

**Perspectives of primary school teachers on effective
multilingual teaching approaches**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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**in the Faculty of Education
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Supervisor: Prof Funke Omidire

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DECLARATION

I declare that the mini-dissertation “**Perspectives of primary school teachers on effective multilingual teaching approaches**”, which I hereby submit for the degree Magister Educationis in Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution

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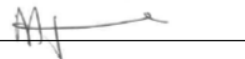
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ETHICS STATEMENT

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

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to the kindest, strongest and most passionate women in my life, my grandmother **Hunadi Esther Moganedi** and my mother, **Boledi Julia Moganedi**. You have been my source of strength and wisdom, thank you.

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- I would like to thank God- for countless showing me his grace, giving me the strength to conquer and the wisdom to understand my journey and my purpose.

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ABSTRACT

There are several major factors that teachers must take into account when dealing with multilingual classrooms such as culture and language diversity. Therefore teaching in a multilingual classroom requires teachers to make the curriculum accessible to all learners through the use of various multilingual teaching approaches. This study explored the perspectives of teachers on effective multilingual teaching approaches in accommodating linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms. Qualitative research methods were employed and data was gathered through focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. Convenience sampling was used to select the participants who were nine teachers from two resource constrained primary schools situated in a semi urban area in Gauteng. The data was analysed by using thematic analyses technique.

The findings indicated that participants perceive the utilisation of code switching and peer teaching to be effective multilingual teaching approaches. Furthermore, the teachers viewed visual aids; concrete objects as useful tools for supporting learners in multilingual classrooms. . The participants stated that they experienced challenges such as excessive workload, and limited time to support learners. Despite these challenges, the participants believe that it is worthwhile to strive to respond to the needs of diverse learners in multilingual classrooms. It is recommended that teacher training focused on teaching linguistically diverse learners in multilingual classroom should be provided as part of a teacher professional development initiative and also included in the pre-service training of teachers.

Keywords: Multilingual classroom, multilingual teaching approaches, inclusive teaching, code-switching, teachers' perspectives

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Kind regards



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
FG	Focus Group
IE	Inclusive Education
L2	Second Language
LiEP	Language in Education Policy
LoLT	Language of learning and teaching
MLE	Multilingual Education
MT	Mother tongue
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
SASA	South African Schools Act
SA	South Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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1 CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Schools nationwide are linguistically and culturally diverse (Phatudi, 2015). To deal with this diverse context, schools are required to find effective and sustainable teaching and learning strategies. The Constitution of South Africa (1996) officially declared 12 official languages (including the South African sign language) in 1994 and adopted policies such as South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (SASA) and the Education White Paper 6 (WPE6) (Department of Education [DoE], 2001; SASA, 2004) and the Language in Education Policy (DoE, 1997), to deal with the language changes in education (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2010). Despite the efforts made to facilitate multilingual education in South Africa (SA), teachers are challenged with the responsibility of understanding how best to meet linguistically diverse learners' learning needs and provide an equal, fair and effective education for all learners. The inclusion of linguistically diverse learners in schools thus requires changing the culture and organisation of classroom practices to enable teachers to develop language support interventions. The study aimed to investigate the perspectives of primary teachers on effective multilingual teaching approaches in the multilingual classroom.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to Phatudi (2015), education development has brought changes from previously homogenous classrooms to more multicultural and multilingual classrooms. According to Phatudi, "in most countries, more schools are becoming diversified as learners from diverse cultures come together as a community of learning" (p. 25). This community of learning has brought along not only different languages and cultures but also different learning styles, intellectual ability and socio-economic background. Policies such as the Language in Education Policy and Inclusive Education Policy were developed to deal with this multilingual situation in SA. The objective of these policies, together with the South African Constitution (1996) and SASA is to ensure the successful promotion and facilitation of a fair, non-discriminatory education that respects and caters for multilingual teaching in schools (Nel, 2013). The education system, therefore, requires teachers to adopt approaches aimed at promoting successful multilingual teaching and learning in classrooms.

The teaching of learners from diverse language background in SA, however, is still a challenge. According to Garcia and Sylvan (2011), learners' limited proficiency in English (LoLT) contribute to the learning challenges experienced in multilingual classrooms, which includes difficulty to express their thoughts/ideas (especially in writing). The population of learners in schools are not only a representation of South African languages but language communities from other parts of the world, particularly African countries (Lemmer, Meier & Van Wyk, 2012). The challenge then becomes when these linguistically diverse learners are expected to learn effectively and be taught in one common language. Thus, a major problem for teachers with multilingual classrooms is adopting and developing teaching methods and approaches to accommodate the learning needs of individual learners. Curriculum reform in SA also contributed to the problem, as the "teachers may be left feeling inadequate when they cannot cope with the demands of the curriculum that they see as "imposed and unmanageable" (Samoff, 2008, p. ix).

Without the recognition of the importance of creating sustainable systems, and structures which might assist in developing flexible and adaptable approaches to multilingual teaching and learning, establishing and maintaining an inclusive education for multilingual learners would remain a challenge. A need, therefore, arises to explore teachers' views of multilingual teaching and learning in schools, especially in semi-urban schools where most classrooms have learners who speak different home languages.

1.3 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

1.3.1 Language and Educational Policy Development

Teacher classroom practices, the use of teaching resources, managing schools and learning are all informed by policies in SA. The South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) has introduced a policy of equitable multilingualism in education by declaring and promoting the use of 12 official state languages (including the South African sign language) in 1996. In recognising cultural diversity and in promoting multilingualism, the South African Constitution and the DoE developed a Language in Education Policy in July 1997 (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2010). According to the SASA section 6 (1), the school governing body (SGB) is responsible for choosing an appropriate language policy for the school and for "promoting multilingualism through using more than one language of learning and teaching" (DoE, 1996). Furthermore, the language policy stipulates that all learners should be "competent in their additional

language while they develop and maintain their home language” (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2010). Although Constitution and South African schools Act has given schools the authority to choose the language of learning and teaching in their respective schools, the medium of instruction from the fourth-year changes, in most schools, to English.

