1 linked to a home and there is happiness

Storyboard 7 depicts a reference made by a learner from School A (5116) who places importance on the translinguaging approach and associates it with his/her home: “I felt I was at home.” Additionally, the need for more translinguaging lessons to support his/her understanding was accentuated:

- ❖ ***“Yes I would like more lessons because I understand”***



Storyboard 7:  
Translinguaging supports understanding in a classroom.

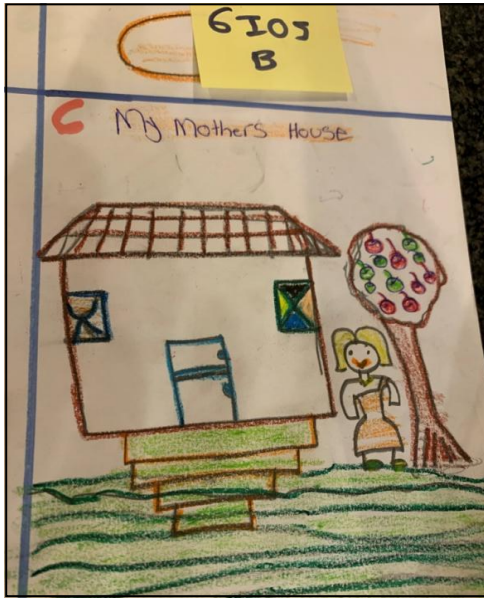
In addition, Storyboard 7 showcases Theme 4 in which the need for more translinguaging lessons is highlighted.

Storyboard 8 is an example of another reference made by a learner from School B (6105) who also identifies with Theme 4. The learner recognises L1 as being special and places emphasis on the need for more translinguaging lessons::

- ❖ ***“Yes becous Sepedi is my first language”***
- ❖ ***“I feel Im special to my language”***

Furthermore, the learner adds value to Theme 5, which clearly links translanguaging to understanding:

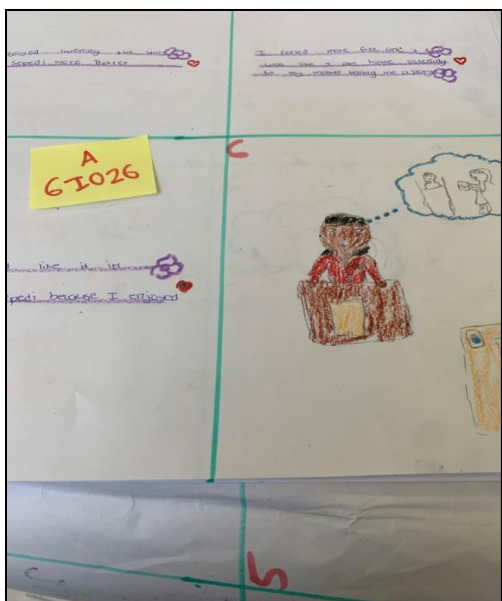
- ❖ *“I understand it in both of them (English/Sepedi)”*



Storyboard 8:  
A positive emotional experience

In Storyboard 9, a learner from School A (61026) articulated the following positive emotional feelings that resonate with Theme 6:

- ❖ *“I enjoyed listening to the story in Sepedi more better”*
- ❖ *“I feeled more free and I was like I am home listening to my mother telling me a story”*



Storyboard 9:  
L1 is valued

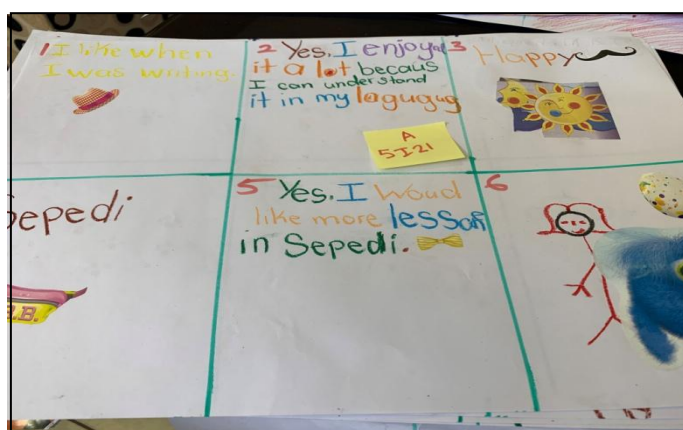
In Storyboard 9, the learner drew a picture of a speech/thought balloon with a mother reading a story to a child to demonstrate the strong maternal link associated with

his/her home and the classroom (learner is sitting on a desk). This drawing indicates the strong link to feelings being elicited when L1 is brought into the classroom.

With the same conviction, a learner from School A (5I21) expresses the following in Storyboard 10:

- ❖ *“Yes I enjoy it alot becaus I can understand it in my lagugug”*
- ❖ *“Happy”*
- ❖ *“Yes I would like more lessone in Sepedi”*

These quotations substantiate the need for more translanguaging lessons to be made accessible. All three themes are recognised interchangeably in Storyboard 10.



Storyboard 10:  
Translanguaging to be made accessible

The same idea was shared by a learner from School A (5I29) who embraces the positive emotional link that associates happiness with understanding:

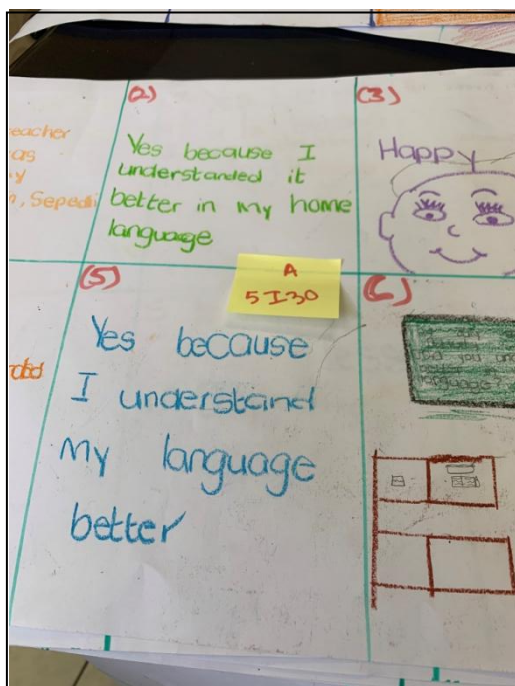
- ❖ *“Very happy because I understand my home language”*
- ❖ *“Yes because we understand our home language and we know the language”*
- ❖ *“I like the lesson because it was explain for us in our language”*
- ❖ *“Yes I understand the story better”*
- ❖ *“Yes because I feel excited when i am listening to the different language”*

The continuous reference to words such as ‘excited’ and ‘very happy’ depicts a sense of affirmation to the use of multiple languages and the strong link with Theme 6.



The reflection and drawing in Storyboard 11 of a learner from School A (5I30) supports the component of understanding being linked to translinguaging and views L1 as an important contribution to learning.

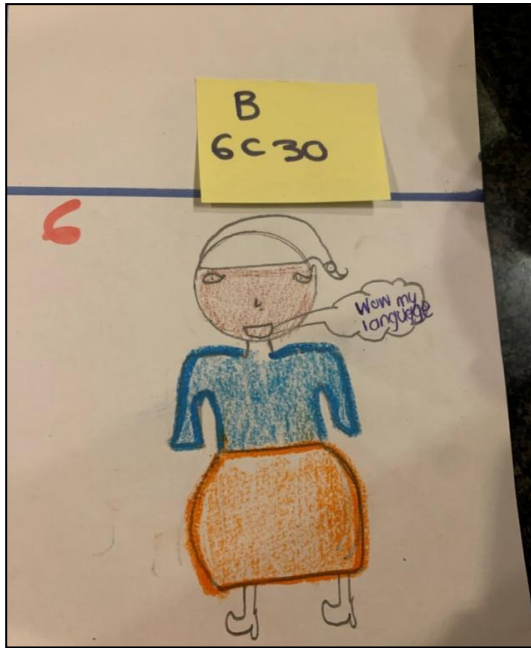
- ❖ *“When our teacher said it was going to play it in English, Sepedi and IsiZulu”*
- ❖ *“Yes because I understand it better in my home language”*
- ❖ *Yes I understand it better in Sepedi”*



Storyboard 11:  
Understanding content better  
in L1

Similarly, in Storyboard 12, a learner from School B (6C30) explained that his/her understanding was better with L1 and used the word “like” to describe the audio recordings being played in the classrooms. In the drawing in quadrant six, the learner used the word “Wow” to affirm recognition of L1 in the classroom:

- ❖ *“Yes, because I like my home language more than English”*
- ❖ *“I felt happy because now I know what does dove mean in my home language”*
- ❖ *“I liked when the teacher Played the radio and listening to a man who were reading Topo’s story in my home language”*



Storyboard 12:  
Visual representation of a  
positive response

In Storyboard 12, the learner wrote in a speech/thought balloon the following:

- ❖ *“Wow my language”*

This demonstrates the strong association with both Theme 5 and Theme 6 regarding a greater understanding when L1 is included in the classroom and the positive feelings of the learners when L1 is used to support their learning and teaching environment.

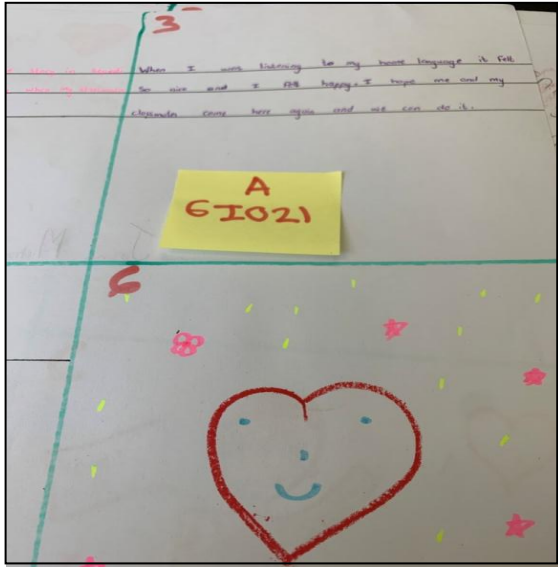
Below are additional comments from learners who identify optimistically with the aforementioned themes:

A learner from School A (6I011) indicated the following:

- ❖ *“I did feel like i understand better my home feel I understand the story better”*
- ❖ *“Yes! Because I like the story with homelanguage.”*
- ❖ *“Yes! I like the story in Sepedi because I understand better.”*

Storyboard 13 of a learner from School A (6I021) demonstrates the following:-

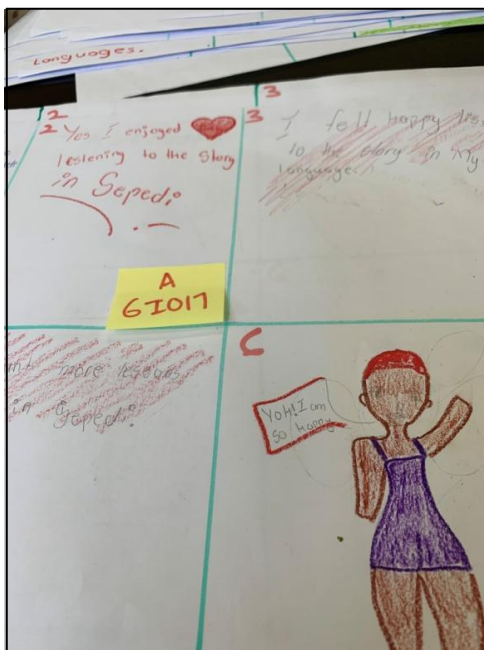
- ❖ *“When I was listening to my home language it felt so nice and I felt happy, I hope me and my classmates come here again and we can do it.”*



Storyboard 13:  
Link translanguageing to happiness

The learner from School A (6I017) highlights all three themes in Storyboard 14: the need for translanguageing is recognised; greater understanding is established when L1 is integrated into learning; and feelings of enjoyment and happiness are linked to L1.

- ❖ *“Yes I enjoyed listening to the story in Sepedi”*
- ❖ *“I felt happy listening to the story in my home language”*
- ❖ *“I want more lessons to be in Sepedi”*
- ❖ *“I understand the story better in Sepedi”*
- ❖ *“What I liked about the lesson is when we were listening the story in Sepedi”*



Storyboard 14:  
Happiness towards L1 when audio recordings are played

A learner at School B (6C11) expressed strong emotions such as 'great' and 'amazing' when listening to the audio recordings being played:

- ❖ *"It feel greateat and amayizing too"*

The learner further conveyed that a deeper understanding was gained when L1 was used in the classroom:

- ❖ *"Yes because I get to know mare this that I don't know or words that I don't understand"*

Similarly, a learner from School B (6C28) acknowledged the following:

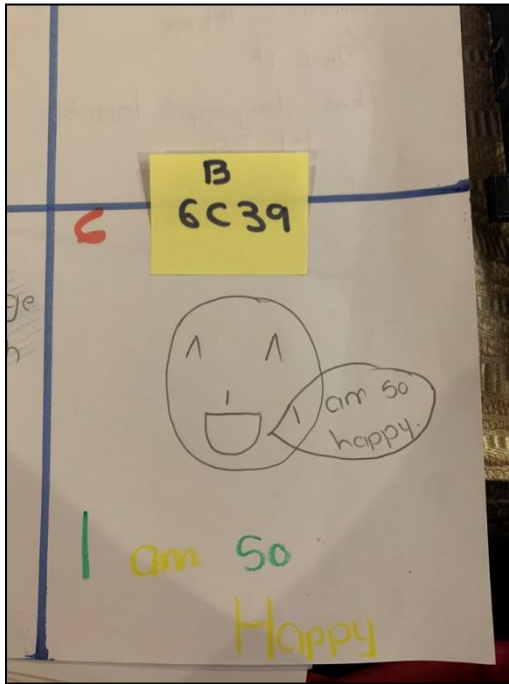
- ❖ *"Yes because its my language I understand it and love it I speak Isizulu everyday 'I understand it in Isizulu better than English'"*
- ❖ *"Yes because some of the words I didn't know they translated it in (IsiZulu) home language"*

The above comments confirm the need for translanguaging as a scaffolding tool to enhance learners' learning experiences. This is reaffirmed by a learner in School B (6C22) who expresses the following:

- ❖ *"I understand in both languages because when I didn't understand something in English I can understand it in IsiZulu"*
- ❖ *"Yes I enjoyed because they making us understand the story in our language"*

Storyboard 15 from School B (6C39) reinforced the previous learners' comments, attaching similar meanings to the translanguaging approach:

- ❖ *"I feel very happy because it makes me understand and listen"*
- ❖ *"I understand it in IsiZulu because it my language and I know it better than English"*



Storyboard 15:  
L1 creates happiness

A learner from School B (6C12) associated a sense of pride with the experience of translanguaging:

- ❖ *“What I liked it was a lesson to me I enjoyed very much because it is very good and I even make myself proud”*

A learner from School B (6C06) acknowledged in his/her storyboard that when multiple languages are used in a parallel manner, repetition is enforced, and this contributes to understanding:

- ❖ *“I like that they repeat for us in Sizulu”*
- ❖ *“I feel so very happy to listen the story”*
- ❖ *“Yes I understand in Sizulu because that is my language”*

The storyboard of learner from School B (6I030) presented a similar message, indicating that multiple languages scaffolded his/her understanding:

- ❖ *“I liked in two languages because i understand what they are saying in the story”*
- ❖ *“I feel happy because I understand in the story”*

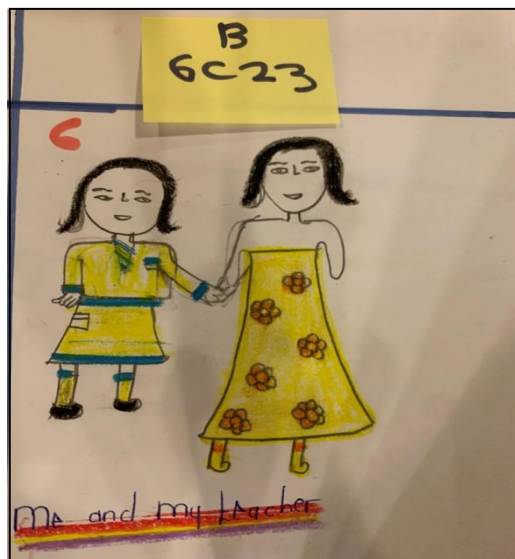
The storyboard of learner from School B (5I41) reiterates the message:

- ❖ *“Yes because it is my home language and i am used to it and it is better in Sizulu because the nouns that i don’t understand them in English i understand them in isiZulu”*
- ❖ *“I felt very happy listening to the story in sizulu because i understand it better in SiZulu”*

A Learner from School B (6C23) recognised the teacher as a role model. This is demonstrated in Storyboard 16:

- ❖ *“I felt very happy to hear a English story and change it to Zulu language”*
- ❖ *“Yes because its my home language and I really love storys with Zulu language”*

In the drawing, the student drew a picture of herself and her teacher holding hands.



Storyboard 16:  
Teacher and learner  
relationship highlighted

Storyboard 17 displays how learner from School B expressed gratitude for the translanguaging strategies that were implemented and which in turn promoted understanding:

- ❖ *“I will never leave my language and thank you very much”*
- ❖ *“I was very happy very very happy God bless you”*
- ❖ *“What I like about the lesson was when the teacher make me understand”*

In the same storyboard, the learner drew a smiling sun and a happy woman jumping in the air.