This transition of the Language of Teaching and Learning (LoLT) together with WP6 on inclusion requires teachers to use different teaching approaches, methodologies and resources in the classroom to ensure that a range of diverse learners’ needs are accommodated in schools (Engelbrecht, Nel & Hugo, 2013). Despite the development and implementation of policies that support multilingual teaching in schools, multilingual teaching is still a challenge because of a mismatch in the home languages of other learners and the school chosen home language (HL). Teachers confronted with the almost impossible task of incorporating the curriculum’s demands, with adherence to the Language in Education Policy, in their teaching. According to Makgamatha, Heugh, Prinsloo and Winnaar (2013), “curriculum and assessment developments [in South Africa] proceeded without effective mechanisms for including the principles of the language education policies”.

1.3.2 Language Acquisition and Language Learning

“Learning to use language effectively enables learners to acquire knowledge, to express their feelings and ideas, to interact with others, and to manage their world” (Xamlashe, 2015, p. 43). According to Engelbrecht et al. (2013), despite the promotion of teaching learners in their HL, parents still prefer their children to use English as the LoLT. This leads many schools to use English in learning, a language most learners are not proficient in and are only exposed to in school. Therefore, teachers should consider how language is learned and incorporate learners’ HL knowledge in teaching multilingual classrooms. Mbatha (2015) states that Cummins’ Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS), which is language skills, acquired through informal learning (HL) can be used to acquire the LoLT and Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). CALP can be defined as a skill that enables a learner to understand academic concepts and communicate in both oral and written modes (Landsberg, 2016). Thus, the development of CALP depends on a learner’s prior language knowledge (HL). “Languages are connected in multiple ways and influence one another in a dynamic system” (Haukas, 2016, p. 2). This statement is evident in international and local studies which indicates that “without sufficient support of the development of the first language in school and home,

English second language learners do not succeed academically and both the development of learners' first language and second language are negatively affected" (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2010).

1.3.3 Multilingual Teaching Approaches

Teachers in schools are faced with the challenge of ensuring that the needs of learners from diverse language backgrounds who have limited proficiency in English as the language of teaching and learning are met (Lemmer et al., 2012). In an attempt to accommodate linguistically diverse learners in their lessons, teachers commonly use code-switching and translanguaging. A study conducted by Phathudi showed that through skilful code-switching between isiXhosa and English teachers in the Western Cape schools were able to articulate a wide range of teaching approaches to mediate cognitive needs (Phathudi, 2015). In contrast with the results of the study conducted by Phathudi, Childs (2016) reported that teachers felt that translanguaging or code-switching is challenging, time-consuming and required the teachers to be proficient in the HL of the learners.

Even though code-switching and translanguaging are the most commonly used and effective approaches in multilingual teaching, some studies find it to be ineffective. Landsberg (2016) states that translanguaging and code-switching are helpful, however, he argues that it could be confusing when there is a variety of HL in one classroom, since some learners may not understand the language code teachers switch to. Therefore, there was a need to explore effective multilingual approaches used for the development of effective teaching practices in multilingual classrooms further.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

There have been many qualitative and quantitative studies that surveyed teachers' beliefs and attitudes on second language teaching and learning in bilingual and multilingual classes internationally and nationally (Haukas, 2016; Reeves, 2006). However, there is little research that focuses on teachers' perspectives and teaching practices in the inclusion of multilingual learners in South African schools (Childs, 2016; Haukas, 2016; Monyai, 2012). This study of limited scope was aimed at gaining insight into the views of teachers on effective teaching approaches in accommodating linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms. This study investigated the effect of teaching approaches used by teachers in semi-urban multilingual classrooms. Furthermore, the study attempted to describe the actual

teaching and learning interactions in multilingual classrooms and the challenges faced by teachers in teaching multilingual and multicultural classrooms better. The study sought to contribute to the existing research literature by focusing on the perspectives, approaches and capabilities of teachers in South African semi-urban communities who are committed to providing all learners with an equal opportunity to learn.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study sought to expand and explore multilingual approaches in classrooms by answering the following questions:

Main research question: What are primary school teachers' perspectives on the effective multilingual approaches for inclusively teaching linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms?

The following sub-questions guided the study further:

- How do teaching practices adequately accommodate linguistically diverse learners in classrooms?
- What challenges do teachers experience in teaching multilingual classrooms?
- How equipped are teachers in teaching multilingual classrooms?

1.6 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

Based on the evidence from existing studies on teaching linguistically diverse learners in schools, and my experiences in teaching multilingual classrooms, the study's working assumptions were as follows:

- Teachers experience challenges in teaching multilingual classrooms. They do not get sufficient support in terms of providing relevant resources and focused teacher developmental training.
- Code-switching is considered a valid and frequently used teaching approach in multilingual classrooms. However; it is difficult if the teacher is not fluent in the language of the learners.
- Multilingual teaching approaches are more effective if the learners taught have mastered the use of their HL at an academic proficiency level.

1.7 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

The study frequently refers to the key concepts defined in the following section.

1.7.1 Multilingual Education

Multilingual education is “a set of principles that are used to varying degrees in different approaches depending on the teaching context, curriculum and learners” (Haukas, 2016, p.4). It is a learner-centred approach intended at developing a learner’s language awareness and language knowledge across the languages that the learner knows (Haukas, 2016),

1.7.2 Multilingual Classroom

For this study, “a multilingual classroom in the South African context can be classified as one in which there are three or more different home languages spoken by the children in that classroom while the LoLT of the school is English”, while English is not the HL of the learners (Hooijer & Fourie, 2009, p. 2)

Inclusion is the guiding principle that informs the process of reform and restructuring that requires schools to accommodate all learners, irrespective of their social, intellectual, physical, emotional and linguistic differences (Nel, 2013).

1.7.3 Inclusive Education

According to Nel (2013), the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) and National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training (NCSNET) define Inclusive Education (IE) as learning environment that promotes the personal, professional and academic development of all learners, regardless of gender, disability, culture, race, religion, language and learning style (Nel, 2013).

The WP6 (DoE, 2001) defines IE as a process of acknowledging and respecting learner differences irrespective of their age, language, disability and gender; addressing the diverse needs of all learners in South Africa (DoE, 2001). This study will use this definition.

1.7.4 Code-switching

“Code switching is the alternative use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation” (Milroy & Muysken, 1995, p. 7 as cited in Phatudi, 2015).

1.7.5 Translanguaging

While translanguaging is a process by which teachers and learners engage in complex discursive practices that include learners' language practices in order to develop new language skills and sustain old ones. (Childs, 2016).