Storyboard 17:  
Translanguaging promotes  
gratitude in the learner

The storyboard from School B (5133) presents the following comments:

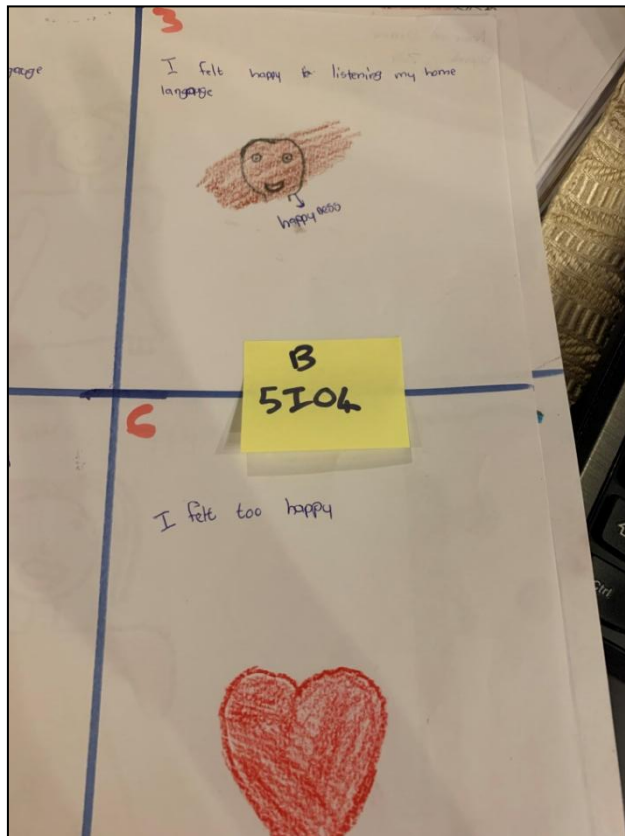
- ❖ *“Yes because it makes us to have some fun with our home language and we have never her the English story in sizulu”*
- ❖ *“Yes I feel very happy and it was very fun for me to listen to the story with my home language”*
- ❖ *“I like a lot about what we have ben doing in the class room”*

The storyboard from School B (5104) presented similar comments:

- ❖ *“I like the story I mean the lesson because the speaker were talking in different languages”*
- ❖ *“I felt happy listening my home language”*
- ❖ *“I felt so happy”*
- ❖ *“Yes because in every grade I will learn isiZulu”*

Storyboard 18 is another example of a learner expressing happiness.





Storyboard 18:  
L1 elicits happiness

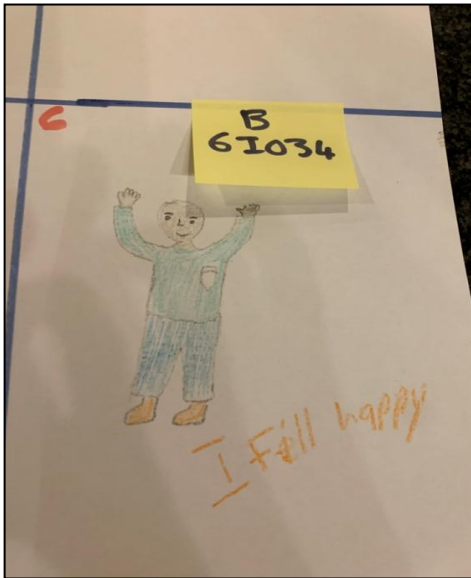
This emotion of happiness was reiterated in the storyboard from a learner in School B (5101):

- ❖ *“Yes because I like Sizulu and I want more lesson aboute Sizulu lessons”*
- ❖ *“I felt that I am talking to my mother at Home. Talking Sizulu with him.”*
- ❖ *“I like thise lesson about is good I love it”*

Storyboard 19 from the perspective of a learner in School B (61034) indicates the following comments:

- ❖ *“I like the lesson with English and Sepedi”*
- ❖ *“With all language English and Sepedi I know them”*
- ❖ *“Nice and lovely because is my languag”*
- ❖ *“Because is my language I know it”*





Storyboard 19:  
Visual display of happiness  
linked to multiple languages

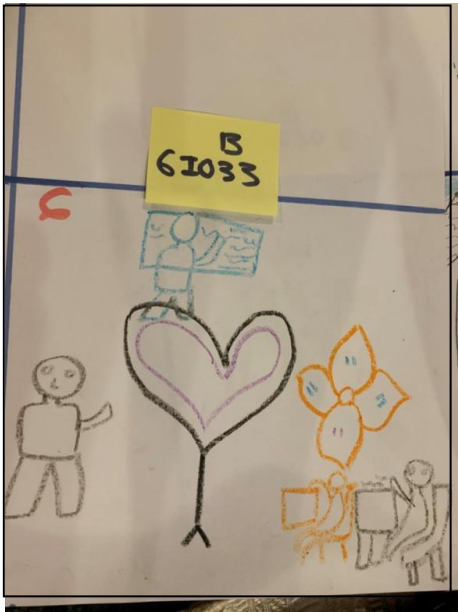
Happiness linked to multiple languages was indicated by a learner in School B (6128) who wanted more lessons in both Sepedi and English:

- ❖ *“I feel happy”*
- ❖ *“Yes enjoy listening again in Sepedi”*
- ❖ *“In English and Sepedi”*

A learner from School B (61033) stated the following:

- ❖ *“No I want to be in Sepedi I like to listen”*
- ❖ *“I feel happy to listening with Sepedi”*

The drawing in Storyboard 20 (61033) shows how learning should take place in a classroom with multiple languages. The picture displays a teacher teaching while the learner is sitting behind the desk. Symbols of hearts and flowers are present, demonstrating a positive association with multiple languages being included in classrooms.



Storyboard 20:  
Visual depiction of learning and understanding

Storyboard 21 from a learner from School B (61031) also presents images of hearts and flowers and includes a smiling face with the following text captions:

- ❖ *“Yes because it is my language and like to listening to it and understand”*
- ❖ *“Yes because I understand in English and Sepedi”*
- ❖ *“I felt happy about the lesson”*



Storyboard 21:  
Positive drawings linked to happiness

In summary, the positive comments from the 21 storyboards presented above strongly resonate with the three main themes identified in the study. Majority of the learners’ storyboards resonated with Theme 5 – achieving greater understanding through the use of multiple languages. Most learners articulated that their understanding improved when L1 was included in the classroom lessons.

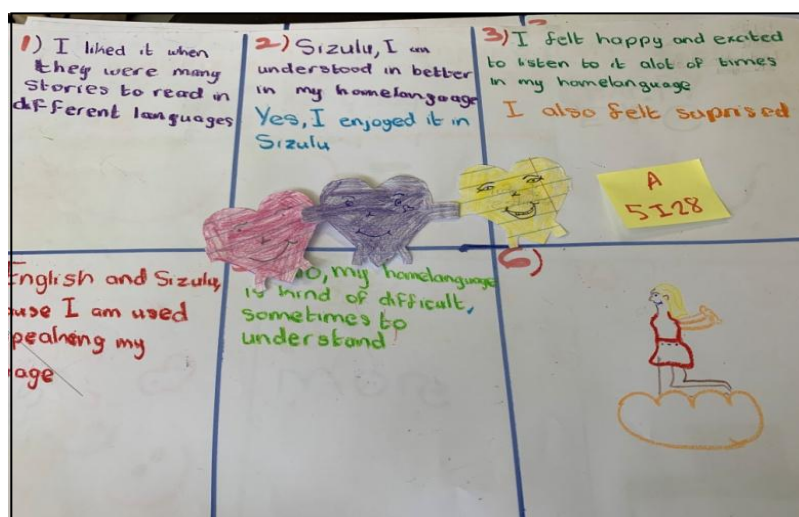
The storyboards of the learners that are not included in this chapter but are attached in Appendix D2, demonstrate similar comments. The storyboards reflect and confirm the essentiality of including translanguaging into classroom lessons, which in turn creates a greater opportunity to understand learning content. Including L1 into classroom lessons elicits positive, optimistic, and reminiscing emotions.

Most of the storyboards depicted very similar themes, and the learners' subjective experiences were collective. The majority of the learners expressed a need for translanguaging to be included as a support strategy in which multiple languages are taught in a parallel manner. Adopting such a strategy gives learners the opportunity to enhance their understanding through using their L1 to fill in the gaps created when using the English language. Furthermore, there is the need to recognise L1 as an essential asset for understanding and enhancing a positive image for all multilingual learners.

**(b) Results of the storyboards that reflected other viewpoints**

On the contrary, 15% of the learners viewed the translanguaging approach less optimistically. Mixed emotions were identified amongst a few learners. The learner of Storyboard 22 from School A (5128) indicated difficulty in understanding his/her L1 (isiZulu):

❖ ***“No my home language is kind of difficult sometimes to understand”***



Storyboard 22:  
Negative aspects of L1

Similar comments associated with isiZulu being a difficult language to understand were made by the following learners:

A learner from School B (6C18) commented:

- ❖ *“I would like more lessons to be in English”*
- ❖ *“I undertsnad in English not in IsiZulu because English is more easy than IsiZulu”*
- ❖ *“I felt very happy. Other people they don’t feel happy because the don’t like their home languag.”*

These learners described isiZulu as being a difficult language to understand, but this could have been influenced by the fact that they do not like their L1. Similar findings emerged from a learner from School B (6C09) whose work presented the following comments:

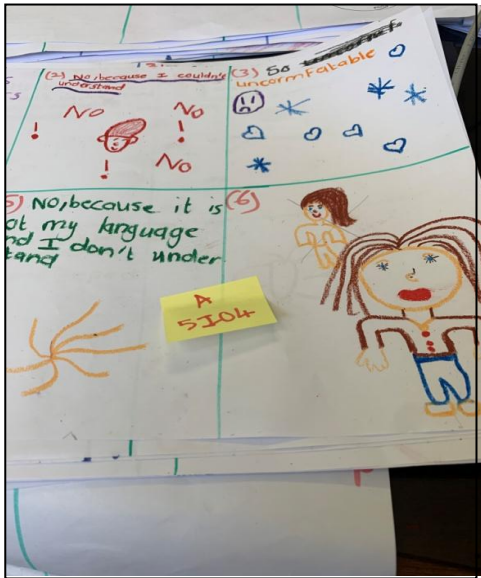
- ❖ *“I understand it better in English”*
- ❖ *“No because the were some words I didnot understand those words”*

A learner from School A (5I04) whose L1 is Xhosa expressed the following:

- ❖ *“No because I couldn’t understand”*
- ❖ *“So uncomfatable”*
- ❖ *“No, because it is not my language and I don’t understand”*
- ❖ *“In English”*

The above comments highlight the multiple languages that exist in South Africa. In the current study, Xhosa was not included in the translanguaging support strategy, and this made the learner feel uncomfortable because despite the support, the learner still felt minoritised since his/her particular L1 was not recognised inside the classroom.

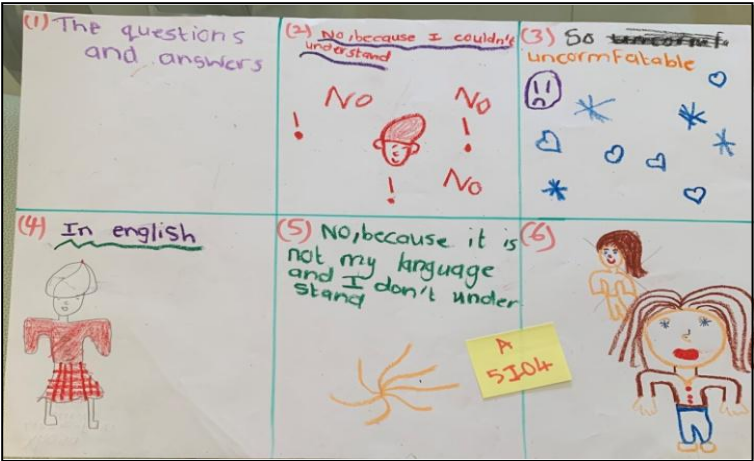
The drawings depicted in Storyboard 23 School A (5I04) clearly demonstrate the word “NO.” Exclamation marks and a sad face are used to express feelings that are not associated with positivity.



Storyboard 23:  
Negative response towards L1

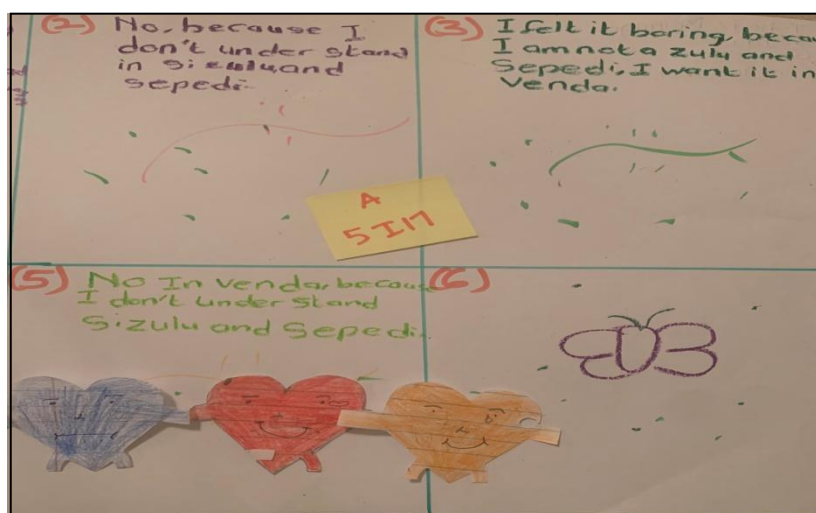
It would seem that in certain instances, two or three languages should be included in the translanguaging efforts in classroom spaces. The need to incorporate multiple languages is due to factors such as globalisation and immigrant learners (as discussed in Chapter 2). In this study, some immigrant learners appeared to feel minoritised in spite of support being given (see storyboards 24 and 25 below).

At least five of the storyboards displayed an indifferent opinion towards translanguaging. Two storyboards (Storyboard 24 and Storyboard 25 from learners in School A (5104) and (5117)) serve as examples to demonstrate how the learners were able to express themselves through the medium of the storyboard. In Storyboard 24, the learner uses strong words such as **“NO!, NO!, NO!”** and the statements, **“No, because I couldn’t understand”** and **“No, because it is not my language and I don’t understand.”** When asked how he/she felt listening to the L1, the learner responded, **“So uncomfortable.”**



Storyboard 24:  
A visual representation of a constraint identified from the learners' perspective

When asked if he/she enjoyed listening to the story again in Sepedi and isiZulu, the learner of Storyboard 25 from School A (5117) responded: ***“No because I don’t understand in Sizulu and Sepedi”***, followed by expressing a feeling of boredom: ***“I felt bored, because I am not a Zulu and Sepedi, I want it in Venda.”*** When asked if they would like more lessons to be translated into Sepedi or isiZulu, the learner reaffirmed, ***“No, In Venda, because I don’t understand Sizulu and Sepedi”***.



Storyboard 25:  
Visual representation of how a learner requests another L1

The above comment indicates the need to add an additional L1 (Venda) to support learning and understanding. It would seem that despite the negative experience of this learner, he/she still recognises the need to include an L1, which motivates the need for translanguaging. However, for the current research, this learner’s L1 was not included in the support implementation classes.

Another learner from School A (5113) shared the following view:

- ❖ ***“No because I do nt speak Sepedi at home I speak Tswane”***
- ❖ ***“I understand the story in English”***
- ❖ ***“Sepedi is not mu langange I donot speak sepdi and I felt sad”***

A learner from School B (6CO3) commented:

- ❖ ***“In English because I didn’t hear that man clear because in other ways he was making many mistakes so I understand the story in English not in SiZulu”***

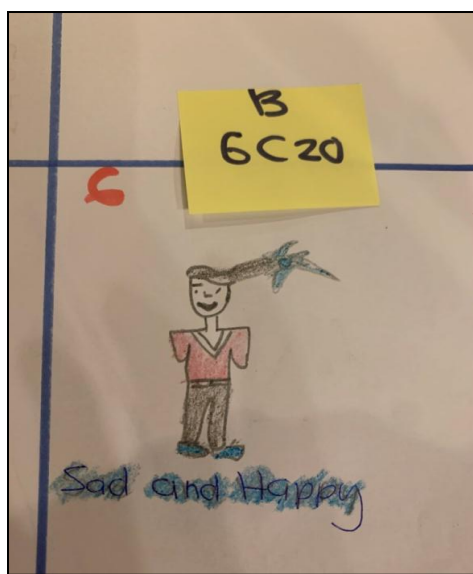
In Storyboard 26, a learner from School B (6C20) critiqued the translator in the audio recording and disliked the manner in which the translator was speaking:



- ❖ *“I like every lesson except Isizulu”*
- ❖ *“No because I like English”*
- ❖ *“No because the man is not speaking properly”*

In the drawing, the learner drew a picture with the caption,

- ❖ *“Sad and Happy”*



Storyboard 26:  
Mixed emotions identified

A learner from School B (5I22) shared the same view and asserted:

- ❖ *“No because it was not reading it nice.”*
- ❖ *“No because he will read so slow again.”*
- ❖ *“I felt happy and sad at the same time.”*

The information elicited from the storyboards indicate some of the constraints identified within a translanguaging space and clearly align with the present study as being important aspects to consider and discuss. These constraints are addressed comprehensively in Chapter 5 in line with the proposed research questions.

#### 4.6.4 DISCUSSION OF STORYBOARDS

The findings that emerged from the storyboards are crucial in answering the research questions. More specifically, the majority of the comments in the storyboards perceive translanguaging positively as a support strategy in multilingual classrooms. The manner in which the learners experience learning in multilingual contexts is clearly outlined in their storyboards and serves as an important contribution to the

research questions. The learners' authenticity in their storyboards can offer many insights into the use of translanguaging support strategies. It is equally crucial to understand how the learners experienced the translanguaging support strategies in order to answer the research questions.

The drawings/writings presented by learners in the storyboards demonstrate the meanings they attach to the topic being investigated (Guillemin, 2004; MacGregor et al., 1998; Mair & Kierans, 2007). Detailed information was gained from each storyboard that was reflective of the learner's wants and needs. The learners were all able to express themselves on paper, exposing their lived experience of the support sessions in which translanguaging was used. This is endorsed by MacGregor et al. (1998) who assert that the drawings are vital because they are produced by a specific individual in a particular space and time and are considered a visual representation of the learner.

The majority of the learners agreed that they benefitted by listening to the comprehension texts in their L1. The rich, authentic, and valuable information obtained from the storyboards aligns with the research of Burke and Prosser (2008) who assert that storyboards help to understand a child's inner world and enable communication. The positive responses elicited from the storyboards indicate the need to embrace translanguaging in schools in order to uplift and to move away from monolingual language systems towards a more flexible approach to accommodate multilingualism.

Snell (2017) elaborates that for learners to interact with the world and to create new meaning, they need to use language to shape, recall, and communicate their experiences. This aligns with how the learners in this study responded to L1 being included in their learning and teaching environment in which L1 created a platform for communication through the medium of the storyboard where learners were able to express their need for L1. On this note, Busch (2012) and Garcia and Baetens Beardsmore (2009) describe language as a social process involving a learner's linguistic repertoire to make connections and meaning, using creativity to move fluidly amongst the linguistic practices that are most appropriate in any given situation.