1.7.6 The difference between Code-switching and Translanguaging

Code switching is a responsive strategy that involves a shift between languages in context and it includes translation, the shift between languages is usually a short move from the LoLT to the home language of learners and then a switch back to the LoLT (Childs, 2016). Translanguaging is a strategic pedagogical practice that combines two or more languages in a systemic way within the same learning activity. Translanguaging also includes code-switching; however, there is a slight difference in this discursive practice as it involves the process in which bilingual learners make sense of classroom activities using two languages, such as reading, writing, discussing and taking notes (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011).

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The proposed study is guided by Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, "which states that knowledge is constructed through social influences and interactions within one's environment" (Nel, 2013, p. 23). The theory views external social factors as essential in a learner's development in which learners are considered trainees requiring the guidance and support of a teacher (Zhou & Brown, 2015). According to Woolfolk (2010), meaning and knowledge in sociocultural theory is not inactively received but is actively constructed and reconstructed through the use of mental activities as the learner progresses to higher levels of understanding.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory further, states that meaning and knowledge is constructed through two forms, firstly through the actual interaction between people (interpersonal category) and through an inner internalised form (Kozulin, 1986). The sociocultural theory is mostly applied in education as it explains guides and informs the process of language acquisition and language teaching. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, learning is guided by the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding, described as the process where a teacher assists learners to independently construct new meanings to social context (Woolfolk, 2010). Thus, individuals connect information learnt through social experiences to previous knowledge and then construct new understanding and knowledge (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2006).

The internalisation of “meaning and higher-order mental processes, such as reasoning and problem solving, are arbitrated by psychological tools, such as symbols, language and signs (Van der Veer, 1997). Therefore, the language in this theory serves as a tool that mediates the process of constructing meaning and understanding one’s environment; it allows an individual to express ideas and ask questions. Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory emphasises the importance of others, the social context and language in the cognitive development of an individual. This notion pushed teachers to re-examine the extent to which learning takes place in their classes, which led to teachers seeking to adopt teaching approaches that accommodate all learners (Aljohani, 2017).

Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory as the study’s framework provided structure within which the relationships among variables and constructs of the study are explained. The theory was used to understand how learners learn and what to consider in exploring the interaction between learners and teachers in multilingual classrooms. The sociocultural theory explains in detail how learning takes place, which guides and informs the use of the approaches teachers perceive as effective in multilingual classroom teaching. The theory provides a framework in understanding the role of a teacher, teaching approaches and resources as mediators in the process of multilingual teaching and learning

1.9 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

The researcher intended to regenerate knowledge about the study using the research paradigms reflected below.

1.9.1 Epistemology

The study was based on the perceptions, experiences and interactions in the classrooms between teachers and learners. Therefore, the constructivist paradigm was used as a fundamental frame to guide the investigation. Constructivism is a research paradigm that assumes that reality is multiple, subjective and is derived through real-life experiences. According to the constructivist, “understanding and meaning of the world is formed through interactions with others and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals’ lives” (Creswell, 2013, p. 25). This paradigm aims to understand the world through the diverse subjective personal experiences of individuals. Social constructivism states that constructed knowledge varies, thus, a researcher should try to understand the complex context from the perceptions of those who live in it should attempt to understand the complex context

from the perceptions of those who live in it (Mertens, 2010). This supports the notion of Morgan and Sklar (2012), who argue that human experiences can only be understood from the perspectives of others. Therefore, researchers have to position themselves in the context of the study to ensure adequate interpretation of the meanings others have about the world (Maree, 2012). Constructivist's philosophy was relevant for the proposed study because it focuses on the process of constructing meaning through intersections of learners with the guidance of skilful teachers, which provided me with practical experiences of teachers' multilingual teaching practices.

1.9.2 Methodological Approach

A qualitative approach was employed as a mode of inquiry in gaining information and understanding the perceptions of teachers and their experiences in inclusively adopting approaches that accommodate linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms. Qualitative research is a scientific approach that seeks to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the perceptions of the participants (Creswell, 2014). According to Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest and Namey (2005), qualitative research is effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the views, values, behaviours, and social contexts of a particular population.

Similar to the constructivist paradigm, the qualitative approach holds a view that different groups construct diverse perspectives, and that these social constructions influence people' understanding of the world they live in (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). In attempting to understand the multiple dimensions of meaning people construct, I used emerging questions, procedures and collected data in the participants natural setting (Creswell, 2014). I chose a qualitative approach this study because it uses more flexible and inductive research methods that enable adaptation and freedom of intervention between the researcher and teachers (Willig, 2013).

1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher intends to understand and gather rich descriptive data about the best multilingual teaching approaches used by teachers studied by using the following qualitative approaches

1.10.1 Research Design

The research was undertaken using a collective case study to gain greater insight into the research topic. A collective case study design is a qualitative approach in

which the researcher explores multiple bounded systems over time and through detailed, in-depth data collection (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), case study research is a systematic analysis of a set of related events intended at describing and explaining the phenomenon of interest. This systematic inquiry of issues studied in collective case study research involves “in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audio-visual material, documents, and reports)” (Creswell, 2007, p.157).

A collective case study offers “a multi-perspective analysis in which the researcher considers not just the voice and perspective of one or two participants in a situation, but also the views of other relevant groups of actors and interaction between them” (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012, p. 75). According to Johnson and Christensen (2012), a collective case study approach strives towards a holistic understanding of a complex system and the way components of a specific system operate together. Since a case study views a case as a system influenced by both the internal and external context, it enabled me to examine the context of the cases to describe and understand the function of teachers (cases) in multilingual classrooms (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

1.10.2 Selection of Participants

The cases studied were selected using convenience and purposive sampling. Convenience sampling is non-random sampling where members of the target population are selected based on meeting a certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, and willingness to participate in the study (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Etikan et al. (2016), contend that purposive sampling is a non-random sampling technique that depends on the researcher’s judgement to ensure that participants have the characteristic needed in the research. Two resource-constrained primary schools situated in a township called Orange Farm in Gauteng, a mainstream school and a full-service school were conveniently selected for the study. Furthermore, nine teachers from the schools were recruited to form two focus groups, with four participants in one focus group and five in the other focus group. Two teachers, who appeared more knowledgeable and active in using multilingual teaching approaches in each focus group (FG), were selected for semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The selection of participants (two teachers) for classroom observations and semi-structured interviews was based on the following criteria:

- The teacher must teach languages, math, social science, natural science & technology;
- The teaching must occur in a classroom of learners who speak over five different home languages among them; and
- The teachers must frequently use multilingual approaches during lessons in their classrooms.

1.11 DATA COLLECTION

The research utilised multiple sources of data collection methods starting with FG interviews, followed by individual semi-structured interviews and then classroom observations to understand the dynamics of teaching multilingual classrooms.

A focus group is a form of group interview in which participants interact through discussing a topic provided by the researcher (Cohen et al., 2007). Focus group discussions were used to gather collective information about the views of individuals about a problem. It enabled me to understand how other people interpreted key terms, and agreements and disagreements with the issue raised (Mertens, 2010). I formulated six semi-structured interview questions for the group discussion, and the discussion took an hour for each school. The advantage of using semi-structured questions for focus groups is that important questions are covered in the discussion while it also enables additional insight, as participants are flexible to debate the topic further (Mack et al., 2005).

According to Knowles, Nieuwenhuis and Smit (2009, p. 87), “a semi-structured interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the participant’s ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours”. One teacher was selected from each focus group to participate in an individual semi-structured interview. The one on one semi-structured interviews with these teachers sought to provide in-depth information about teachers’ ideas and knowledge on using multilingual teaching strategies to accommodate learners in their classrooms. The benefits of a semi-structured interview are that there is direct contact between the researcher and the participants, so questions can be clarified, and participants can elaborate on their answers (Cohen et al., 2007).

According to Nieuwenhuis, “observation is the systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects and occurrences, without necessarily questionin them” (Nieuwenhuis, 2007, p. 83). I had a first-hand observation of how

teaching takes place in multilingual classrooms. This observation provided an insider viewpoint of multilingual practical teaching and learning interactions that occur in a multilingual classroom. To refrain from disturbing the dynamics of the setting, I played the role of an observer as a participant. The classroom observations occurred during each teacher's normal lesson periods in their respective schools. To ensure that all important information or data was recorded, field notes, an audiotape and images were used. The advantage of observation is that the researcher can record the information as it happens (Creswell, 2014). Research questions and the purpose of the study were used to guide the study regarding what was relevant to the topic during classroom teaching observations.

1.12 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Thematic analysis was used because it sought to discover and understand situations by using interpretations, as is intended in this study. Thematic analysis is a systematic method for recognising, organising and analysing data patterns in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It involves identifying common threads of meaning, categorising the meanings and clustering them into themes to describe the phenomenon (Willig, 2013). The data was analysed using an inductive approach of thematic analysis, which means that I approached the data without trying to fit it into an existing coding frame (Willig, 2013).

The first step taken towards analysing the data was to become familiar with the data collected by reading and re-reading the text several times. Secondly, I identified meaningful and interesting features from the data collected (coding process) by writing notes about the text and using highlighters to indicate the potential patterns on the notes. Thereafter, codes were used to identify similarities in the data to construct themes. The themes identified were reviewed and defined; the process involved checking if the themes worked in relation to the topic, which enabled me to make a connection between themes. The created themes were given names that reflected the meaning of the theme to the reader. The advantage of thematic analysis is that it provides rich, detailed and complex information about the phenomenon studied (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

1.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research in psychology should be conducted on the principle of respect and protection of human rights among participants (Elias & Theron, 2012). A qualitative approach requires the researcher to actively participate in the context studied and

use a data collection method that involves institutions and human beings. Therefore, I ensured that the research adhered to the ethical codes (American psychological Association principles and University of Pretoria ethics guidelines) that guided this research. Before undertaking the study, I ensured that the welfare and rights of the participants were safeguarded through assuring them that they would be indemnified against physical and emotional harm (benevolence).

The participants and institutions were fairly treated and were not subjected to any discrimination. The participants were not misled into participating in the study. A consent form was distributed to participants explaining in detail what the research was about and what was expected from the participants. Furthermore, the identity of participants remained anonymous throughout the study, and learners' identities during the observations were also kept confidential. Lastly, participation in this study was voluntary, thus the participants were aware that they had a right to withdraw from the study at any stage.

1.14 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 2: Literature review. This chapter provides a review of the literature consulted concerning the study. Relevant sources include books, journal articles and internet databases. Aspects that are discussed the chapter are the concept of multilingual education, the value of language policy in multilingual and language acquisition and language learning. The chapter further discusses teaching approaches for learners in multilingual classrooms, and challenges teachers face in teaching multilingual classrooms as well as the study's theoretical framework.

Chapter 3: Research methodology. This chapter focuses on the research process, including the research design and research methodology. I selected a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' views and experiences concerning the study topic. I selected a qualitative approach because it uses more flexible and inductive research methods that enable adaptation and freedom of intervention between the participant and the researcher. The chapter further provides a detailed explanation of the data collection methods that were selected, which included semi-structured interviews, FG discussions and classroom observations.

Chapter 4: Data analysis and findings. This chapter focused on providing information on how data was collected and presents the data collected from FG

discussions, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. It compares and contrasts the research findings with related literature and research.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendation. This chapter provides a summary of the research report. It concludes the study by reviewing each chapter and discussing the study findings. The chapter further discusses the contributions of the study, the limitation of the study as well as recommendations for further research.

2 CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on reviewing the literature on various perspectives on effective multilingual teaching approaches in primary schools and the challenges of teaching linguistically diverse learners. The concepts of multilingualism and multilingual education are first discussed, followed by a discussion of the effect of the Home Language in learning the language of instruction. Furthermore, the chapter reviews various teaching approaches used in multilingual classrooms and the language in education policy in relation to promoting and facilitating equal access to education for learners who come from different language backgrounds.

Multilingualism is a common phenomenon in many countries, including SA. Schools had to adapt to meet the individual needs of every learner in multilingual classrooms and ensure that educationally acceptable standards are maintained. UNESCO (2003) states that in ensuring that learners have a solid foundation for learning and equal access to education (curriculum) and are accommodated in multilingual education, the education system should develop a language policy aimed at addressing all levels of education and integrate it in a national plan for education. In an attempt to promote multilingual education, the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1994) adopted the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) in 1997.

Despite the promotion and facilitation of the LiEP in schools, most parents still prefer English as the medium of instruction for their children rather than their mother tongue (MT) (Childs, 2016). Many countries, especially those in Africa, the Middle East and South America, choose English as a medium of instruction in schools (Hooijer & Fourie, 2009). According to Childs (2016), this is because English in these countries is perceived as the language of international commerce and a valued method of communication globally. This perception has contributed to the many children in South African schools learning through the medium of a second language.