Most of the storyboards demonstrated positive views on the use of translanguaging. This aligned with Theme 4 – requesting a need for more translanguaging lessons to



be included in classrooms. The storyboards also identified with Theme 5, with the results reflecting greater understanding associated with translanguaging. Lastly, most of the storyboards related strongly to Theme 6, which associates positive emotional feelings with listening to L1.

The results from the storyboards resonated with Chongo et al. (2018) who advocated that the storyboard can facilitate and provide an in-depth narration of the lived experience of study participants. The honest and clear meanings elicited from the individual storyboards concur with Chase et al. (2012) who describe the storyboard method as an alternative mode of engagement to face-to-face conversations with participants with cultural barriers. In the current research, the messages displayed on the storyboards were very clear. Using the storyboard method, learners were able to express their needs in a culturally less-biased environment and their drawings and writings depicted their feelings in a straightforward, sincere, and non-threatening way. These feelings reflected both positive and negative experiences and were a valuable source of data.

The need for more translanguaging support strategies incorporating L1 as an important means of communication aligns with Dodman (2016) who asserts that language permits the flow and the sharing of information between individuals and their environments through communication. Wells (1999) confirms that language enables one to make sense of the world in which one lives and to act accordingly.

Certain learners indicated that their L1 was not included in the translanguaging classroom. This resonates strongly within a South Africa context, a country with 11 official languages (Constitution, 1996; Hurst & Mona, 2017; Songxaba et al., 2017) and aligns strongly with Kioko et al. (2008) who denote the role of L1 in education and learning as being significantly important.

Some of the learners did not perceive the translanguaging support strategy lessons positively because their L1 was not included. This signifies and highlights the urgent need for L1 as a medium included in classrooms to cater for a multilingual population. The 15% of learners identified in this study who viewed the translanguaging approach less optimistically demonstrate the vital need to accommodate learners from linguistically diverse platforms. Although the present study used three languages simultaneously in the translanguaging strategy, the need

for an additional L1 was indicated. These learners indicated that they did not benefit from the translanguaging support strategy since their L1 was not included, which made them feel excluded. The exclusion felt by the learners who did not experience a process of mediation and scaffolding to enhance their understanding can be attributed to the conflicts of language resolution due to socio-economic inequality that have influenced South Africa (Omidire, 2019b; Prinsloo et al., 2018; Spaul, 2015). Most of these learners travel from various townships that comprise a rich multilingual society and, therefore, some L1s were not identified in this study, minoritising certain learners. This study agrees with Garcia and Leiva (2014) and Velasco and Garcia (2014) who assert that learners should be able to practise dynamic languages, thus opening a space for liberation, giving learners a voice, and eventually eradicating negative outcomes for minoritised learners.

The literacy skills of the learners identified from the storyboards significantly aligned with the literacy challenges related to writing seen in the worksheets completed by the learners (see Section 4.5.1.2a). This revealed that the basic literacy skills of the majority of the learners are deficient or lacking, aligning with Omidire, (2019a) and these difficulties must not be overlooked.

#### **4.7 SUMMARY**

The themes that emerged during the analysis of the data were described in detail in this chapter. Chapter 5 discusses the findings described in Chapter 4 in terms of relevant literature on the topic. The research questions posed in Chapter 1 are addressed through the findings of the study. The limitations and contributions of the study are also described before recommendations are made for further research and training. Finally, concluding comments are given.

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## **CHAPTER 5**

# **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this concluding chapter, I provide an overview of chapters 1 to 4. Thereafter, I present the answers to the primary and the secondary research questions indicated in Chapter 1. Contributions of this study are identified, followed by probable limitations of the research. Lastly, the chapter concludes with recommendations for future training, practice and research.

### **5.2 OVERVIEW OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS**

Chapter 1 introduced and provided a general overview of the study. This was followed by the problem statement, an explanation for the purpose statement and the significance thereof. The research questions were formulated to guide the study, and the conceptual framework was briefly outlined. My selected epistemology and methodological approach was introduced and the methodological strategies employed were briefly stated. The chapter concluded with a brief overview of the quality criteria and ethical considerations that were adhered to throughout the study.

Chapter 2 consisted of a literature review that drew attention to the global impact of multilingualism and its effect on the language and communication practices identified in learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms. The socio-economic effects, teachers' position in multilingual education settings, and the value of L1 within a South African context were considered. I deliberated on the global impact and the strategies used in multilingual education. This was followed by a discussion of translanguaging as a practice for supporting learners' academic and linguistic progress by considering both the enablers and constraints of the practice. The chapter concluded by identifying Vygotsky's SCT and the asset-based approach as theoretical frameworks to support my study and my conceptual framework.

Chapter 3 encapsulated the research process, outlining the research methodology and the meta-theoretical paradigm on which the study was based. The research design and the selection of participants were explained, followed by a detailed overview of the various steps of the research process, data-collection methods, data

analysis, quality criteria, population sampling, and the research timeline process. Adherence to quality criteria, ethical considerations and my role as the researcher, as strongly abiding principles throughout the research process were demonstrated.

Chapter 4 presented the results of the study in terms of the themes and subthemes that emerged following the thematic data analysis. The results were subsequently positioned in terms of existing literature with the aim of presenting the findings.

### **5.3 DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In this section, I address the formulated research questions that guided the study. I initially address the five secondary research questions and then endeavour to answer the primary research question. Throughout this chapter, I link the findings of the study to the extensive literature review presented in Chapter 2 and the conceptual framework that was discussed in Section 2.8.

#### **5.3.1 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 1**

The Secondary Research Question 1 for the study is as follows:

*What are the enablers of translanguaging in primary school classes?*

The enablers for implementing translanguaging in primary school classrooms were identified as a subtheme in the overarching theme of conceptualising L1 as an asset in multilingual classrooms. The enablers of translanguaging played a significant role in the results of this study. The enablers identified were as follows:

- A non-threatening environment supported the learners and made them feel accepted.
- Teachers' positive attitudes towards translanguaging made the support strategy easier to administer.
- The availability of the translated audio recordings of learners' L1s as a resource and the inclusion of L1 in the lessons enabled the success of translanguaging as a practice in multilingual classrooms.

##### **5.3.1.1 A non-threatening environment**

During the course of the study, learners from both schools experienced translanguaging support lessons with the aim of empowering the learner (to learn)

while providing the teacher with skills (use of L1 to scaffold learning). This resonates with the assertion of Wei (2011) that translanguaging indeed alters the landscape of monolingual teaching. The research demonstrated that multiple languages in a lesson worked relatively well and was met with comments like 'benefitted the learners', 'enjoyment', and 'better understanding' when translanguaging was taking place. These results are in line with research from Clyne (2017) and Wei (2011), who similarly accept that the process of learning and teaching takes place when multiple languages are included, resulting in effective meaning making as discussed in section 4.3.1.1.

The teachers found that the learners felt included when they heard their L1s being played in the classroom, supporting their understanding and enabling more engagement during the lesson. The learners were able to understand the meanings of words that they previously did not know and seemed comfortable while the support strategy was being implemented. This is in line with Garcia, et al., (2017) who share the same conviction that translanguaging enables learners to feel accepted into the classroom community which in turn promotes the use of all their resources to participate fully. Similarly, the work of Mgijima and Makalela (2016) illustrates the positive effects of translanguaging in line with the present study. This includes the creation of meaning-making by learners, a safe environment in which learners can experiment with their L1 and L2 in a non-threatening way, and there is collaboration and association amongst the learners.

The value of L1 in the particular social context of these learners is identified by Vygotsky (1962) who stated that language affords a way through which information is transmitted for individuals by considering their social and cultural context. This plays an important role in their development and is linked to my conceptual framework. Including learners from similar contextual backgrounds and with the same L1 into a classroom space with teachers they know created a non-threatening environment that enabled translanguaging as a practice to take place. A similar view is demonstrated by Leask (2019) who accepts that enabling language learning in multilingual classrooms requires a specific social environment, school culture, and instructional classroom in order to integrate and support learners by creating innovative ways for them to achieve academically.

The learners and teachers involved in the current study expressed that including L1 into the classroom enabled the learners to associate positively with their L1, creating a feeling of acceptance and at the time, informing their understanding, see section 4.3.1.1. This is in line with Bialystok (2018) and Ismaili (2015) who echo that teachers need to adopt a positive attitude to create a classroom environment that is conducive to learning as identified in the current study resulting in learners being awarded the opportunity to engage in translanguaging. Moreover, the study of Hassan and Ahmed (2015) demonstrate the positive effect of translanguaging, reinforcing certain concepts through repetition in various languages, inevitably leading to a more profound understanding and learning of subject material (Hassan & Ahmed, 2015) as demonstrated in the support implementation classes. Likewise a learning platform for the learners was established because the teachers willingly embraced the support strategy to enable learning to take place which benefitted the learners optimally. Daniel et al. (2019) concur with these findings and assert that by scaffolding translanguaging into classrooms, teachers can optimise the learners' learning experience to be beneficial and worthwhile in their school environment

### **5.3.1.2 Teachers' positive attitude towards translanguaging**

The teachers were positive towards the support strategy and created a non-threatening environment for the learners as discussed above and seen in section 4.3.1.1, and thus, the benefits of incorporating L1 into the classroom were favourable and enabled translanguaging to take place. During the lessons in which L1 was included, the teachers facilitated the strategy by asking the learners questions relating to the comprehension texts. Bialystok (2018) and Ismaili (2015) maintain that teachers in diverse linguistic settings need to have a positive attitude to create a harmonious classroom environment. This aligns with the conceptual framework of the current study that specifically focused on mediation, implying that teachers should engage in a process of interaction where they can comment on the learners problem-solving efforts in oral or written reflections (Brown & Cole, 2002).

The teachers' engagement with the learners during the lessons enabled the translanguaging support strategy to meet its outcome. This in turn led to the teachers concurring that the translanguaging strategies positively affected the learners. The learners were able to scaffold their learning in the classroom by applying L1, already a resource in their life world, and formulate direct links between understanding and

the content being taught. In addition, collaborative or cooperative learning was established to scaffold learners successfully. This aligns with one of Sarker's (2019) processes that meaningfully scaffolds learners' experiences and also identified in section 4.3.1.3.

Literature concurs that the most favourable situation is if the teachers organise lessons and use teaching strategies that lead to learning settings in which learners feel accepted by their teachers and are included in the classroom teaching environment (Cummins & Schecter, 2003; Frank & Torpsten, 2015; Lwanga-Lumu, 2020). Similarly, Cahyani et al. (2016) elaborate that the translanguaging approach is indeed a coherent way for teachers and/or learners to manage and facilitate the mental process of learning. Garcia (2009d) shares this view.

The findings in this study confirm that translanguaging is a progressive movement in education that shifts from monolingual to multilingual education. The latter enables access to different linguistic features in order to expand communication, promote meaning-making and gain understanding and knowledge through the integration of the various languages. These findings are supported by Makalela's, (2018b) view of moving away from monolingual language hierarchies (Makalela, 2018b), to subsequently embracing translanguaging as a strategy promoting accessibility of L1, thereby making it possible for learners to experience a good education (Makoe & McKinney, 2014).

### **5.3.1.3 Availability of translated audio recordings as a resource**

The teachers' observations in relation to the translated audio recordings of learners' L1s, served as an enabler in the multilingual classroom. Availability of this form of technology, of having access to three languages during a lesson, as well as the hard copies of the translated texts allowed most of the learners to follow the story. This was captured when the learners continued to turn the pages of the comprehension texts while listening to the same content (story) in their L1. This meant that learners seemed to be understanding. This act described the language practice known as translanguaging and fits the description of being "the planned and systematic use of two languages within the same lesson" (Nagy, 2018, p. 42) to support learners in multilingual classrooms. Similarly Lewis et al., (2012b) confirm that translanguaging

alternates between language of input and output in the classroom, in line with the current findings from this study.

The translated audio recordings and its positive impact on the learners was supported by Wu (2018) who stated that Vygotsky's SCT theory is significant to language acquisition, where L1 plays an essential role for learners to learn and acquire a new language by building on their ideas through relationships with the social world, who typically can include the class teacher and other learners, in line with the present study. Moreover the findings from the current study endorse Garcia's (2019) view that translanguaging allows a space for all learners to be educated and increases their meaning making making the educational experience worthwhile.

The translated audio recordings additionally linked to the conceptual framework of the study, which identified with Sakar's (2019) process of determining the reasons for learners' frustration and controlling that frustration by including the translated recordings to scaffold learning. The translated audio recordings of the specific L1s of the current study additionally provided a platform that enabled better understanding and generated more confident learners (see section 4.4.1.1). This is in line with the study of Wei (2011) and Omidire (2019b) that indicated developing confidence amongst learners as a benefit of translanguaging. Similarly, the inclusion of L1 in this study is viewed as an asset, in line with (Prinsloo, et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2020) who assert that L1 is valuable to include in the educational sphere.

The conceptual framework of this study appreciates L1 as a resource in the classroom environment that supports learners in gaining an in-depth understanding, which aligns with Eloff and Ebersöhn's (2001) view. This view correlates with that of Scanlan (2007) who associates the asset-based perspective with language learning, making the claim that L1 should be recognised as a fundamental strength. Additionally Omidire (2019b) echoes that for learning to take place, L1 ought to be included to allow learners to make connections thereby promoting better skills is comprehension. Phipps, (2019) shares the same view that when learners can alternate L1 with other languages, this organised switching of languages of input and output allows information to be processed efficiently.

The translated audio recordings provided a scaffold between the teacher and the learner, mediating a process of learning and teaching to take place in an environment



where language barriers exist. This is in line with Vygotsky's (1962) approach of including mediation and scaffolding. Technology seemed an appropriate way for translanguaging practices to be effective in the current study in. Mays (2019) encourages proactive support strategies such as technology as resources in diverse settings for learning and teaching to take place. Furthermore, Mays (2019) states that technology is an enabler to support translanguaging; it can "be used during the process of teaching and learning to address barriers to learning" (p. 141).

Lantolf's (2000) assertion of SCT is that the mind is mediated and that an individual does not establish a direct relationship with the world but that this relationship is mediated through the use of tools. This is in line with the current study that acknowledges that the translated audio recordings of L1 function as tools to support the learning and teaching processes in multilingual classrooms.

The findings of this study are in agreement with existing literature, which states that enabling translanguaging support strategies in multilingual classroom spaces leads to positive outcomes. There is conformity in the research substantiating that L1 needs a space in the educational environment so that learners can scaffold their learning (Hillman et al., 2019). This is achieved firstly, by understanding the content being taught to learners through their L1 (Makalela, 2015b) and secondly, by allowing learners to navigate their learning, not relying fully on L1 but rather using it as a mediator to accommodate their learning experience (Hillman et al., 2019; Makalela, 2015a). This rationale is featured in the findings of this study where multiple languages afforded a more holistic approach to learning and teaching.

#### **5.3.1.4 Including first language in the classroom facilitates better understanding**

First language as an enabler supported the learners and made it possible for them to understand better because they were simultaneously involved in the processes of reading and listening to the text as seen in section 4.4.1.2. Thus, translanguaging enhanced the learners' understanding when included in the classroom. This finding aligns with that of Tian and Macaro (2012) who demonstrated that learners who received input in their L1 benefitted more than learners who received input in one language only. Gorter and Cenoz (2017) and Ngcobo et al. (2016) view translanguaging as a way to accommodate comprehension skills, ideally providing

translations of the tasks and allowing learners to answer content questions in the language in which they feel most comfortable.

In the current study, the teachers observed that including multiple languages resulted in the learners being more engaged in the lessons because L1 guided their understanding and allowed them to code switch certain words. This fell in line with Clyne (2017) who asserts the inclusion of two or more languages enhanced communication. Similar views are confirmed by Cummins (2019, 2009), he indicated L1 as a foundation upon which new knowledge is built, and Gobingca (2013) acknowledges that when L1 was phased into the education system in South Africa and maintained for eight years as the primary language of learning, an improvement in the matriculation results of black learners resulted. Sayer (2013) motivates for L1 in classrooms and appeals to teachers to recognise and use learners' L1 as teaching tools in line with the translanguaging approach.

My study incorporated L1 into the classroom, and the following benefits were established:

- The learners who experienced the translanguaging demonstrated more involvement and engagement in the lessons than the learners in the control class.
- The learners who experienced the translanguaging demonstrated increased understanding by raising their hands to answer questions related to the lessons that were given in multiple languages.
- The learners who experienced the translanguaging showed more interest in the lessons than the learners in the control class where no L1 was present.

The above aligns with the views of Atkinson et al. (2000) that SCT acts as a vehicle to create a learning environment comprising interaction between teachers, learners and tasks, presenting opportunities for learners to build their own understanding during their interactions with others. Ma (2017), similarly states that assistance must be provided to support the learner to reach his/her zone of proximal development (ZPD) or develop language acquisition. Rizve (2012) concurs that the most efficient way of implementing learning and teaching pedagogy is to rely on a more knowledgeable peer to support learners in learning effectively by scaffolding them in their particular ZPD. In the present study, the translated audio recordings of L1

served as a platform to provide the learners with the appropriate support, in line with Siyepu (2013) who asserts that once the learner, with guided support masters the task, support can then be removed allowing the learner to complete the task alone. This aligns with Vygotsky's view that by providing guided support can assist the learner to achieve the task (Galloway, 2001), and also identified in section 4.4.1.2.

Furthermore, the teachers in the current study observed that the learners were listening to the lesson and following the text visually. The teachers claimed that this subsequently led to the learners having a better understanding of the comprehension text and thus able to answer the questions relating to it. This correlates with the views of Lewis et al. (2012a) and Mjijima and Makalela (2016) who describe translanguaging as the intentional alternating of the language of input and the language of output during a lesson, with a view to allow learners to think and express their ideas in the language in which they feel comfortable.

Similar views were shared by Garcia and Lin (2017) and Menken and Shohamy (2015), who agree that several languages make academic content more understandable. Meanwhile Rivera and Mazak (2017), Makalela (2015a), and Omidire (2019b) shared that integrating L1 enhances the sense of ownership within the learning process and fosters a stronger sense of identity.