With regard to schools that provide education in the HL in the foundation phase (FP) as stipulated in the LiEP, the transition from using HL as a medium of instructions to using English as LoLT in the fourth grade occurs with challenges (Lemmer et al., 2012). It then becomes a challenge when their teachers, who have had limited training and skills in teaching multilingual classrooms, must now find new ways to teach them. (Hooijer & Fourie, 2009). Therefore, in a multilingual country like SA, it is

imperative for teachers to recognise the nature of discursive practices of learners in their classrooms and to be able to draw on the diverse linguistic resources that promote or enable learning.

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF MULTILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

Multilingualism is a widely used term and depends on the context of the study. Odugu (2011), defines multilingualism as the knowledge and the use of separate languages, as a pluralisation of monolinguals. According to Corson (1990, as cited in Heugh, 2013), multilingualism is the use of more than two languages in every sector of the community. Multilingualism, therefore, refers to the knowledge and use of more than one language in daily life.

Multilingual education implies that two or more languages are used as mediums of instruction. According to UNESCO (2016), multilingual education involves the use of more than three languages in education, the mother tongue, a regional language and an international language. Multilingual education encourages and emphasises the importance of access to education in both a learner's HL and a language of a wider communication relevant to the individual's context. Stoop (2017, p.22) argues that, "even though multilingual education encompasses multiple practices and challenges at different times for different individuals in various parts of the world, it plays a crucial role in protecting and maintaining different languages, speech communities and people's identities".

The development of multilingual education in SA post-apartheid aimed to support nation-building and socio-economic equity (Heugh, 2013). The LiEP followed an additive approach to multilingualism, which recommend that learners' HLs should be used for learning and teaching in the first three years of school and that a first additional language (FAL) should be introduced and taught as a subject.

2.3 MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION RELATED STUDIES

A study conducted in American school found that most teachers welcomed the inclusion of multilingual learners in their classes and believed that this process created a positive learning environment (Reeves, 2006). The teachers claimed that the inclusion of second language learners in the mainstream was not beneficial to learners and that learners shouldn't be mainstreamed until they have attained a minimum level of English proficiency (Reeves, 2006). Haukas' (2016) research suggested that teachers were eager to use both their existing and learners' linguistic

knowledge to learn the LoLT and were positive about learning and teaching activities that had the potential to promote multilingualism. However, when the teachers were asked whether they make use of these activities, less than one-third of the teachers claimed to do so (Haukas, 2016). These controversial findings thus suggest that teachers acknowledge the inclusion of multilingual learners and are willing to adapt their teaching approaches and resources to accommodate the learners.

Studies have shown that many teachers internationally and locally welcome the inclusion of multilingual teaching in schools; however, they believe accommodating multilingual learners is a challenge. A study conducted by Hooijer and Fourie (2009), indicates that despite South African policies supporting multilingual pedagogy, teachers preferred learners at a certain level of proficiency of LoLT before being accepted into the school.

A study conducted in eight schools across three provinces (Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West) suggested that teachers were experiencing problems in teaching multilingual classrooms (Mathey, 2010). The results revealed that 84% of teachers with multilingual classes experienced problems because the teachers were not proficient in dealing with multilingualism (Mathey, 2010). These teachers preferred to use the language of wider communication within a single medium mode of delivery. On the other hand, 24% of the respondents indicated that they have attempted to solve the problem by using language that is common to both the learners and teacher when explaining concepts, using dictionaries and asking another learner to explain the work. Some teachers indicated that their perception of the language issue was negative and that they merely kept on teaching in the language of wider communication, namely English or Afrikaans. These studies thus suggest that language is a problem for the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning across the board, regardless of level of schooling and linguistic proficiency of the learner.

2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF HOME LANGUAGE IN THE ACQUISITION OF LOLT

The DoE developed or adapted policies and educational programmes that support and promote multilingual education in South African schools (Heugh, 2013). The LiEP promotes multilingualism through the establishment of the use of home (African) languages in teaching and learning, which promotes educational models such as MT-based multilingual education. According to UNESCO (2003), the term HL includes the following elements: The language(s) that one has learnt first; the

language(s) one identifies with or is identified as a native speaker of by others; the language(s) one knows best, and the language(s) one uses most (UNESCO, 2003,p.15). Stoop (2017) states that HL or a MT-based multilingual model means that a child begins their education in their mother tongue and afterward changes over to second additional languages.

Similarly, the LiEP stipulates that all learners should be “competent in their additional language while their home language is maintained and developed, all learners should learn African language for a minimum of 3 years by the end of the general education and training band” (DoE, 1996, p.3). The education policy further states that to ensure a smooth acquisition of an additional language, a minimum of three years is granted to schools to teach learners in their HL. The advantage of learning in the HL during the first three years of school is that it serves as the foundation of lifelong learning and a bridge to second language acquisition (Makgamatha et al., 2013). According to Stoops (2017), there is sufficient evidence that the MT-based multilingual model is advantageous and a promising solution for addressing language gaps and inequalities experienced in education, especially in countries with multilingual communities, like SA. UNESCO (2003) also states that research from various countries has shown that learning to read and write in one’s HL promotes access to literacy and enhance the ability to read and write in other languages .Therefore, this implies that learners who have access to the Mother Tongue -based education are better trained with language skills in their home languages and other national languages.

UNESCO (2003), concludes that mother-tongue education promotes the acquisition of knowledge and it enhances the development of a learner's cognitive, and social skills. Stoop (2017) also asserts that languages should not be taught separately, but should rather be cooperated with each other. Therefore, it is essential to consider children’s home languages in developing curriculums and in the teaching and learning context. Successful acquisition in one’s own language or first language enables an individual to learn a new language more easily.

These studies reveal the value of HL in learning a new language, which should be considered in teaching learners from diverse language backgrounds. For this reason, it is also important to further explore the departmental consideration and accommodation of the existence of multiple languages in classrooms.