Similarly, the asset-based approach featured in the conceptual framework was pertinent to this study because L1 was viewed as an asset within the South African context. This concurs with Myende and Chikoko (2014) who assert that it is crucial to identify existing assets within the community. Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006) describe classroom assets as including human resources, books, videos, audiotapes, furniture, blackboards, diversity, peer group support, and teaching methods. These assets are important because they contribute to the learning and teaching practices found in African schools. For my study, L1 together with teacher support, the school environment (building with classrooms, desks, furniture, etc.), the teachers and their resources, and the learners with the same L1 served as enablers and supported learning within the classroom.

In summary, the translanguaging strategies implemented in the current study seemed to have a profoundly positive effect on the learners in multilingual classrooms. Learners' experienced a safe environment where L1 scaffolded and

facilitated better understanding. In addition, the teachers' enthusiasm facilitated a smooth administration of the support strategy that included learners' L1s being translated and pre-recorded to enable translanguaging to take place as a practice in multilingual classrooms.

The aforementioned findings align with the work of Baker's (2011) educational advantages of translanguaging. Baker (2011) states that the translanguaging approach supports a fuller understanding of the learning content and enhances the understanding of the L2 (in this case, English). Findings from my study highlight these advantages by making it possible for learners to use their L1 in their learning environment through mediated support received from the translated audio recordings, as well as the subsequent facilitation received from the teacher in a safe environment, integrating the learning experience for all learners positively.

### **5.3.2 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

The Secondary Research Question 2 for the study is as follows:

*What are the constraints of translanguaging to support learning and teaching in primary school classes?*

The constraints of using translanguaging to support learning and teaching practices in multilingual classrooms included the following:

- Language complexities and contrary views relating to L1;
- lack of resources and time constraints;
- insufficient training to teach in multilingual classrooms; and
- existing socio-economic factors.

These constraints are discussed individually below.

#### **5.3.2.1 Language complexities and contrary views relating to first language**

From the teacher's observations and from a few learners' comments (see section 4.5.1.1), the translated recordings of isiZulu appeared to be slightly difficult to understand when the English text was translated to IsiZulu. Similar findings were outlined by Mgijima and Makalela (2016) who similarly expressed that the L1, namely

isiXhosa, used in their study was a complicated language and did not simplify the learners' understanding. Similar findings came from Deumert's (2010) study, where learners preferred to use English as opposed to Xhosa, claiming that it is a complex language to understand,

Some of the learners storyboard's demonstrated differing views with regard to including L1 as identified in section 4.6.3.1. Some learners appreciated L1 being incorporated into the classroom but at the same time indicated that they also understood the content in English for the reason that they do not speak their L1 at home any longer. In this regard Strauss (2016) draws attention to this view by identifying parents' views of adopting the approach of having their children taught through the medium of English and eliminating L1 entirely as a resource within African languages. Other views from learners indicated that they were not comfortable using their L1 confirming Parmegiani and Rudwick's (2014) argument that some learners were not comfortable using their L1 in an academic setting due to the lack of opportunity in their schooling years to develop strong academic literacy skills in their L1. Similar findings resonated from Garcia and Wei (2014) who assert that the minority language cannot compete with the majority language.

Literature contends that some parents want their children to learn in an English medium from Grade 1 (Nel et al., 2012), resulting in language challenges due to English not being their L1 (Rossi & Stuart, 2007). Additionally, past historical ideologies found that parents in rural areas requested the school to teach their children in English because they viewed English as the only language spoken by most South Africans (Moodley et al., 2019).

Findings from the current study highlight the teachers concern with regard to language policies which have affected many learners who firstly, are very reliant on their L1 and secondly, whose L1 falls away from Grade 4 onwards when English becomes the LoLT in public schools (Krstic & Nilsson, 2018; Makalela, 2018a). This causes learners to experience a lack of understanding because L1 is not included in their classrooms any longer, which affects learning outcomes (Prinsloo et al., 2018).

A small percentage of learners felt excluded during the translanguaging support strategies because their particular L1 was not translated and audio recorded. The teachers observed that this made some of these learners feel excluded. This aligns

with Ngcobo et al. (2016) who express that learners who are not proficient in the African languages used in class may feel left out. Extending this argument, one teacher from the current study proposed that these minority learners should grasp translanguaging as an opportunity to acquire a new language and reap the benefits in areas such as the work place later in life, aligning with Hanushek and Woessmann's (2012), viewpoint of the economic benefits related to multilingualism.

Ferreira-Meyers and Horne (2017) additionally concur that when learners are exposed to multilingualism in the educational system, they are competent to face the professional (and personal) world in which they interact. According to these scholars, multilingualism in education also provides learners with skills that can be used beyond school level. These skills will become valuable assets and will enable them to work and study in other countries, fitting into a large society and thus increasing job opportunities (Crawford, 1996; De Klerk, 1995; Hanushek & Woessmann, 2012; Laitin & Ramachandran, 2014; Skutnabb-Kangas & Garcia, 1995). These views align with the conceptual framework featuring the asset-based approach whereby scholars such as Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) encourage one to recognise capacities, abilities, skills, and social resources in every person and community.

### **5.3.2.2 Lack of resources and time constraints**

Commonalities were observed between both research sites, including lack of resources, shortage of teachers, and overcrowded classrooms resulting in a shortage of furniture such as tables and chairs, (see section 4.5.1.1). Additionally, educational resources such as a curriculum to cater for multilingualism and dictionaries for the learners to use during the English lessons were lacking, impeding the learning and teaching practices. Furthermore, financial constraints including the lack of funding for basic resources by government and the respective departments was questioned by the School Principal, HOD and the teachers of both research sites in separate discussions.

Mokolo (2014), Myende (2014), and Gobingca (2013) affirm that many schools in the township/rural areas are characterised as being under resourced and lacking basic facilities such as sufficient classrooms, electricity and water. These schools often lack furniture such as desks and chairs for the learners. The classrooms are overcrowded, and the teacher–learner ratio is concerning. This concern is predominant in literature

in which similar trajectories are identified. Ebersöhn et al. (2017) denote the limited access to adequate electricity, transportation, and education as significant challenges that affect learning outcomes. The findings from my study identified these challenges as significant.

Moreover, educational resources to support multilingualism appeared to be of little concern in these schools, despite the urgent need expressed by the teachers to provide them with additional resources such as translated L1s and to include educational resources such as English textbooks with translated CDs in the different L1s to scaffold learning. Recommendations to adjust the curriculum to include diverse languages were motivated from the School Principal and the teachers who realised the urgency of implementing such support strategies to accommodate learners in multilingual classrooms (see section 4.3.1.2). These findings fall in line with (Makalela's, 2015c) view of an overwhelming and dominating curriculum which compels the learners to fit into a box and does not allow flexibility in their choice of language. However, the teachers in the present study were mindful that such initiatives are extremely time consuming and expensive, especially when all learning content needs to be translated and the country already has impending financial constraints. There is agreement in research that most schools are under resourced and are not equipped to cater for learners in multilingual classrooms (Rassool & Edwards, 2010).

The inclusion of translanguaging support strategies was linked to time constraints, in line with Palmer (2009) who addresses time constraints as a significant concern, especially when schools have to adhere to traditional language boundaries and segmenting language lessons to certain times a day. Thus the teacher's view in the current study of including multiple languages to guide the learning experience could influence the assessment criteria stipulated by the Department of Education (2009b) (which does not cater for multilingual learning), thus creating a sense of apprehension in teachers if deadlines cannot be met correlates with literature. The work of Omidire (2013) also demonstrates these constraints and indicates that teachers need more support and better preparation to make meaningful changes in multilingual classrooms.

Omidire (2019a) reinforces that teachers do not have sufficient training to deal with L2 learning (also demonstrated in this study, section 4.5.1.2), and they cannot adjust

the curriculum in support of their teaching due to time constraints, especially in large classrooms (Khong & Saito, 2013). In line with the findings of the current study (see section 4.5.1.2), teachers find it difficult to include support strategies for learners since there are insufficient resources at many of the schools (Balfour et al., 2008), and this influences learners' schooling.

### **5.3.2.3 Insufficient training to teach in multilingual classrooms**

The teachers who participated in the current study are aware of the literacy challenges that learners are experiencing within the South African context. However, these teachers are frustrated by the fact that they are unable to provide their learners with the knowledge and skills that are the result of socio economic factors which teachers do not have control of. Nagy (2018) similarly states that teachers often feel challenged when they have to use multiple languages in the classroom to promote learning because they have only been trained according to monolingual language norms, which discard the use of other languages in the class.

The School Principal acknowledged that for multilingualism to be accepted in schools and for learners to realise the educational benefits of guided support "reskilling and upskilling of teachers" is required (see section 4.5.1.2). Teacher training is imperative and recognised as a need by this School Principal, who subsequently rationalised that the school governing body lacked funds to initiate training for teachers. Naiker et al. (2014) agree that a School Principal's leadership is an important resource for any school, and the School Principal should establish partnerships with the teachers through mentoring and providing support. Myende and Chikoko (2014) confirm that such partnerships allow teachers to be regarded as assets. According to Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006), school assets include the leadership capacity of teachers, learners, and parents together with books, videos, audiotapes, furniture, blackboards, and the peer group support of diverse learners with different L1s.

These findings align with Nel and Müller (2010) who recommend that teachers should receive training to teach English as an L2 and be given general support to teach the learners effectively. Similarly Wu (2018) states that persons responsible for school policy should take action, such as adjusting policies properly, supporting teachers' professional development, and establishing a comfortable and environment



to allow both learners and teachers to feel more confident and eradicate feelings of apprehension.

Findings from this study elicit that learning and teaching in multilingual settings needs a shift in focus within the academic sphere to accommodate diversity. Omidire (2019a) summarises the teacher's position in multilingual classrooms by stating,

[M]any teachers are ill prepared to deal with learners who speak English as a second language. Teachers have insufficient training to handle second language learning and to adjust the curriculum in support of their teaching. To teach second language learners properly, more time is needed to work effectively with them. (p. 8)

It would seem that teacher training is not sufficiently recognised as a need in schools. It is important to highlight such training since it contributes to the learning and teaching practices found in African schools.

#### **5.3.2.4 Existing socio-economic factors**

South Africa has a multitude of socio-economic challenges including poverty and unemployment (Prinsloo et al., 2018; Spaul, 2013), overcrowded classrooms, and teachers whose L1 is different to that of the learners (Daly & Sharma, 2018). The current study established that socio-economic factors are prominently identified in both schools and often impede learning outcomes. The findings in relation to the existing literacy skill challenges identified in the worksheets of the learners prominently echo the work of Omidire (2013) on language practices and the literacy statistics in South African schools, which demonstrate inadequate results in basic literacy skills. Furthermore, Omidire's (2019a) study emphasises that many of the learners find it challenging to express themselves in English. This is often reflected in the quality of their written work that appears to magnify the extent of illegible sentences, incorrect use of grammar, and poor handwriting, which are indeed the ramifications of learning in their L2s, and clearly displayed in the worksheets of most learners in the current study.

Cognisant of these challenges the teachers in the current study support the idea of embracing translanguaging as a support strategy to develop learners' literacy skills and acknowledge the need for L1 to be included in the school curriculum. This is in

line with the asset-based approach that identifies with the challenges that are experienced in the educational sphere. Myende (2014) similarly suggests that to overcome these problems, schools need to develop strategies such as assessing their existing assets and mobilising them accordingly.

### **5.3.3 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

The Secondary Research Question 3 for the study is as follows:

*How do learners experience learning in multilingual contexts?*

Determining the learners' experiences is valuable because they contribute to the essence of the study. It appears that translanguaging scaffolded the learning experience for the learners. The learners were supported in the process of learning and achieved a level of greater understanding through the use of translanguaging practices. In addition, the impact of translanguaging was viewed positively by the learners (analysis of the individual storyboards) who seemed to experience positive emotional feelings while listening to their L1. The points outlined above are discussed with a view to answer the research question.

#### **5.3.3.1 Learners supported in the process of learning to a level of achieving greater understanding**

The findings from this study demonstrated that listening to comprehension text in multiple languages (L1s together with English) created better understanding for the learners and that repetition of the multiple languages used in the classroom supported learning (see section 4.3.1.1). These findings are similar to those of Snell (2017) who elaborates that for learners to interact with the world and to create new meaning, they need to use language to shape, recall, and communicate their experiences. Similarly, Owen-Smith (2010) denotes the significance of L1 as giving learners opportunities to perform to the best of their ability and to reach their full potential.

In this study, the experience of learners in multilingual classrooms is supported by the conceptual framework, more specifically, ZPD, scaffolding, and Vygotsky's theory that promotes the idea of tools within the mediated theory (Ma, 2017). Ma (2017) identifies these tools as being the assistance provided by others that helps learners to achieve their ZPD or to make progress in language learning. In the context of the

present study, the tools would include the L1s of the learners within a translanguaging approach to scaffold their learning.

The teachers (see section 4.3.1.1) observed that listening to their L1s increased the learners' understanding. The learners were more involved and motivated in the classroom discussions and responded well to questions posed. The learners appeared to be having more fun than before because they understood the content of the work in the classroom. This finding concurs with Mashiya (2010), Omidire (2019b), and Stoop (2017) who link L1 to education and demonstrate the positive effects on learners' cognitive and social dimensions, thus increasing the incidence of high-performance educational systems in a multilingual world.

The current study also revealed that listening to the content in multiple languages created an opportunity for the learners to navigate their own learning. Listening to the translated audio recordings in their L1 while reading the same comprehension text, is in line with the ZPD and is outlined in the conceptual framework. The rationale for the conceptual framework is motivated by Swain and Lapkin (2013) who suggest that learners should be given an opportunity to use their L1 during collaborative dialogues and in private speech to mediate their understanding. Siyepu (2013) echoes a similar belief in line with Vygotsky's SCT and states that by offering the learner assistance, such as including L1, allows the learner to master the task. For the current study, the assistance of L1 can be removed once the learner gains confidence in his/her learning experience.

A comparison was made between the control class and the support implementation class (where L1 was included). Teachers identified that in the control class where there was no translanguaging support, the learners demonstrated less involvement and interaction during the teaching, resulting in mechanical and rote learning. In the support implementation classes where the lessons were heard in three languages, the teacher seemed to be more engaged and the learners appeared to be more involved. There is agreement in research that translanguaging provides learners with opportunities to make sense of their world and maximises their participation (Garcia & Wei, 2014). Cummins (2019) and Heugh (2015) are of the same opinion that both languages can be used systematically to mediate understanding.

In the current study, the teachers witnessed the effects of translanguaging and explained that the learners' experience of learning in multilingual contexts was positive. The translated audio recordings allowed the learners to experience more than one language in the classroom and promoted learning in line with Martínez-Roldán and Sayer (2006), who assert that offering activities such as retelling English texts in specific L1s can promote understanding. This additionally falls in line with Bhooth et al's. (2014) study where scholars agree that the use of L1 facilitated the learning of English in an Arab country (Al-Nofaie, 2010; Khresheh, 2012; Machaal, 2012; Storch & Aldosari, 2010).

The aim of my study was to incorporate translanguaging into multilingual classrooms by incorporating translated audio recordings of learners' L1 together with hard copies of the translated texts; this was deemed valuable by both the learners' and the teachers. My study agrees with the research of Angu et al., (2020); Rabab'ah and Al-Yasin (2017) and Smith et al., (2020) who validate the use of L1 as an effective method in translanguaging pedagogy simply because it scaffolds learning.

Vygotsky's theory plays an influential role as I draw upon the work of Garcia and Sylvan (2011). These authors describe how learners rely on peers and technology (such as iPads and Google Translate) together with support from their teachers to generate opportunities for language use (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011). According to Makalela (2015b), using translanguaging in the classroom provides a 'better way' for learners to learn. Similarly, there is confirmation from Giambo and Szecsi's (2015) study, they assert that literacy skills possessed in one language can advance the literacy skills in another language. In addition, using resources in the language in which the learner has a better repertoire increases the learner's literacy performance. Giambo and Szecsi (2015) add that by allowing learners to read in both languages enables access to both languages as resources.

Hassan and Ahmed, (2015) and Hornberger and Link (2012) elaborate that translanguaging allows the understanding of one language to inform the understanding of another. This was identified in the current study (section 4.3.1.1) in the support implementation classes where the learners shuffled between languages to gain meaning and understanding. Based on the analysis of the results, L1 was viewed favourably; literacy skills of reading with understanding and listening skills through oral input were highlighted in the results. By integrating L1 into the

classrooms, learners who seemed to be struggling to understand English were able to listen to the content in their L1 to scaffold their understanding and/or comprehension which falls in line with Bhooth et al. (2014) whose study displayed similar findings. This is identified positively as 'ticking the box' for literacy skills related to listening and reading with understanding.

In line with Leung and Valdes's (2019) opinion of translanguaging to being both challenging and exciting, challenging because it forces us to examine our previous perspectives on the language itself and exciting because it suggests new possibilities and outcomes for teaching and learning in additional languages. My study concurs and confirms that the learners experienced enjoyment, excitement and positive emotions during the translanguaging support strategies, and that all these positive expressions are clearly depicted in their individual drawings of their storyboards as discussed in Chapter 4.

### **5.3.3.2 Learners experienced positive emotions**

The storyboards represented the learners' inner voice and their perceptions of the translanguaging approach. Most learners displayed feeling of happiness and enjoyment. They indicated that greater understanding was achieved when L1 was included into the classroom. In addition, the learners demonstrated an appreciation for the repetition of multiple languages in the classroom, which enhanced their understanding (see section 4.5.1.2). This aligns with the work of Torpsten (2018) who asserts that translanguaging approaches lead to positive influences and allow languages to be easily learnt.

Furthermore, there is conformity in research (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Snell, 2017; Velasco & Garcia, 2014) indicating that the translanguaging approach in education affords opportunities that allow learners to move freely between the language practices that they know and to demonstrate increased participation and deeper understanding of the learning content. This was reflected in the experiences of the learners involved in my study.

Additionally, the work of Mgijima and Makalela (2016) illustrates the positive effects that enable translanguaging to be effective; these include the creation of meaning-making by learners, a safe environment in which learners can experiment with their L1 and L2 in a non-threatening way, and collaboration and association

amongst the learners. Garcia et al. (2017) similarly reinforce the idea that integrating a linguistic repertoire enables meaningful change. All of these factors were identified in the present study.