2.5 THE VALUE OF LANGUAGE POLICY IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

The development of the South African constitution contributed to improvements and fairness in the promotion of an effective and non-discriminatory education system (Lemmer et al., 2012). Therefore, the South African Constitution, (South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996, 1997), as well as the SASA and the National Education Policy Act (South African National Education Act, Act 27 of 1996, 1997) inform the LiEP. In recognising SA's cultural diversity and in promoting multilingualism, the South Afr. Constitution Act (Act 108 of 1994) declared 12 official languages. Chapter 1(6) of the constitution further states that the language policy must acknowledge the historical diminished use of South African people's indigenous languages, then take practical measures to uplift and advance the use of these languages (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2010). Heugh (2013), states that LiEP document was informed by a fundamental principle that "school students should have equal access to the curriculum and that this might be best achieved through a national system of active multilingual education" (DoE, 1996, p.4).

The model of supporting additional languages, therefore, had to be established and implemented in the education system. This means that learners should receive home language education combined with well-resourced teaching of a second language, in order to provide equal access to meaningful education in South African schools (Makgamatha et al., 2013). This means that all learners should become fluent in at least two languages, their HL and one additional language. The reason for this is to allow learners to consolidate their language and other skills through being proficient in their HL. They can then use that to scaffold to other skills in other languages.

Schools in SA use single, dual and parallel medium modes to implement the notion of additive multilingualism (Phathudi, 2015). Single medium education refers to the provision of education in one language only, across grades, either an HL (Sepedi) or the language of wider communication (English). According to Mathey (2010), learners who are taught in their HL benefit much more from this mode of education than those who are taught in the language of wider communication. Dual medium education involves a stable and systematic exposure to two languages of learning and teaching where different languages are used alternatively as the LoLT in the same class, for example, a learner will receive education in both Sepedi and Afrikaans (Mathey, 2010).

Parallel medium education is side-by-side language provision and means that learners are taught separately based on their choice of language (Childs, 2016). South African schools mostly use a single and parallel medium of education. Even though these modes are used to promote the use of different languages in school and to accommodate linguistically diverse learners, other learners are disadvantaged as they may not be proficient in the languages chosen by their schools. This presents a mismatch in the intention of language policy, which is to uphold the right of every learner to be instructed in the language of his choice through the implementation of the policy.

The aims of the Language in Education Policy are:

- 1. To promote full participation in society and the economy through equitable and meaningful access to education;*
- 2. To pursue the language policy most supportive of general conceptual growth amongst learners, and hence to establish additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education;*
- 3. To promote and develop all the official languages;*
- 4. To support the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in SA, including languages used for religious purposes, languages which are important for international trade and communication, and S. Afr. Sign Language, as well as alternative and augmentative communication;*
- 5. To counter disadvantages resulting from different kinds of mismatches between home languages and languages of learning and teaching; and*
- 6. To develop programmes for the redress of previously disadvantaged languages. (DoE, 1996, p.2).*

However, the most important consideration is to retain proficiency in the home languages while providing support to acquire additional languages. Therefore, SASA section 6 (1) states that “the SGB is responsible for choosing an appropriate language policy for the school and for promoting multilingualism through using more than one LoLT and offering additional languages as fully-fledged subjects”

(DoE,1996,p.3). Furthermore, the LiEP specifies that all learners should be proficient in their additional language while their HL is preserved and developed.

The LiEP stipulates that all learners should have an equal opportunity to learn an African language for a minimum of three years by the end of the general education (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2010). Most schools, therefore, offer at least two home languages in the FP depending on the language dominance of their learners. Even though indigenous languages are recognised as official languages in SA, not all learners are accommodated in an HL chosen by their respective school in their first three years of schooling. Some learners have the benefit of a match between their main language (home language) and the medium of instruction of the school, but other learners do not have this privilege. (Childs, 2016). Another challenge presented by the freedom of schools to choose their own LoLT, is that some schools choose to use English as their medium of instruction from Grade 1 onwards. In such schools, English is widely preferred and perceived to be the language of upward mobility (Taylor & von Fintel, 2016).

According to Heugh (2017), “the primary issue of concern for educators then becomes how best one can utilise and develop students’ multilingual capabilities in order to achieve the kind of proficiency in an international language that permits entry to the socio-political and economic mobility of aspiration” (p.209). In an attempt to address the transition from using a HL to using English in the fourth grade, different approaches are used. The use of these different approaches thus provides an opportunity for translanguaging and functional multilingual learning to enhance learners’ skills in reading and writing extended texts written in English, Afrikaans and African languages (Heugh, 2017). The development of IE in 2001 was another initiative of ensuring that a range of diverse learner’s needs is accommodated in schools (Phadudi, 2015). Through this policy, the department encourages the use of different teaching approaches, methodologies and resources in the classroom. This is termed curriculum differentiation and adaption (Engelbrecht et al., 2013).

2.6 LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

“Language described in the curriculum assessment policy statement (CAPS) is a tool for thought, communication, it is also cultural and aesthetic means commonly shared among a group of people to make better sense of the world they live in” (Nel, 2013, p. 212). According to Xamlashe (2015, p. 43) Garcia and Sylvan (2011, p. 387)

assert that “learning to use language effectively enables learners to acquire knowledge, to express their identity and idea, to interact with others and manage their world.” Therefore, the main focus in teaching multilingual classrooms should be on negotiating challenging educational content with all learners by enhancing their language practices and skills, rather than simply teaching one standard language (Lemmer et al., 2012).

With reference to the LiEP in SA, in addition to an African language as a HL, most schools use English as the LoLT. This might possibly be one of the contributing factors to challenges faced by educators in multilingual classrooms. According to the census (Statistical SA, 2011), only 9.6 per cent of the South African population consists of English mother-tongue speakers (Nel, 2013). Despite this, at least 65 per cent of South African schools use English as their LoLT; this leads to many learners using English in learning, a language they are not proficient in and are only exposed to in school.

Cummins’ Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) concepts provide detailed explanation of language acquisition in multilingual classrooms (Landsberg, 2016). Interpersonal communication skills refer “to the universal aspects of language proficiency that enable speakers of a particular first or HL to communicate successfully with other speakers of the same language” (Phatudi, 2015, p.44). This implies that BICS are language skills acquired through informal learning, through social interaction and peer communication. According to Landsberg (2016), BICS can be used as a foundation to acquire CALP, as it contains high fluency words and simple grammatical construction.