Nagy (2018) claims that translanguaging practices lead to a more relaxed atmosphere in which the learning process is creative and is based on the language skills of the learners who come into contact to create and negotiate meaning together. In line with this ideology, the storyboards outlined that the learners experienced a sense of belonging when their L1 was played in the classroom. The above viewpoints echo Makalela (2015b) who affirmed that using one's own language provides one with the balance needed to learn another language.

Makalela (2015b) additionally stated that learners felt a sense of belonging, felt at home, and appreciated the feeling attained when their L1s were heard in the classrooms, as also identified from the storyboards. Makalela's (2015b) views correlates strongly with the views of the learners in my study and these findings are clearly outlined in their storyboards. Some learners drew pictures of their home or that of their mother to express how L1 made them feel. Other learners expressed strong messages in their storyboards, these included them writing down persuasive words expressing how much they wanted more lessons to include their L1, followed by gratitude for including their L1. The learners additionally expressed in their own words that L1 facilitated better understanding, and the pride they felt when L1 was included in their classroom.

The findings outlined in the storyboards from the learners' perspective resonate with Lwanga-Lumu, (2020); Makalela (2015a) and Rivera and Mazak (2017), these scholars agree that integrating L1 could potentially lead to a greater sense of ownership within the learning process and foster a stronger sense of identity. The affirmation received from the learners and the teachers regarding the intergration of L1 in multilingual classrooms is positive and aligns with the views of (Lwanga-Lumu, 2020; Omidire, 2019b) who claim that it is necessary to recognise learners' assets such as their L1s and their socio-cultural and developmental backgrounds to develop an open mind about alternative teaching practices to enhance learning (Lwanga-Lumu, 2020; Omidire, 2019b), as also demonstrated in my study.

#### **5.3.4 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 4**

The Secondary Research Question 4 for the study is as follows:

*How do teachers experience teaching in multilingual contexts?*

The following findings emerged in relation to the teachers' experiences of teaching in multilingual classrooms:

- L1 built a positive classroom environment and provided support to the learners.
- Teachers appreciated the guided support that the translated audio recordings provided.
- Greater collaboration between learner and teacher was established.
- More time was needed to support learners with the translanguaging strategies.

##### **5.3.4.1 First language built a positive classroom environment and provided support to the learners**

The teachers' observations included how the learners reacted to the different languages in the classrooms that subsequently enabled them to experience a second chance for understanding content. The teachers recognise that translanguaging provides learners with the opportunity to use their L1 to reinforce concepts that they may not have understood in English (see section 4.3.1.1). The teachers observed that during the lessons, the learners were more engaged in the lesson, and participation increased when there was understanding.

These observations align strongly with Kleyn and Garcia (2019) who deliberate that the teacher must be cognisant of the L1 of the learners and accept L1 as a resource to be used for learning, subsequently allowing all learners to immerse fully in the class by bringing their L1 to achieve academically. This aligns with the component of mediation from the conceptual framework that highlights the view of Swain and Lapkin (2013) that learners should be encouraged to mediate their thinking via their L1 when they experience difficulty in the L2 and that using the L1 can enable learning to take place.

#### **5.3.4.2 Teachers appreciated the guided support from the translated audio recordings**

The teachers in the current study appreciated the guided support given to them during the teaching process and recognised the translated audio recordings as a scaffold to mediate the gap between them and the learner. The teachers acknowledged that including L1 in the classroom increases the learners' English proficiency and scaffolds their teaching. Using a language that is familiar to the learners promotes their confidence. This was identified by the teachers during the translanguaging support lessons. The teachers witnessed learning taking place when most learners turned the page to follow the story while listening to the translated audio recordings. This impressed the teachers greatly as seen in section 4.3.1.1.

Kleyn and Garcia (2019) explain that a teacher should facilitate and support translanguaging in the classroom to give learners the opportunities to use their full linguistic repertoire (gestures, pictures, technology, etc.) and to create meaning from the features of L1. Furthermore, L1 links to the conceptual framework that recognises technology as a mediating tool, aligning closely with Vygotsky's concept of mediation. Fotos (2004, p. 7) concurs and clarifies: "Technology will not replace teachers; teachers who use technology will replace those who don't".

The teachers were aware that their L1 was not the same as the learners and thus recognised the value of the translated audio recordings. This revelation is supported by Kotzé, Van der Westhuizen and Barnard (2017), they assert that the challenges may be intensified when teachers lack the experience and knowledge to support multilingual learners (Chataika, Mckenzie, Swart & Lyner-Cleophas, 2012) or have their own L1, which is not the same as that of the learners in the classroom (Duarte, 2019; Ismaili, 2015; Mabiletja, 2015). The teachers admitted that previously, they had relied on peer support to scaffold the learners' understanding, but now the audio recordings and the hard copies of the translated comprehension texts served as mediation to scaffold the learning process in which listening to and reading the text in both languages aided understanding. This correlates with the asset-based approach. Scanlan (2007) advocates applying the asset-based perspective to language learning and indicates that the L1 of learners should be recognised as a fundamental strength. This was clearly presented in the findings of the current study.



Lastly, teaching in multilingual contexts evoked hope. Teachers (see section 4.4.1.1) felt that by giving learners the opportunity to learn in their L1 could indeed promote a higher pass rate, reduce failures, and develop confident learners. This is in line with the component of 'shift', which advocates the needs of the learner as being of paramount importance and where the teacher is open to adapt to flexible strategies to promote learning and understanding (Kleyn & García, 2019). Regarding the emergence of the asset-based approach and positive psychology approaches, Dewaele et al. (2019, p. 1) claim that

positive psychology interventions have been carried out in schools and universities to strengthen learners and teachers' experiences of flow, hope, courage, well-being, optimism, creativity, happiness, grit, resilience, strengths, and laughter with the aim of enhancing learners' linguistic progress. (p. 1)

The translated audio recordings and the translated hard copies of the text acted as scaffolds for conducive learning and teaching to take place and were a pivotal contributor in enabling the translanguaging process to take place. This approach aligns with Guerrero Nieto (2007) who acknowledges that mediation through technology subsequently scaffolds language learning. According to the teachers involved in the current study, the translated audio recordings created a form of mediation between the learner and the content that was being taught. Similar findings were shared by Daniel et al. (2019) who agree that scaffolding multiple languages in one classroom can allow teachers to support the learners experience as being beneficial and worthwhile. Similarly Duarte (2019) alleges that translanguaging strategies have provided learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms with flexible ways to use multiple languages to communicate, as also identified in the present study.

#### **5.3.4.3 Greater collaboration between learner and teacher was established**

Hillman et al. (2019, p. 43) point out that "teachers often use the students' L1 to build relationships, cultivate a shared identity, and create a positive classroom climate." Hillman et al. (2019, p. 43) further contend that in order for the translanguaging practices to be successful, the "teacher-student relationships must be positive and supportive." The current study highlighted that when teachers adopted multilingual

perspectives in the classroom and established a multilingual climate for all the learners, a positive outcome towards translanguaging as a supporting strategy to practise in multilingual classrooms resulted. This finding falls in line with Garcia and Leiva (2014) and Velasco and Garcia (2014) views who concur that when a teacher embraces an alternative method to teaching, a translanguaging space is created to recognise the intrinsic worth of dynamic language practices.

There is agreement in research that teachers play an instrumental role in translanguaging classrooms. Nagy (2018) recognises the translanguaging space in the classroom as requiring both the learner and the teacher to accept common goals such as liberating mixed linguistic skills, competences, and different linguistic backgrounds so that translanguaging can function as a scaffolding device to overcome cultural and linguistic differences.

#### **5.3.4.4 More time needed to support the learners**

The teachers in the current study felt that they did not have enough time to include support strategies in multilingual classroom that would allow translanguaging pedagogies to develop. Time constraints as highlighted in section 4.5.1.2 would be experienced by the teachers and the learners, with support implementations such as extending a lesson to cater for multiple languages causing strain. Teachers would not be able to meet deadlines, adding to the existing challenges of absenteeism, transport issues and the significant distances that are travelled.

The teachers and HOD viewed transport issues as a constraint because learners were unable to stay after school and thus could not receive extra support from the teacher. This is an example of the socio-economic factors that influence learning and teaching in African schools, specifically in South Africa which have also been identified by Prinsloo et al., (2018). These factors have infiltrated into the teachers' experiences within the classroom since the teachers are directly involved and are witnesses to the trajectory of the country's difficult circumstances.

This places a burden on the teachers who cannot fulfil their moral obligation to the learners who are already experiencing linguistic challenges in agreement with Krause and Prinsloo, (2016) who state that learners' different schooling experiences, differences in socio-economic, socio-cultural and language backgrounds that have an impact on learning outcomes. Spaul (2013) and Plüddemann (2015) refer to such

sub-standard educational systems, which result in poor quality of work and coupled with the external factors further impede the learners as demonstrated in the findings of my study.

Additionally Makalela (2015c) echoes that L1 is often ignored due to an overwhelming curriculum which is rigid and does not allow diverse practices to be utilised nor allow the needs of learners in multilingual classrooms to be met. These findings are clearly outlined from the School Principal and the teachers' views regarding the lack of time they have to accommodate the needs of all the learners from their own distinctive and diverse backgrounds.

### **5.3.5 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 5**

The Secondary Research Question 5 for the study is as follows:

*What are the teachers' perceptions of using translanguaging as a support strategy for learning in multilingual contexts?*

The perceptions of the teachers involved in the current study regarding the use of translanguaging as a support strategy for learning in multilingual contexts are as follows:

- Value is attained from translated audio recordings of the learners' specific L1s, resulting in greater participation amongst learners.
- The importance of receiving training to support learners in multilingual classrooms is acknowledged.
- Translanguaging is perceived as being the answer to the literacy challenges of learners.

These perceptions are discussed individually below.

#### **5.3.5.1 Value attained from the translated audio recordings of the learners' first languages**

The teachers experienced the translated audio recordings as guided assistance that supported their classrooms when more than one language was prominent. This is supported in literature by Hillman et al. (2019) who identify that when teachers use

the learners' L1, they engage in a process of building relationships, fostering a sense of identity and creating an affirmative and constructive classroom climate.

The aforementioned findings resonate strongly with the conceptual framework and align with the SCT in which the teacher acts as a mediator to provide assistance for the learner in achieving a task he/she could not do alone (Guerrero Nieto, 2007). Furthermore, Rizve (2012) claims that the best way of teaching and learning is direct instruction when a person with more skill can support learners to effectively learn by scaffolding them in their particular ZPD as identified in the present study.

Guerrero Nieto (2007) additionally claims that mediation through technology scaffolds language learning and benefits learners by enhancing their L2 skills. Similarly Jabbar (2017) links the idea of scaffolding to the ZPD, as guided assistance given by adults or peers to support a learner, followed by the gradual process of taking away the support. Promoting and adapting learning materials to provide a means to support knowledge was identified as one of the processes from Sarker (2019), and utilised in this study as support to accommodate the learners. These adapted strategies align with the present study whereby the audio recordings positively scaffolded the learning and teaching experience through accepting technology as guided support and mediation.

#### **5.3.5.2 Greater participation amongst learners was established**

The study of Chukly-Bonato (2016) demonstrated how translanguaging processes in the classroom could influence learners' linguistic behaviour within several weeks by identifying a translanguaging pedagogy that changed learners' behaviour in a short amount of time. Implementing translanguaging practices eliminated the pressure of having to articulate in perfect English, thus creating a calmer and more relaxed atmosphere in a classroom. Findings from the present study (see section 4.4.1.2) demonstrated the manner in which the learners in the support implementation class began to take an active part in classroom discussions with more confidence and the manner in which they participated more willingly resonates with Chukly-Bonato's (2016) findings..

Similarly, the study of Torpsten (2018) in a Swedish multilingual classroom highlighted that learners learn languages by socialising with friends who speak different L1's. In addition, this may also be achieved when learners are given the

opportunity to use their L1 to speak, read, and write together with others in school, by direct instruction, and through lessons organised using teaching strategies that allow learners to feel accepted and included in the classroom teaching environment (Cummins & Schecter, 2003; Frank & Torpsten, 2015). These findings resonate with the present study in the manner in which translanguaging support strategies were used in the support implementation classes.

Similarly, a study by Lopez et al. (2014) evidenced how multilingual learners alternated between English and Spanish while interacting with mathematical items. This made it possible for the learners to show their mathematical skills even in conditions where their knowledge of English was deficient. Similar findings emerged from the current study where learners from diverse L1s understood better when L1 was incorporated in the support implementation classes, fostering more understanding and greater participation, as seen in section 4.4.1.1.

### **5.3.5.3 Teachers' acknowledgement of importance of receiving training**

The teachers acknowledged that accommodating the different L1s of learners in multilingual classrooms requires access to the necessary school resources. In line with the literature acknowledging the need for more training for teachers in multilingual contexts (Kotze et al., 2017; Omidire, 2019a), the School Principal similarly acknowledged that for teachers' to teach with multiple languages required training to gain the appropriate skills to manage support strategies in line with the translanguaging approach. Kotzé et al. (2017) and Wu (2018) echo this view and state that to support these learners is sometimes difficult because teachers experience a lack of knowledge and skills regarding the diverse languages to be offered as the LoLT in the classroom (Chataika et al., 2012; Engelbrecht, 2006).

Schissel et al. (2018) and Wu (2018) expressed that teachers' do not receive training on linguistic diversity, nor do they receive techniques for working with multilingual learners. The teachers in my study additionally indicated financial constraints, and acknowledged that translanguaging support strategies are an expensive way to accommodate learners, especially in schools that already have financial constraints and are poor in terms of their structure and management.

#### **5.3.5.4 Translanguaging as a strategy for addressing literacy challenges**

A finding of significant importance that emanated from the study is the trajectory of the education status of the country. The teachers and the School Principal collectively expressed concern regarding the issue of learners who exit primary school and cannot read or write and question the use of translanguaging as a possible resolution to these impeding concerns. Literature and the findings from the current study contribute positively to the inclusion of the translanguaging approach in multilingual classrooms in order to foster greater understanding and provide a comfort zone for learners to enhance their academic progression by bringing in their L1.

The concerns raised by the teachers and the School Principal of including translanguaging as a support strategy to assist learners whose language practices were marginalised are addressed by Makalela (2015b). Makalela (2015b) indicates that translanguaging practices can help overcome negative perceptions towards L1 by embracing multiple linguistic identities, enhancing multilingualism as a norm and making language learning a positive experience. Alexander (2012) and Heugh (2013) support this view and comment that policy that inhibits L1 from Grade 4 onwards in South African schools should be changed to maintaining L1 for longer, possibly throughout the years of primary schooling to assist in developing and consolidating the L1.

Furthermore, the need to include translanguaging support strategies to allow learners to overcome literacy challenges was highlighted by the teachers and the School Principal. The research of Childs (2016) and Makalela (2015b) endorses translanguaging as a strategy for the planned and systematic use of the L1 of learners together with the language of the classroom in order to foster learning and teaching while humanising the learning and teaching experiences for learners and teachers. Axelsson (2013) agrees by asserting that if learners in multilingual classrooms have an opportunity to develop cognitive skills of thinking and learning in all their languages, they can progress on an equivalent plane as learners whose L1 is English. In line with literature, my study demonstrated the positive effects of translanguaging and if appropriately utilised can inform better learning and teaching practices in multilingual classrooms.

The scope of multilingual education has broadened, demonstrating additional benefits over and above the school environment. These benefits enable individuals to infiltrate a multilingual world, presenting them with skills to participate confidently, to become responsible adults, to succeed, and to become productive in the workplace (Hanushek & Wöessmann, 2008), which implies better opportunities in society.

### **5.3.6 PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION**

The Primary Research Question of the current study is as follows:

*How can insights into the use of translanguaging inform our knowledge of learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms?*

Acknowledging L1 as an asset in multilingual classrooms to scaffold the learning experience for learners and being cognisant of the challenges experienced in multilingual classrooms within a South African context can indeed provide insight into understanding the translanguaging approach. In the current study, translanguaging as a support strategy that informs our knowledge of learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms was linked to the conceptual framework to create meaning and possibly identify a feasible option to include in multilingual classrooms to enhance learning and teaching.

Vygotsky's SCT appreciates the initiative that learning cannot be separated from its social context. Therefore, it is important to use the components of SCT (ZPD, mediation, and scaffolding) while considering the assets and resources available within the South African context as pertinent in providing a platform for translanguaging to support language acquisition. There is consensus in research that L1 plays a vital role in the L2 classroom, giving learners the opportunity to learn and acquire understanding in a multilingual classroom (Lopez et al., 2014; Mgijima & Makalela, 2016; Nyaga, 2013).

The findings of this study correlate positively with research that

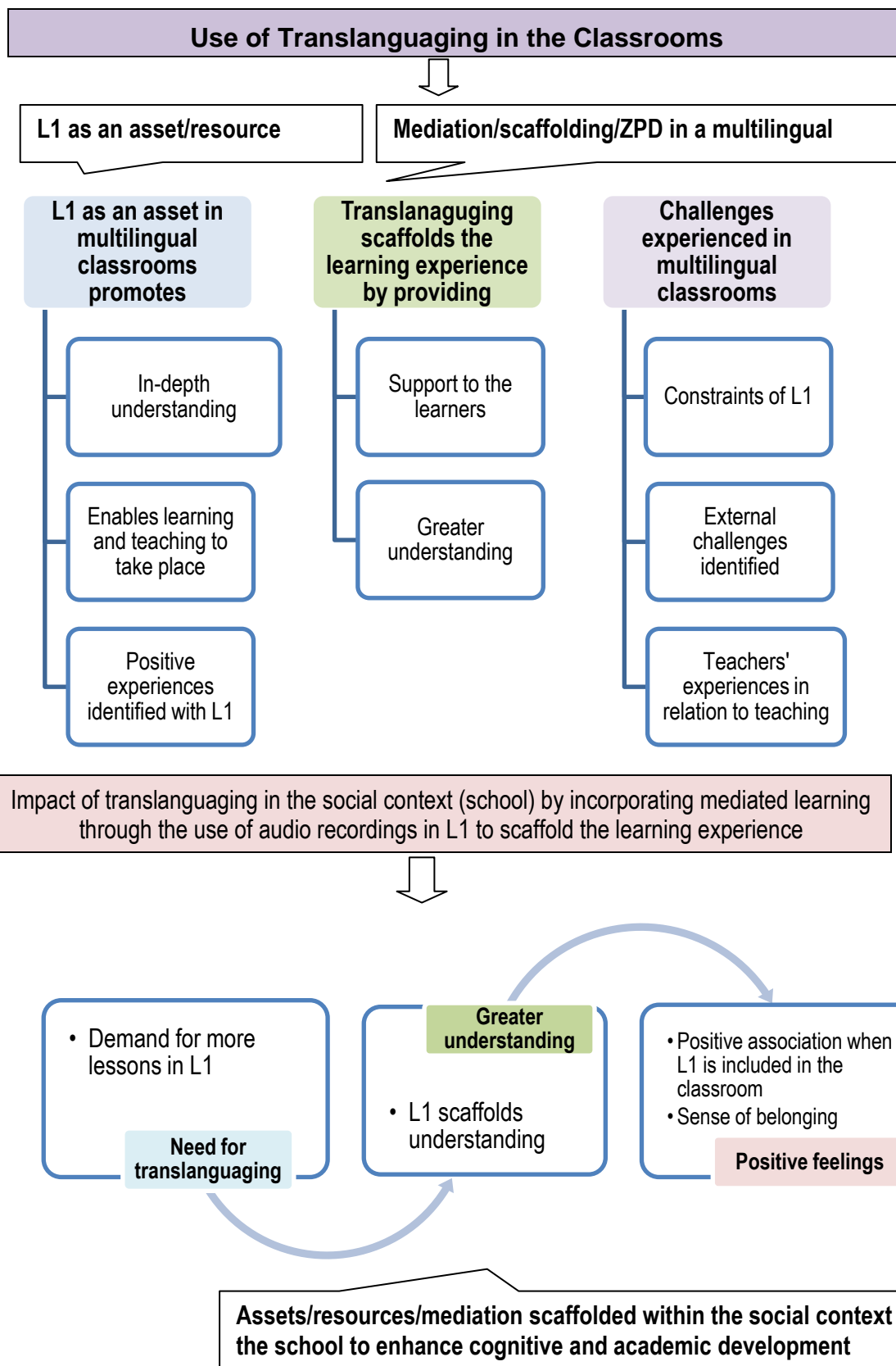
- identifies L1 as an asset to be used in multilingual classrooms to facilitate learners' understanding (Stoop, 2017);
- indicates that L1 enables learners to experience learning in a language with which they are familiar (Garcia & Li, 2014); and

- asserts that L1 promotes a positive experience associated with the learning and teaching process (Mgijima & Makalela, 2016).

Furthermore, this study identified translanguaging as a scaffolding tool to support the process of learning while providing learners with the opportunity to achieve greater understanding through the use of multiple languages, one of them being their L1.

The use of translanguaging support strategies in multilingual classrooms can be affected by external challenges that are linked to South Africa's socio-economic climate, influencing learning and teaching outcomes (Omotoso & Koch, 2017; Prinsloo et al., 2018). On the contrary, the impact of translanguaging on the learners' overall experience is viewed as one of immense support that facilitates the learning process positively (Cummins, 2019; Garcia, 2019; Omidire, 2019b; & Ncobo et al. (2016). This is outlined in the findings of the present study (section 4.4.1.1; 4.5.1.2). Furthermore findings from this study identified translanguaging being able to incorporate L1 as a mediating tool to encapsulate meaning and understanding in line with (Leask 2019; & Lewis et al's. 2012b) views in the process of learning. The impact of translanguaging when included in the classrooms gives hope, a sense of familiarity, and a sense of inclusion for the learners in a multilingual world who at times are subjugated to monolingual language systems as also highlighted in the work of (Makalela, 2015b, 2018b). Figure 5.1 is an extract of the themes that emerged and were incorporated into the conceptual framework. These themes candidly provided answers to the secondary research questions, which optimistically answered the primary research question.





**Figure 5.1: Extract of themes identified in this study**

Insights into the use of translanguaging to inform our knowledge of learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms is possible when one can identify the enablers

and the constraints of using translanguaging to support learning in primary school classes. In addition, understanding the experiences of the learners and the teachers in multilingual contexts and determining the teachers' perceptions regarding the use of translanguaging as a support strategy for learning in multilingual contexts is necessary.

Findings from this study (section 4.5.1.2) clearly outline the positive impact of translanguaging. Learners involved in the study indicated a need for more translanguaging lessons and acknowledged that translanguaging informed their understanding. In addition, most learners experienced positive feelings associated with L1 when L1 was included in the lesson. There was agreement amongst both the learners and the teachers regarding the use of the translated audio recordings. Firstly, the recordings facilitated the use of L1 in the classroom. Secondly, the translated audio recordings took the place of guided mediation and added value to the translanguaging approach. Lastly, the translated audio recordings provided support and were recognised as a valuable resource for both the learners and the teachers.

Vygotsky's SCT was central to the study. The theory recognises that learning cannot be separated from its social context. The current study considered the assets and resources available within the South African context as pertinent to language acquisition. The study acknowledged that L1 plays a vital role in the L2 classroom, enabling learners to learn and acquire a new language by building their dialectical relationships with the social world such as their peers and teachers. This inevitably influences their cognitive development.

This exploration of translanguaging strategies guided by the SCT and the asset-based approach builds on the competencies of Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners' development of L2 and their flexibility in listening to multiple languages in a classroom setting. Translanguaging acts as a medium of guided support to scaffold L1 as an MLE and uses L1 as a potential asset to allow the learners to engage critically with the content of the work in the parallel learning fashion of translanguaging.

Through mediation and scaffolding, the learner in the multilingual classroom setting engages in listening, critical thinking, and speaking skills by being exposed to

mediated learning through the use of translated audio recordings that facilitate L1, enabling multiple languages to be used in parallel to inform learning. This is in line with the conceptual framework. There is probable reasoning to confirm that L1 as an asset within the social context of the partnering dynamics of the teacher and learner and the learner and learner enhances communication. This premise facilitates understanding by developing L2 competence through guided support to accommodate academic development and develop greater understanding.

#### **5.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

My study provided important insights into the practical process and the requirements for implementation of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms. It also recommended possible policy changes to be considered in order to implement multilingual education. Government should focus on facilitating resources that will directly translate into the learners' languages and use technology as a means to address the problem of multiple languages. Furthermore, the importance of resources to cater for the technological requirements for effective implementation deemed necessary to facilitate the process of translanguaging as a pedagogy in multilingual classrooms.

The findings suggest that the teachers in these multilingual contexts were aware of the relevance of L1 in the development of academic proficiency in multilingual classroom environments. However, they were not in a position to pursue translanguaging practices due to the multiplicity of languages in their classrooms and in many cases, a strict, monolingual-based curriculum and legislative context that does not cater for such approaches. However, through their involvement in the support strategies, these teachers generated knowledge about the positive impact of the translanguaging pedagogy on the overall development of learners in multilingual settings.

The study highlights the importance of giving learners a voice in the processes and decisions that affect them. The learners were given a platform to take ownership of their needs and expressed that it would be beneficial if more translanguaging practices were to be initiated. On this premise, the current research may contribute to the groundwork needed for similar studies to be conducted in South African schools

where there is minimal research conducted on the practical nature of implementing translanguaging approaches in primary school classrooms.

In addition, my research may assist psychologists in presenting schools with ways in which to implement multiple languages and in finding ways to strengthen the current educational system. The research highlights the constraints of implementing resources to accommodate the needs of multilingual learners, and this leads to questioning the policies in relation to language development and to consider approaching the Department of Education and question their progress on the resources it has available to support such initiatives.

## **5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Only two schools from one province participated in the study. Inclusion of more schools from various demographics could have yielded additional useful information. Additionally, not being able to generalise my findings as an interpretive researcher with a qualitative study, it is difficult to rule out researcher bias and influence. Although I paid close attention to ensuring quality assurance and criteria, my subjectivity may have been influenced, particularly during data collection and the interpretation process.

Another limitation of my study was the lack of resources available at the research sites. This resulted in substantial time being dedicated to arranging and setting up equipment to cater for multiple languages (i.e. bringing in computers and sound bars to play the translated texts in the L1s). This limitation could have extended to equipment of this nature being stolen or broken during transport.

The complexity of the isiZulu language specifically appeared to be somewhat challenging for a few learners.

## **5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study offers a preliminary view of the phenomenon of introducing translanguaging support strategies into multilingual classrooms in South Africa. Further research is recommended to deepen the understanding of the effects of translanguaging as a pedagogy. Recommendations for future research include

teacher training, the role of educational psychologists, and initiation of policy in relation to translanguaging practices.

### **5.6.1 FUTURE RESEARCH**

Literature on understanding translanguaging and its effects on learners in multilingual classrooms internationally and in the South African context is extensive. However, the application of translanguaging as pedagogy is limited. South Africa is rich multilingually and, therefore, further research needs to be conducted on learners from different grades and subjects to identify whether and how translanguaging practices scaffold learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms. The following recommendations are highlighted:

- Undertake a larger study of the experiences of South African learners who engage in translanguaging support lessons in other school-related subjects with a sample that is also representative of South African society;
- conduct a comparative and longitudinal study, contrasting the academic achievements of learners involved in the translanguaging support lessons with learners who did not experience the activities;
- observe translanguaging support strategies being used in other school subjects;
- for future studies, when translanguaging is taking place in classrooms, English speaking learners and those learners whose L1 may not have been included could be given additional tasks from teachers to eliminate boredom. Such strategies could include asking the learners to write down questions for the authors of the stories or draw pictures about the story;
- determine how from Grade 4 onwards (when the medium of instruction is English) translanguaging is used in teaching the academic concepts that occur in the various school subjects.

### **5.6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHER TRAINING**

The value of transanguaging is explicitly identified as a need in multilingual classrooms, however to ensure that this is feasible, it is important to adapt the

current system to accommodate translanguaging strategies. The following are discussed as possible recommendations to support translanguaging:

- The Department of Education should provide support and resources for teachers so that they are better prepared in multilingual classrooms to enable effective learning and teaching. In-service training for teaching in multilingual classes is recommended.
- A significant investment in pre-service teacher education with a focus on investing time and money for teachers to receive training on linguistic diversity and to provide them with techniques for working with learners in multilingual classrooms should be made.
- School policymakers and administrators should take action such as adjusting policies properly to support teachers' professional development in a multilingual world.

#### **5.6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER PROFESSIONALS**

- Educational psychologists can contribute by understanding the systemic needs of all parties involved and developing practical support strategies that can be initiated in schools and thereafter, presenting these learning and teaching methods to teachers for use in their classrooms.
- Educational psychologists can create focus groups for teachers to share their practical strategies and insights, using each other's resources to enhance a knowledge base amongst teachers. This collaboration can be a platform that does not require financial capital but rather practical solutions for implementing effective teaching practices.

#### **5.6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY STAKEHOLDERS**

- Further research is needed in relation to the language practices in the multilingual-classroom context and their continual improvement.
- Policy should recognise that strategies that value the importance of L1 as a resource need to be implemented in classrooms.

- Programmes need to be promoted to support multilingual education, and the subsequent development of skills need to be addressed for educational success.
- Policy should focus on a dynamic and transformative process of structuring the different L1s through technological processes by building on their existing methods. Where they currently provide CDs of the learning content in their textbooks, they can extend this practice by translating all learning content into the different L1s and provide learners with ways in which to access this. By using simple tools such as earphones, learners can listen to learning content in the language of their choice, thus creating opportunities of being accommodated in a multilingual world.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

Findings from this study indicate that including translanguaging strategies to support learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms within a South African context is beneficial to the learners. The study has shown that the learners preferred the translanguaging approach, which accommodates changing negative perceptions towards African languages, investing in their multiple linguistic identities, enhancing multilingualism as a norm, and making language learning a positive experience.

Furthermore, this study highlights the positive influence of translanguaging where L1 facilitates understanding and supports learners in a process of learning in which they can achieve greater understanding through the use of multiple languages. Findings highlight that the learners enjoyed the experience and there was greater engagement in the learning process. This in turn motivated and supported the need to integrate L1 continuously to support the development of the learners' L2.

The findings of this study reveal constraints such as considering the background of the initial discourse of the inequalities of past policies, socio-economic struggles, language policies, and personal dynamics in addition to personal views regarding L1. Such constraints continue to affect many people negatively, particularly learners and their learning experience. Similarly, learners encounter numerous challenges within their social context, which negatively affect their learning.

I was able to appreciate the learners' experiences of learning in a translanguaging classroom. I was also able to understand their experiences, which identified the need for more translanguaging lessons to be included in the curriculum. The findings of the study demonstrated possible strategies that could be used to support learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms by integrating L1 into the school curriculum, thus valuing L1 as a resource. The translanguaging strategy of using multiple languages in learning and teaching pedagogy is informed by the extent to which learners and teachers appreciate the value of leveraging L1 and moving away from monolingual ideologies. Furthermore, this study highlighted that learners and teachers who do not share the same L1 can participate in translanguaging pedagogies by using translated audio recordings of the L1 to scaffold the learning and teaching process. Thereafter, the teacher can facilitate the lessons by engaging with the learners with a view to deepen their understandings of the texts through discussion. This study also contributes to understanding how translanguaging pedagogies can become a multilingual classroom practice. Sharing these findings and different support implementation strategies with teachers in order to support learners in multilingual classrooms is a step in the right direction for implementing translanguaging pedagogies.

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# APPENDICES

**APPENDIX 1** – Consent – Principal

**APPENDIX 2** – Consent – Parent

**APPENDIX 3** – Consent – Teacher

**APPENDIX 4** – Consent – Learner

**APPENDIX 5** – SOP (Standard operation procedures)

**APPENDIX 6A** – Identifying information

**APPENDIX 6B** – Semi-structured interview questions outlined

**APPENDIX 7** – Example of coding the data

**APPENDIX 8** – Excerpts of research assistants field notes

**APPENDIX 9** – Learners worksheet examples

**APPENDIX 10** – Excerpts of researchers field notes

**APPENDIX 11** – Storyboard examples

**APPENDIX 12** –Example of one Grade 5 text

**APPENDIX 13** –Example of one Grade 6 text

**APPENDIX 14** – Prescribed text sources

**APPENDIX 15** – Example of observation sheet

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University of Pretoria  
Faculty of Educational Psychology  
Groenkloof Campus

THE PRINCIPAL

[REDACTED]

07 March 2019

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

### **RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL**

I am a PhD student in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria. I am working on a project titled: “THE UTILISATION OF TRANSLANGUAGING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING IN MULTILINGUAL PRIMARY CLASSROOMS” under the supervision of Dr Funke Omidire. This is a qualitative study of selected primary schools in Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa.

The aim of the study is to focus on using multiple languages within the classroom with the aim of facilitating teaching and learning, developing both first language (L1) and English language within the framework of additive multilingualism. This study seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of how teachers manage multiple languages in their classrooms and how learners in multilingual classrooms learn by utilising first language as an intervention method to facilitate the teaching and learning process. This could, in turn, illuminate current practice in the development of language and literacy skills and inform future practices in multilingual classrooms.

As part of the study, I would like to observe teacher-learner classroom interaction in four classrooms over a period of four consecutive weeks, visiting the school once a week.



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The observations will enable me answer some of the key research questions of my study. I would additionally like to interview the teachers after the sessions and engage in some activities with the learners to gather written content as a form of document analysis. The observations and interviews will be audio/video recorded. The recordings will be safely stored, and only viewed by my research supervisor and myself.

Confidentiality will be ensured by using pseudonyms for all participants. All effort will be made to ensure that no harm will occur to the learners and teachers. They will be allowed to withdraw from participating in the study at any point/ time even without giving reasons should you wish to do so.

I would like to sincerely thank you in anticipation that your assistance for this research could contribute immensely to the existing body of knowledge in South Africa on multilingualism.

Please do contact me or my supervisor at any time if you would like clarification or feedback.

### Supervisor

### Researcher

Name: Dr Funke Omidire  
Contact Number: +27 12 420 5506  
Email address: funke.omidire@up.ac.za

Mrs Sameera Ayob  
+27828208873  
saessop@gmail.com

Yours Sincerely

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Sameera Ayob  
PhD Research candidate  
Department of Educational Psychology  
University of Pretoria

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Dr Funke Omidire  
Supervisor  
Department of Educational Psychology  
University of Pretoria



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### School Principal Consent Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_ give consent for you to approach teachers and learners in the intermediate phase (Grade 5 and 6) to participate in the research, titled “**Exploring the utilisation of multiple languages for teaching and learning in primary classes**”.

I have read the Project Information Statement explaining the purpose of the research project and understand that:

- The role of the school is voluntary
- I may decide to withdraw the school’s participation at any time without penalty
- Only teachers and learners who consent will participate in the project
- All information obtained will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- The participants’ names will not be used.
- The school will not be identifiable in any written reports about the study.
- Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
- A report of the findings will be made available to the school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal’s name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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University of Pretoria  
Faculty of Educational Psychology  
Groenkloof Campus

07 March 2019

Dear Parent/Caregiver

My name is Sameera Ayob and I will be conducting research at the [REDACTED] Primary School. The research focus is on “THE UTILISATION OF TRANSLANGUAGING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING IN MULTILINGUAL PRIMARY CLASSROOMS”. The purpose of this study is to find out how different languages learners speak can help them understand what they learn better in the classroom. I have obtained consent from the principal, the teachers and the Department of Education to do my research at your school. The information I collect will be confidential and only used for research at the University of Pretoria. The names of learners and identifying information of learners will be removed. No one will be harmed during the research.

I will collect information by:-

- Audio and video-recordings of the sessions observed during the class lessons.
- Taking photographs of the learners workbooks and storyboards.
- Take photographs of learners in group discussions (Learner’s identity will not be revealed and learner confidentiality will be maintained at all times)
- Speak to the teacher about the classroom dynamics and the outcome of the lessons.

Confidentiality will be ensured by using pseudonyms for all learners. Learner’s names and all identifying information will be kept safe and will not be disclosed. All effort will be made to ensure that no harm will occur to the learners and teachers. The learners will be allowed to withdraw from participating in the study at any point/ time even without giving reasons should they wish to do so.

I would like to sincerely thank you in anticipation that your child's participation for this research could contribute immensely to the existing body of knowledge in South Africa on multilingualism.



Please do contact me or my supervisor at any time if you would like clarification or feedback.