CALP “refers to the student’s ability to understand and express, in both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas relevant to succeed in school” (Landsberg, 2016, p.44). CALP is used for academic purposes, and it requires intensive support from teachers because it takes much longer to develop (Phatudi, 2015). Both BICS and CALP are important in the South African context. This is because the language education policy emphasises the importance of teaching learners in their early years of schooling in their HL, while at the same time being introduced to English FAL. This suggests that languages are connected in multiple ways and influence one another in a dynamic system (Haukas, 2016). This statement is evident in international and local studies which indicated that without adequate support of the development of

first language in school, second language learners did not do well academically and these negatively affected the learners' first language and second language development (Lemmer & van Wyk, 2010). Therefore, it is important to know and understand the process of learning another language and the relationship between HL and language of acquisition when teaching in multilingual classrooms.

In the process of learning the target language, learners create their own language system called interlanguage, which is made up of materials from the target language as well as the learner's home language (Bylund & Oostendorp, 2013). The learner links both languages, compare them and use the results of the analysis to create their own hypothesis or ideas of how the target language works. However, this newly created interlanguage grammatical rules differ with those of the target language because the process of understanding and mastering the target language is continuous (Bylund & Oostendorp, 2013). A learner then can only be proficient in the target language when the interlanguage grammar starts to resemble the target language. In some cases, especially in South African schools, this may take time and be challenging because most learners only have the opportunity to use the target language at school and during lessons (Lemmer et al., 2012).

Another aspect that needs to be explored in teaching multilingual classrooms is how learners use the knowledge of other languages when they learn a new language. As mentioned, individuals draw on their knowledge of the existing language to learn another language. The use of another language is called cross linguistic influence. According to Bylund and Oostendorp (2013), cross-linguistic influence occurs naturally in both first language and second language learning, and it can be easily observed. This can be observed when we listen to people speaking a second language (L2), we can sometimes guess what the HL is. This may be because their pronunciation contains phonetic features from their HL, or they may translate phrases directly from their HL.

Crosslinguistic influence is mostly beneficial if the structure of the language being transferred is equivalent (a match) to the target language. This explains the difficulties linguistically diverse learners face in acquiring the LoLT in schools. A mismatch in language structures makes it difficult to transfer the element of the HL to the LoLT. Therefore, "rather than attempting to maintain learners' languages in isolation, teachers should help learners to become aware of and draw on their existing knowledge" (Haukas, 2016, p.2). Learners should be taught to utilise their

own experiences from previous language learning when learning a second language. However, the challenge of drawing on a previous existing language to acquire the LoT is that the second language is only used in the classroom and for academic purposes.

2.7 TEACHING APPROACHES FOR LEARNERS IN A MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOM

Garcia and Sylvan (2011, p. 390) argue that “multilingual classrooms of today are characterized by an increased plurality of practices. Rather than constructing educational models for a particular type of student who uses one language or the other, we must learn to focus on teaching individuals within multilingual classrooms in which the plurality is created by paying attention to the singularity of the individual student”. Multilingual approaches allow all learners to use their HL in the classroom through the same language peer interaction alongside the target language, for instance, English. Furthermore, it can be used to discuss explanations, clarify questions and think through problem-solving strategies. Various studies (Childs, 2016; Garcia & Sylvan, 2011; Mbatha, 2015), suggest that the following are the most used teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms.

2.7.1 Translanguaging

Translanguaging refers to “multiple discursive practices as seen from the perspective of speakers themselves. Translanguaging entails using one language to reinforce the other in order to increase understanding and in order to augment the pupil’s ability in both languages” (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011, p. 392). Childs (2016), suggests that “the process of translanguaging uses various cognitive processing skills in listening and reading, the assimilation and accommodation of information, choosing and selecting from the brain storage to communicate in speaking and writing”(p.30).

According to Garcia and Sylvan (2011), translanguaging involves two concepts languaging and transculturation. The former refers to the discursive practices of people (a product of social action), and transculturation is the complicated and multidirectional process in cultural transformation, that also involves well as to the questioning of the knowing subject (Childs, 2016). Translanguaging also includes code-switching; however, there is a slight difference in this discursive practice as it involves the process in which bilingual learners make sense of classroom activities using two languages, such as reading, writing, discussing, taking notes and, signing (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011). While code-switching involves “a shift between languages in

context and it includes translation” (García, 2011, p. 147), Childs (2016) defines translanguaging as a practice utilised by multilingual people to shift between the languages that they know to communicate in a social context.

In SA, translanguaging can be seen as a systematic and pedagogical way of connecting the LoLT and the language of learners (Childs, 2016). Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012) state that the process of translanguaging require an individual to use different cognitive processing skills in listening and reading, to integrate information and select specific information from the brain to communicate in speaking and writing. This suggests that using translanguaging in a multilingual classroom requires a more comprehensive understanding of the language of learners as it progresses from simply finding the equivalent vocabulary to determining and conveying meaning.

The process of using translanguaging in a multilingual classroom promotes and facilitates more effective learning, for example, learners are encouraged to use the knowledge and skills acquired from one language to assist them use another language (Lewis et al., 2012). This notion suggests that language should not be viewed as a collection of discrete languages but should be understood as one system, which involves the communication of ideas, culture, perception and development. Childs (2016) states that the way language is used will depend on the classroom environment and diversity of languages spoken by the learners and the teachers. This means that the teacher should be aware of the structures and rules of languages spoken by learners in their classrooms.

The challenging aspect about translanguaging is that it requires teachers to be bilingual or multilingual; hence teachers who operate with a monolingual orientation often reject it (Lewis et al., 2012). However, translanguaging is still observed within the classrooms of teachers who operate with monolingual orientation, as translanguaging focuses more on the learner’s use of two or more languages than the teacher’s role within the classroom (Lewis et al., 2012). Heugh (2013) mentioned that these could be teachers who want the LoLT, to be used exclusively and disregard learners’ home or first languages. This attitude may limit or prohibit effective teaching and learning and successful acquisition of another language. However, the situation differs for bilingual teachers who find it understand and attest to the value of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms.

Teaching in multilingual classrooms needs to shift from seeing the main language of a learner as a threat or problematic to perceiving it as a new language acquisition resource (Heugh, 2013). Teaching in diverse schools requires teachers to acknowledge that learners in their classrooms, especially in semi-urban schools bring with them, cognitive, linguistic social and skills that have been developed in their first language (Lemmer et al., 2012). However, teachers, as mentioned by Heugh (2013), perceive these learners as having no language at all. These perceptions contribute to issues of schools failing to address the needs of learners. It also leads to a delay in a learner's access to academic knowledge and leaving them unable to participate fully in the school.

With regard to teachers' perceptions on teaching practices in multilingual classrooms, Childs (2016) states that translanguaging is a discursive practice that depends on the views of people and the understanding of how cultural meanings are formed.