	<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Researcher</b>
Name:	Dr Funke Omidire	Mrs Sameera Ayob
Contact Number:	+27 12 420 5506	+27828208873
Email address:	funke.omidire@up.ac.za	saessop@gmail.com

Yours Sincerely

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Sameera Ayob  
PhD Research candidate  
Department of Educational Psychology  
University of Pretoria

---

Dr Funke Omidire  
Supervisor  
Department of Educational Psychology  
University of Pretoria



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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT SLIP

By signing this form it means that you agree that your child can take part in the research and that the information used in the study will ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.

	Mother/Caregiver/Guardian	Father/Caregiver/Guardian
Parent name		
Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Signature		
Date		

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Faculty of Educational Psychology  
Groenkloof Campus

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

28 February 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a PhD student in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria. I am working on a project titled: **“THE UTILISATION OF TRANSLANGUAGING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING IN MULTILINGUAL PRIMARY CLASSROOMS”** under the supervision of Dr Funke Omidire. This is a qualitative study of selected primary schools in Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa.

As part of a research study my focus is aimed at using multiple languages within the classroom to facilitate teaching and learning, develop both first language (L1) and the English language within the framework of additive multilingualism. I would like to gain an in-depth understanding of how teachers manage multiple languages in their classrooms and how learners in multilingual classrooms learn by utilising first language as an intervention method to facilitate the teaching and learning process. This could possibly support current practice in the development of language and literacy skills and inform future practices in multilingual classrooms.

The research study will require two Grade 5 and two Grade 6 class learners to take part in four /five sessions (over a period of four /five weeks) which will take place during the English period once a week for 60 minutes each. T



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I would greatly appreciate it if you could participate in this research study. The study entails classroom observations, interviews, drawings by the learners, etc.

Please note that this research focuses on the learners as well as teachers experiences during the implementation of exploring the utilisation of multiple languages for teaching and learning in primary classes as an intervention and therefore cannot comment on your competencies as a teacher. The aim of the research is not to evaluate you as a teacher, but rather for you to act as a facilitator in the process of multiple languages into the learning environment. Your name will not appear in any report and your anonymity will be respected and placed as a priority during the research and in the reporting process. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the research process, and there will be no disclosure of the identity of the teachers, schools, learners, in the reporting process. Participation in this study is voluntary and you have the right to discontinue your services at any stage of the research, furthermore no harm will be caused during these sessions.

I would like to sincerely thank you in anticipation that your assistance for this research could contribute immensely to the existing body of knowledge in South Africa on multilingualism.

Please do contact me or my supervisor at any time if you would like clarification or feedback.

	<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Researcher</b>
Name:	Dr Funke Omidire	Mrs Sameera Ayob
Contact Number:	+27 12 420 5506	+27828208873
Email address:	funke.omidire@up.ac.za	saessop@gmail.com

Yours Sincerely

---

Sameera Ayob  
PhD Research candidate  
Department of Educational Psychology  
University of Pretoria

---

Dr Funke Omidire  
Supervisor  
Department of Educational Psychology  
University of Pretoria



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### Teacher Consent Form

I have read the Project Information Statement explaining the purpose of the research project and understand that:

- All information obtained will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- Your name will not be used at all to maintain strict autonomy
- The school will not be identifiable in any written reports about the study.
- Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
- A report of the findings will be made available to the school.

Please complete this form below

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am willing / not willing to participate in the above mentioned research. I understand my role during the process and should I wish to withdraw from the project, I may do so. I am aware that audio and visual recordings will be used during the research, and this will be viewed by the researcher and the supervisor only.

Teachers name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teachers' Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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University of Pretoria  
Faculty of Educational Psychology  
Groenkloof Campus

07 March 2019

Dear Learner

My name is Sameera Ayob and I will be doing some research with you at your school [REDACTED] Primary School. The purpose of this study is to find out how different languages can be used together with English to help you understand better in your classroom. I have obtained consent from the principal, the teachers and the Department of Education to do this research. I would like you to kindly participate in this research and note that the information I collect will be confidential and only used for research at the University of Pretoria. Your names and your identifying information will be removed. This research is safe and no one will be harmed during the research process.

I will collect information by:-

- Audio and video-recordings of the sessions observed during the class lessons.
- Taking photographs of you and your workbooks and storyboards.
- Take photographs of you in group discussions (Your identity will not be revealed and your confidentiality will be maintained at all times)
- Speak to the teacher about the classroom dynamics and the outcome of the lessons.

Confidentiality will be ensured by using pseudonyms and not your real names. Your name and all identifying information will be kept safe and will not be disclosed. All effort will be made to ensure that no harm will occur to you and your teachers. You will be allowed to withdraw from participating in the study at any point/ time even without giving reasons should you wish to do so.



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

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Lefapha la Thuto

Please do contact me or my supervisor at any time if you would like clarification or feedback.

### Supervisor

### Researcher

Name:

Dr Funke Omidire

Mrs Sameera Ayob

Contact Number:

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Yours Sincerely

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT SLIP

By signing this form it means that you agree to participate in my research and the information used in the study will ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

Learner's name	
Learner's Signature	
Date	

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**APPENDIX 5**  
**Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)**

<b>Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)</b>	
School	[REDACTED]
Date	[REDACTED]
Data collection	For Day 1

**Tick class**

Grade 5 IA	Grade 5 NS	Grade 6 FC	Grade 6 SD
Control	Support strategy	Control	Support strategy

#	Items in order	Person in charge				
		Sameera	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Done	Not done
	Charge all 4 batteries					
	Pack equipment for data collection					
	2 cameras and stands					
	2 Audio recorders					
	Number tags					
	Stationary					
	Clip boards					
	Lessons to hand out to learners					
	Print out observation sheets for teachers					
	Call research assistant to arrange time to meet					
	AT RESEARCH SITE					
	Set up 2 cameras in classroom					
	Set up audio recorders in classroom					
	Class register of learners present (roll call)					
	Chat with teacher before lesson, to reassure her					
	Hand out number tags to learners Confirm male or female on class list					
	Set out lesson plans in front of					

#	Items in order	Person in charge			Done	Not done
		Sameera	██████	██████		
	classroom • English					
	Lessons not stapled, sort and hand out					
	Set up audio recorder to play lesson in Zulu and Sepedi					
	After each class, save data					
	At the end of the day, save data on hard drive					
	██████████					
	██████████					
	Collect all filed notes					
	File it per class name					
	Pack away all valuables :-					
	• 2 Camera					
	• 2 camera stands					
	• 2 Audio recorders					
	• 4 batteries					
	• 1 plug					
	• Collect all reading sheets English					
	• Collect all reading sheets Zulu					
	• Collect all reading sheets Sepedi					
	Hand out observation sheet to teacher and make arrangement to collect it					
	File field notes					
	Reflect in reflection journal					
	Transcribe data					
	Talk to learners and ask specific questions ██████████					

---oOo---



**APPENDIX 6A**  
**Identifying Information**

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<b>Name:</b>	<b>Pseudoname:</b>
<b>Race:</b>	
<b>Gender:</b>	
<b>Languages spoken:</b>	
<b>Home language:</b>	

---oOo---

## APPENDIX 6B

### Semi-structured Interview Questions Outlined

---

#### Introduction

- My name is Sameera and my research is on .....
- Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to engage in an interview session with you.
- This conversation will be treated with utmost respect and confidentiality will be maintained at all times.
- I will be using an audio recorder to tape this session, this is for me to sit and engage with the information for research purposes only.
- Will elaborate on the confidentiality and privacy, autonomy, etc.
- Will engage in some small talk to build rapport.

#### Possible questions to ask:-

1. How long have you been working at the school?
2. Which grades do you teach?
3. How many learners are there in each classroom?
4. What are their home languages?
5. What is the first language (home language) spoken by the learners in the classroom?
6. What is your first language?
7. How do you experience the diversity at your school?
8. What is your experience of teaching English as an additional language? What do you feel are some of the challenges that you experience in your classroom?
9. Based on your experience as a language teacher, is home language a resource that can be used in the classroom ? Will probe further based on the answer I receive.
10. What other constraints in relation to learning and teaching are present in the classroom? How do you work around this?

11. How do you feel about using multiple languages to support learning in multilingual classrooms?
12. How do you feel about utilising multiple languages to assist you as a teacher to teach in multilingual classrooms? Do you think there is a difference in teaching if multiple languages are used?
13. What strategies do you currently to support learning in multilingual classrooms? Probing questions What works well? What does not work?, Why?
14. Do you think using multiple languages in primary school classes can support learning? If yes please elaborate, if no, please explain
15. What do you think are the enablers of using multiple languages in primary school classes? Will probe further by asking what constraints are present, based on the answer I receive.
16. How do you think the learners would experience learning in multilingual contexts?
17. How do think you would feel teaching learners in multilingual contexts?
18. What is your perception of using a multilingual strategy to support learning in multilingual contexts?

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you, I do appreciate it and all information will be treated as confidential.

---oOo---

**Excerpts from different sources of data modalities**

Six themes were identified in this study. Each theme is colour coded as reflected in the figure below. All the data modalities were colour coded to link to one of the six themes.

Excerpts of the different data modalities are identified and colour coded.

Theme 1		
<b>L1 AS AN ASSET</b>	L1 understanding in multilingual learners.	
	Enablers of utilizing translanguaging intervention are identified.	
	Positive experiences identified by the learners and teachers.	
Theme 2		
<b>TRANSLANGUAGING SCAFFOLDS THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR LEARNERS</b>	Learners supported in the process of learning.	
	Learners achieving greater understanding through the use of multiple languages.	
Theme 3		
<b>IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS</b>	Constraints of using multiple languages.	
	External challenges affect the learning and teaching environment.	
	The teaching experience with translanguaging elucidated.	
Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6
<b>THE NEED FOR MORE TRANSLANGUAGING LESSONS IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>GREATER UNDERSTANDING ASSOCIATED WITH TRANSLANGUAGING</b>	<b>POSITIVE EMOTIONAL FEELINGS ELICITED WHEN LISTENING TO L1</b>

## EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEW WITH HOD

58) here they don't know how to do I songa and they can speak  
59) to other people so either will speak Sotho or Zulu but at the  
60) same time affects English  
61) Researcher: yes, yes  
62) HOD: affects English ya  
63) Researcher: Alright, and when you uhhh.. looking at your  
64) classrooms and today when you saw that we brought in  
65) Zulu because it was a Zulu class together with English  
66) what was your impression about this type of intervention  
67) HOD: But I saw learners understand because when that  
68) person was speaking in Zulu they were having their story in  
69) front of them neh, they were able to turn around the pages  
70) Researcher: I saw that too  
71) HOD: Same time all of them turned the page , it means they  
72) were following  
73) Researcher: they were following  
74) HOD: Ya they were following, you could see they knew he  
75) was talking about this line, you know(HOD was mimicking the  
76) learners following the text) That is why they were able to  
77) turn the page because they were understanding, I was  
78) impressed  
79) RESEARCHER: laughs I saw that too  
80) HOD: I was impressed, I said aah these learners are

**LINE 67-78**  
**THEME 1**

## EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEW WITH TEACHER 1 56-62 green

53) bringing in different languages together with English and  
54) allowing learners to experience their home language in a  
55) Classroom?  
56) Teacher 1: I think it would be good and useful, we would also  
57) have a higher pass rate and I think learners are more confident  
58) when they know that their home language will be used in the  
59) classroom and even though English is the dominant language  
60) of the school and around of the world, it will help them a lot, it will  
61) make them more confident speakers, it will help them write  
62) Better, in all aspects of English.  
63) Researcher: Right,  
64) Teacher 1: (continues)If we bring in the languages  
65) Researcher: And if we bring it across the curriculum?  
66) Teacher 1: It would be very useful, because like, like, their  
67) vocabulary is very limited at school, and when they go home they  
68) they speaking their home language, so I think they do need their  
69) home language to guide them  
70) Researcher: okay, in your experience, can an intervention like  
71) This work?  
72) Teacher 1: Yes it would, it would work, it would be very useful to  
73) the learners, and like I said it would bring out, they would be  
74) Different because they more confident.  
75) Researcher: and did you notice that in these sessions that we did?

**LINE 56-62**  
**THEME 2**

## EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEW WITH TEACHER 1 26-28 green

17) Class?

18) Teacher 1: Okay because they were like you said there were three

19) sessions, the first session I did notice they were a bit fidgety and edgy

20) and I didn't understand why, and then later when we spoke you did

21) tell me about the Zulu that was a bit on a higher language

22) higher level, so I see that first it was that they were fidgety

23) and I didn't know why and they looked a bit bored and they were

24) laying around and stuff and as it went on and the problem got fixed

25) the , the ,the Zulu language went on a lower level and then they

26) understood, they they enjoyed it more, you could see them

27) looking through the text and finding the English words and the

28) Zulu words, they were trying to code switch them themselves

29) Researcher: Okay , I noticed that as well because while the

30) recordings were being played and they needed to turn the page

31) Teacher: yes, they turned

32) Researcher: (Continues) they all simultaneously turned

33) Teacher: they did turn the pages

34) Researcher: turned the pages, yes, and that happened in

35) every session, I noticed that that happened in every session where

36) every learner did turn the page

LINE 26-28  
THEME 2

## EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEW FROM OBSERVATION SHEET OF TEACHER 2 box 1 and 3

APPENDIX C-2  
SCHOOL A  
TEACHER 2  
GRADE 6

PAGE 1

APPENDIX : OBSERVATION SHEETS FOR 3 DAYS

OBSERVATION SHEET FOR GRADE 6 TEACHER  
Day One  
15-05-2019

BOX 1

1) Overall impression of the lesson

1 Lesson went well learners were engaged and answered correctly.

2) Describe how the learners experienced the lesson?

2 Learners enjoyed the lesson but started getting tired after a while (intervention class)

3) In your opinion, did any of the learners not enjoy the lesson? How many?

3 All learners enjoyed the lesson

4) What aspects of the lesson do you think need to be revised/adjusted?

4 The learners found some of the words too difficult so if it can be simplified.

BOX 1 AND BOX 3  
THEME 1

## EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEW WITH TEACHER 1 150-153/160-161 purple

142) intervention period, so maybe if we could like do intervention  
143) in a specific period you don't have to have a specific intervention  
144) period work, each lesson has an intervention in it, so we don't need  
145) a separate lesson period to then focus on, I think it will be dealt  
146) with then and there,  
147) Researcher: right then in terms of the learners in your classroom  
148) we had about 40, about 37 to 40 learners and do you think that  
149) This parallel languages worked with so many learners?  
150) Teacher 1: It did, majority of the learners are from South Africa, there  
151) are two or three that don't understand any of the languages because  
152) they are from Zimbabwe or Pakistan or something like that but  
153) Majority of the learners are from here and they understand..  
154) Researcher: In our last session we did a bit of the storyboard where  
155) we said we want the learners to give us their viewpoint obviously  
156) through writing, colouring, drawing, just to get it from their point of  
157) view and as your walked around the classroom, because I saw you  
158) Were very involved in the lesson, what was your experience there?  
159) Teacher 1: I see that they did they that they enjoyed listening  
160) to it in Sepedi, or Zulu, and there were one or two who said they didn't  
161) understand it because none of it is their home language so I think  
162) that in that way we could allow, cater for them  
163) Researcher: And how can we do that?  
164) Teacher 1: Because there is only one or two, maybe like I could, we

LINE 160-161  
THEME 3

## EXCERPTS FROM OBSERVATION SHEET FROM TEACHER 2 box 8 purple

### APPENDIX : OBSERVATION SHEETS

5) How did you experience teaching in multiple languages?

5 Good. The learners were able to answer the questions and seemed to have a better understanding of the text.

6) What differences did you observe in the control and intervention class?

6 The learners in the intervention class understood better and more ~~handsome~~ learners raised their hands to answer.

7) Any other comments you would like to share?

7 Learners appreciated the fruit & sweets

8) Any other comments related to multilingualism and how it impacted the learners?

8 Some learners were confused by the high level of language but alot understood it and it helped them answer oral questions.

BOX 8  
THEME 3

## STORYBOARD ANALYSIS – CODING ACCORDING TO THEMATIC ANALYSIS

170 STORYBOARDS WERE ANALYZED

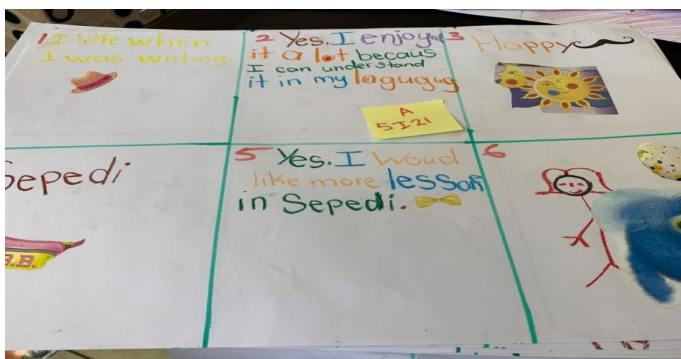
### EXAMPLE 1

❖	<i>“yes I would love for they to be more isiZulu and sepedi lessons”</i>	<b>THEME 4</b>
❖	<i>“Yes because we could know what we were writing”</i>	<b>THEME 5</b>
❖	<i>“I felt very happy that other children can be happy”</i>	<b>THEME 6</b>
❖	<i>“I like that we could understand it and we could be happy”</i>	<b>THEME 6</b>



### EXAMPLE 2

❖	<i>“Yes I enjoy it alot becaus I can understand it in my lagugug”</i>	<b>THEME 5</b>
❖	<i>“Happy”</i>	<b>THEME 6</b>
❖	<i>“Yes I would like more lessone in Sepedi”</i>	<b>THEME 4</b>



Storyboard 10 :  
Translanguaging to be made  
accessible

---oOo---



EXCERPTS FROM RESEARCH ASSISTANT'S FIELD NOTES

Grade 5 - Intervention

15 May

7/18 1 English Text

- > Teacher probes - learners raise hands to identify pictures on worksheet and point on the worksheet - shows concentration and understanding of teachers instructions

7/18 2 > Upright posture

- > No learner is looking around continuously
- > Active engagement and participation

7/18 3 Sepedi Audio

- 4 - Majority are following with english text while listening
- 5 - Posture : bekt back, heads resting on hand → approx 14 learners
- 6 - Learners only listening; approx 8
- 7 -
- 8 - 1 learner lying on desk
- 9 - 1 learner slouching on chair
- 

10 Zulu Audio - wrong page number in audio

11 - attention and concentration has decreased

---oOo---

## WORKSHEET EXAMPLES

Grade 6  
School B  
25 July 2019  
Intervention

Name: Letlhogenolo  
 Sur Name: Mkozi  
 GIO: 24  
 Home Language

1. Who are the people in the story  
Topo and father
2. Where does Topo like to spend time?  
Tree house, What does he do there
3. What happened one day when he was there  
\* This is my tree
4. How did he feel when this happened  
But he felt angry
6. What advice did Topo's father give him  
Caring

GIO 32  
 Home Language:

1. The dove could have Topo and father told him
2. ~~Topo~~ Topo had had a tree house in the big tree in the yard - It often took his books there and read
3. This is my tree now, he thought "Why should I go away?"
4. A week later, baby bird hatchling from the egg
6. One day, a gust of wind blew one of eggs out the nest.

GIO 20  
 Home Language: Sepedi:

1. the people on the story is Topo and his father
2. He like spend time on treehouse reading his books
3. He saw a dove lie eggs
4. He feel angry
5. He was kind and caring
6. He told him that wait for it

-i:Boy

Grade: 6A

Home language: isi Zulu

6C38

- ① 1st Sankhambi
- ② he pulled their long tails
- ③ the monkeys followed him, thinking of the delicious feast that was waiting for them
- ④ no because ~~the~~ he said Dear Friends boy ~~are~~ a sweet voice
- ⑤ to do something unpleasant to someone unpleasant to you because they have done something unpleasant to you

• -uruzi iuruzi -Boy

Grade: 6A

Home language: isiZulu

6C

1. is Sankhambi
2. he then crept up behind the monkeys and pulled their long tails.
3. the monkey followed him thinking of the delicious feast that was waiting for them
4. No because it is not right to throw things in place of people is not good
5. it mean ~~to~~ pay them again
6. his give them food

Grade: 6A

Home Language: IsiZulu

6C

- 1 Sankhambi is the one who started the trouble
- 2 He pulled crept up behind the monkeys and pulled their long tail.
- 3 The monkeys ~~made~~ made a revenge by throwing seeds and sticks at him.
- 4 Yes because he was going to do that and thing they love what he is doing!
- 5 To do something unpleasant to someone because they have done something unpleasant to you.

---oOo---

EXCERPTS FROM FIELD NOTES FROM RESEARCHER

APPENDIX B1  
SCHOOL A

(FNR)

①

GRADE 5  
Intervention class  
15 MAY 2019  
Field notes

73 - 11:45 (settled in)  
- big class  
- so takes time to settle in

74 - Teacher instructs them to read text on their own

75 - Class in attentive and is paying attention  
- teacher asks them to look @ pictures on the side and asks them to see what they see.

76 - Teacher reads passage out loudly  
notes to identify picture  
intensity up down about teacher

77 - The learners are listening on following texts  
"Car is on left hand side"

78 - the learners are responding in English

79 - Teacher is reading and asking questions interchangeably

80 S109 > very attentive / and following

81 S117 > "a" - tick last know

SCHOOL A

FNR

24 JULY 2019  
Hillside

133 38  
learners  
in  
classroom

Intervention Class  
Grade 5  
Field notes  
11:30 - 12:30

134 - class is quiet in English

135 - teacher said she will read comprehension to them they must follow

136 - class is paying attention They are following as the teacher reading to them They all turn the pages to follow the story.  
S115 > following with fingers

137 - STORY BEING READ IN SEPEDI

138 S124 } following with finger  
S105 }  
S122 = following story

139 S132 > following story  
S135 "  
S129 lip reading while listening  
S132 following story

140 all learners turn the page as the recording plays.

INTERVENTION CLASS

9:15

- 169 Handed out some toys
- 170 Boys 12  
Girls 12
- 171 - Why monkeys have Aak tumblings
  - attentive class
  - paying attention
- 172 Sepedi
- 173 GI 07 do not understand  
GI 38
- 174 GI 027 - showing GI 07 how to follow  
GI 010 - not following muslim girl
- 175 - class attentive
- 176 GI 021 - not following  
GI 023 - paying attention
- 177 they all turned the page, to follow the story
- 178 GI 09 - looking at partner (muslim boy)

RFNR  
SCHOOL 13

Grade 6 B  
intervention

Answer ①  
4-5-6

23 MAY MAMALCBI

Sepedi  
Class

- 1 We were here at 11 to begin, but break was
- 2 early. Allowed learners to go out and eat. There is
- 3 a feeding scheme here where learners get hot pap & bobotso
- 4 and a vegetable, a fruit is given a second break.
- 5 Yesterday was pap and milk. Despite the adventures,
- 6 challenges, classrooms structure, broken equipment, etc. learners
- 7 still have routine & structure. Teacher was not prepared for us today.
- 8 During break learners are in and out of classrooms, with food,
- 9 A bit overheard about equipment & class set up.
- 10 Today's lesson is on Paper, teacher said the class is
- 11 Sepedi speaking and we should play recording in Sepedi
- 12 only I discussed this with my supervisor yesterday. Inqobane
- 13 and she said it was okay. There is an Af Zulu class in
- 14 Grade 5 intervention. This means that I will play
- 15 Sepedi & English for Grade 6B and Zulu
- 16 and English in GRADE 5 (intervention classes)
- 17 Multiple languages in the classroom allows learners to listen
- 18 and comprehend what they are reading. In this way
- 19 they are making more sense of the passages.
- 20 During observations at both HIS & Mamelodi, learners
- 21 seemed to be attentive and focused when their H/L
- 22 was being played. If a learner is not familiar with
- 23 another H/L, he/she does not pay attention initially but
- 24 as the recording plays, the learners are redirected to
- 25 the passage to be read in front of them. What I

22 MAY 2014  
22 MAY 2014  
GRADE 5

CONTROL CLASS

22 MAY

GRADE 5

CONTROL CLASS

Mameladi

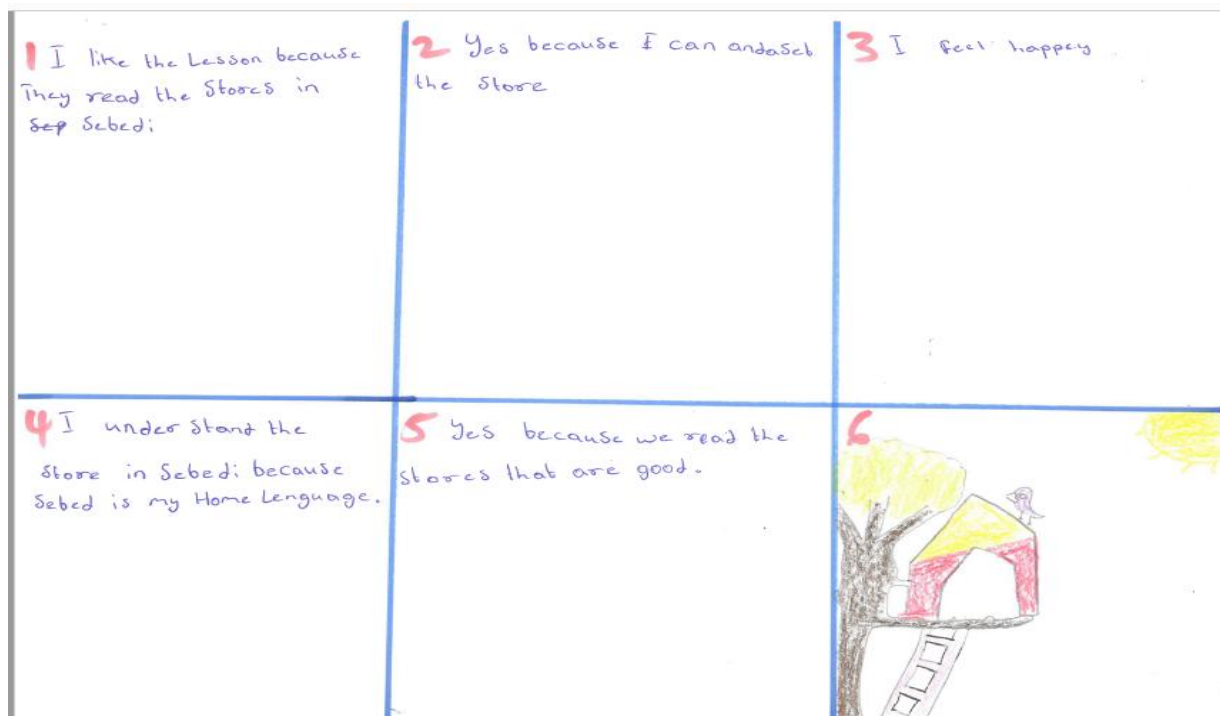
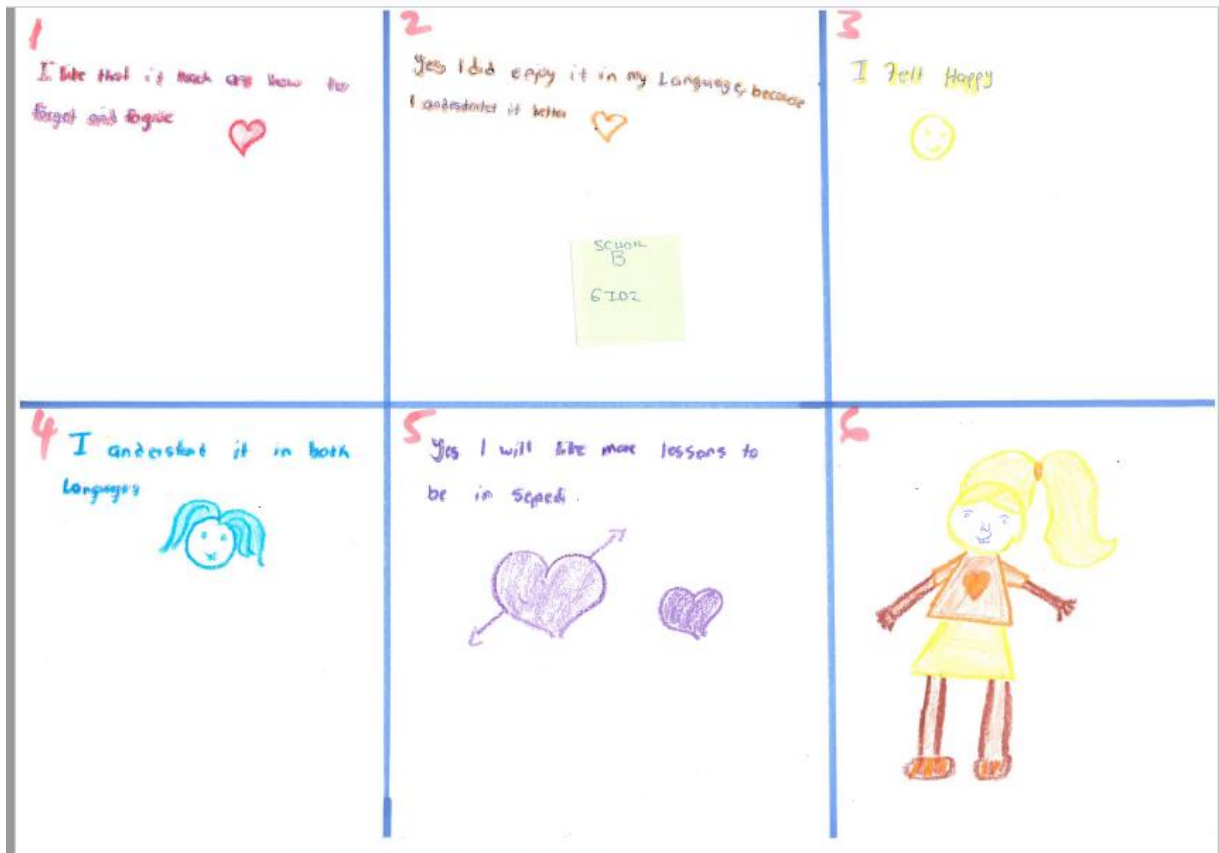
12:15


- 1 - Instructed to write name on paper, H/Language / grade and tag number
- 2 - Class attentive, paying attention
- 3 - Teacher writing questions on board
- 4 - many learners looking around
- 5 - some learners responding to teachers
- 6 - teacher asks them to read word lists
- 7 - Teacher said he will read story out loud  
↳ say if you don't understand story  
re-read yourself.
- 8 - Teacher instructs them to write in full sentences
- 9 - SC 04 } exchanging answers  
SC 18 }
- 10 - SC 30 } discussing Q and A  
SC 31 } looking at each others work.
- 11 - other learners working independently

---oOo---



Examples of storyboards completed by the learners



<p>1</p> <p>The thing I liked about the story is because the person was saying the story was talking with his real voice. He also says it properly.</p> <p>He also speaks than he breaths so that we can understand what he is saying.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Yes! Because it help people can't understand English. But he speak and breath.</p> <p>And He will be saying in the originally Zulu.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>I felt very happy. I also want to learn this story in English and Zulu.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>I understand better in English because I can understand what he is saying. He is speaking in Zulu.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Yes! Because it learn to speak. If you can speak Zulu I can also learn.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>HAPPY AND ENJOYING</p> 

<p>1</p> <p>do not give up and try. I liked it because it gives you power to try again.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Yes, in Sepedi because it was in my language</p>  <p>A 5 I 16</p>	<p>3</p> <p>I felt I was at Home</p> 
<p>4</p> <p>Sepedi</p> 	<p>5</p> <p>Yes, I would like more lessons. because I understand</p>	<p>6</p> 

---oOo---



GRADE  
5

Begin

### The story of Richard Simelane

Richard Simelane worked in a gold mine in South Africa.

On 17 December 1952, Richard and 22 other miners went underground in a special cage. They were walking along a **tunnel** when there was a terrible **explosion**. The earth shook and rocks crashed down. The miners were **trapped** behind fallen rocks. The men thought they would die. But Richard did not give up hope.

Richard started to make a small tunnel through the rocks with his hands. He carefully took out one rock at a time. Sometimes the men passed him a tin of water. After six hours, the miners' lamps went out. It was very, very dark.



"It doesn't matter," said Richard. "I'll feel the rocks better without light."

Thirty hours later, they suddenly felt fresh cool air come through

#### Word list

**mine** – a place with deep holes or tunnels underground, where people look for gold, coal and other minerals

**tunnel** – a long thin passage or path under the ground

**explosion** – when there is a loud noise and things break into small pieces

**trapped** – when you cannot escape

#### Word list

**mine** – a place with deep holes or tunnels underground, where people look for gold, coal and other minerals

**tunnel** – a long thin passage or path under the ground

**explosion** – when there is a loud noise and things break into small pieces

**trapped** – when you cannot escape or get away

when there was a terrible **explosion**. The earth shook and rocks crashed down. The miners were **trapped** behind fallen rocks. The men thought they would die. But Richard did not give up hope.

Richard started to make a small tunnel through the rocks with his hands. He carefully took out one rock at a time. Sometimes the men passed him a tin of water. After six hours, the miners' lamps went out. It was very, very dark.



"It doesn't matter," said Richard. "I'll feel the rocks better without light."

Thirty hours later, they suddenly felt fresh cool air come through a crack in the rocks. Slowly, Richard and three other men crawled into the main mine tunnel.

Rescuers found them. They rushed them to the surface for food, water and medical help. But Richard and a miner called Fernando led the rescuers back. All the trapped men were rescued.

Richard Simelane got the Chamber of Mines Bronze Medal for Bravery. Thousands of people went to see the ceremony. You could hear the clapping and cheering from kilometres away.



### After you read

Answer these questions.

1. Where did this story take place?
2. Who were the people in the story?
3. What happened when there was an explosion?
4. How do we know the men had given up hope? Which paragraph tells us?
5. How long were the men trapped?
6. Complete this sentence:  
People admired Richard because \_\_\_\_\_.
7. **Practise reading:** Work in pairs. Take turns to read the story to each other. Practise reading with expression. Your voice must show that the men were scared or excited.

**While you read**

Think about the guesses you made. Were you correct?

**Giving things up**

Topo had a tree house in the big tree in the yard. He often took his books there and read.

One day, a dove flew onto a branch above him. He watched it settle into a nest.

The next day, the dove was not there so he looked into the nest. He saw two eggs. Then the mother bird flew into the tree. She flapped her wings angrily. "Go away," she seemed to say.

So he climbed down from the tree house. He knew that the dove would not sit on the eggs if he came to his tree house again, and then the eggs would not hatch. But he felt angry. "This is my tree house," he thought. "Why should I go away?"

He told his father what had happened.

"Sometimes we need to give up things we love so that they don't cause harm," his father told him.

Topo made a decision. The dove could have his tree house while she needed it.



Topo made a decision. The dove could have his tree house while she needed it.

One day, a gust of wind blew one of eggs out of the nest. It **smashed** onto the ground. Now there was only one egg.

A week later, a baby bird hatched from the egg. Topo was **delighted**. He loved watching the bird grow bigger and learn to fly.

He was sad that soon it would leave the nest and fly away. But, he was looking forward to having his tree house back!

— END —

**After you read**

1. Who are the people in the story?
2. Where does Topo like to spend time? What does he do there?
3. What happened one day when he was there?
4. How did he feel when this happened?
5. Choose two of the following words to describe his father: **angry, kind, strict, caring, worried.**
6. What advice did Topo's father give him?



**Word list**

**hatch** – to be born by coming out of an egg

**cause** – make something happen

**smashed** – broke into small pieces

**delighted** – very pleased

❖ **Source for Grade 5**

Platinum (Caps): English first additional language, Grade 5 Learner's Book

Authors: Baker, P., de Vos, J., Edwards, M., Ralenala, M., & Swanepoel, G.

Pearson

❖ **Source for Grade 6**

Platinum (Caps): English first additional language, Grade 6 Learner's Book

Authors: Brennan, P., de Vos, J., Edwards, M., Ralenala, M., & Swanepoel, G.

Pearson

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**OBSERVATION SHEET FOR GRADE █ TEACHER**

**Day One**



**1) Overall impression of the lesson**

**2) Describe how the learners experienced the lesson?**

**3) In your opinion, did any of the learners not enjoy the lesson? How many?**

**4) What aspects of the lesson do you think need to be revised/adjusted?**

**5) How did you experience teaching in multiple languages?**

**6) What differences did you observe in the control and intervention class?**

**7) Any other comments you would like to share?**

**8) Any other comments related to multilingualism and how it impacted the learners?**

---oOo---