2.7.2 Code-Switching

2.7.2.1 Theoretical basis of code-switching

According to Mbatha (2015), code-switching is found in theories that acknowledge the association between mother tongue (L1) and additional Language (L2). Cummins developed the linguistic interdependence model to explain symbiosis between the two sets of languages that interact when communication is stressed. The 'developmental interdependence' hypothesis suggests that the development of second language (L2) skills is somewhat influenced by the skills already developed in L1 at the time when exposure to L2 begins. (Mbatha, 2015).

These deliberations suggest that skills developed in one language are useful for the acquisition of a second language and are transferable to the second language. In relation to this statement, code-switching requires knowledge and skills in all the languages involved, as well as higher-level of guiding systems to manage the switch across the languages. (Makoe & McKinney, 2014). According to Wei (2011), Code-switching is not merely a combination and mixture of languages, but it is creative strategies by a teacher and learner in a multilingual classroom. This creativity involves the teacher's ability to "choose between following and flouting the rules and norms of behaviour, including the use of language, and to push and break boundaries between the old and the new, the conventional and the original, and the acceptable and the challenging" (Wei, 2011, p. 374).

Considering the fact that many learners are not exposed to English in their home and only get exposure in the school context, code-switching becomes a way by which teachers and learners negotiate an understanding in classrooms (Makoe & McKinney, 2014). Code-switching has been discouraged in the education system because of the perception that it may lead to language acquisition delay and other studies conducted in SA suggest that using code-switching in lessons is considered a sign of limited English proficiency (Mbatha, 2015). However, a study conducted in Gauteng schools suggested a different outcome than predicted by these perceptions, as a teacher who was initially objected to code-switching in the English class conceded that code-switching might assist to explain grammar rules and other aspects of the English language framework to learners (Mbatha, 2015).

According to Mbatha (2015), there is research that suggests that code-switching is frequently used in classrooms to impact knowledge by using linguistic resources available. Code-switching is not only used effectively in language lessons, but it proved useful to foster mathematical understanding in high school learners. Similar to the result in other studies, teachers reported that they both experienced stress when communicating in English because learners were not proficient in English as LoLT (Wei, 2011). The advantages of code-switching are that it is beneficial in the early stages of teaching and learning L2. It also accommodates the transition from the foundation phase to the intermediate phase in schools that use the HL during the first three years of school (Childs, 2016). This finding suggests that even though code-switching is not formally used (not included in assessments or writing), most teachers in multilingual classrooms use it.

2.8 MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION CHALLENGES

According to Gracia and Sylvan, in the USA, teachers acknowledge that multilingualism is a government priority, as reflected in school curricula and official policy documents (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011). The same is certainly true of SA with our eleven official languages, although, as pointed out in Chapter 2, the literature was still silent about many elements of the teaching of multilingual classrooms in SA. Garcia and Sylvan's study conducted in an American school revealed that most teachers welcomed the inclusion of multilingual learners in their classes. However, other researchers claimed that the inclusion of second language learners in the mainstreams was not beneficial to learners and that learners shouldn't be mainstreamed until they had attained a minimum level of English proficiency (Reeves, 2006). Another study in SA revealed that teachers admitted that they had

difficulties with teaching multilingual classrooms and claimed that they are not skilled to deal with a complex pedagogy as multilingual teaching (Hooijer & Fourie, 2009).

Ferreira-Meyers (2017) said that the greatest challenge of multilingualism was the lack of political determination on the part of the government to implement and support multilingual education. The teachers in Ferreira-Meyers' (2017) study, which was conducted in SA reported that one of the major challenges in the implementation of multilingual teaching is limited training of teachers in African languages and the lack of training resources in teacher education. According to a teacher in this study, the only qualifications they have is the BA, Bed, higher diploma in education and no training and skills for promoting multilingualism in education. All teachers in Ferreira-Meyers (2017) study describe the approaches they used in teaching learners as communicative and learner-centred. Furthermore, they reported that they attempted to instil awareness in learners of differences and similarities between language and culture.

Another teacher in Garcia and Sylvan's (2011) study reports and shares that she draws a parallel between English and the learner's HL to show similarities and differences between these languages. The participants emphasised a relative teaching approach to introducing new vocabulary, which involves teaching strategies such as translation to develop an inter-language awareness (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011). Ferreira-Meyers' (2017) study focused on equipping teachers with the necessary skills to promote and facilitate the use of various educational approaches in teaching multilingual classrooms. Ferreira-Meyers (2017) stated that "multilingual education should encourage awareness of how people learn the languages they have chosen, and an awareness of the capacity to use transferable skills in language learning. To ensure that this awareness occurs, teachers should gain the capacity to perceive the relationships that exist among languages spoken in their classrooms, and develop an integrated teaching approach to language education (Ferreira-Meyers, 2017).

Therefore, teachers need to encourage an attitude of teamwork between learners, acknowledge and promote the use of more than one language to enhance communication in the classroom (Ferreira-Meyers, 2017). Encouraging cooperation between learners is only possible if teachers have the academic background to understand their learner's multilingual background better. In short Ferreira-Meyers' (2017) study suggest that change in attitude towards multilingual education is

required to build multilingual competence, and this can only be done with appropriate teaching methods and approaches.

According to Makoe and McKinney (2014), despite the post-apartheid transformation, in official discourses, English continues to be perceived as an influential means of communication, while multilingual practices are not equally recognised as resources and rendered ineffective for, teaching, learning and communication purposes. A teacher reported that she avoided using African languages in teaching the classroom as these ‘interfered’ with learners’ accurate spelling and pronunciation of English words (Makoe & McKinney, 2014). Guzula, McKinney and Tyler (2016), describe how a mismatch between the language of the learners and the language of the curriculum and the teacher is a problem education.

Despite development and implementation of policies that support multilingual teaching in schools, multilingual teaching might still be a challenge because of a mismatch between the school chosen home language and home languages of most learners (Childs, 2016). Teachers must struggle with reconciling the curriculum’s demands with the LiEP in their teaching. Makgamatha et al. (2013) revealed that curriculum and assessment development in SA go ahead without an effective mechanism for including the guidelines of the LiEP; hence there are limited teaching resources assigned to multilingual teaching specifically.

There is a gap between the learners and the teacher during lessons because of curriculum demands, language diversity in classrooms and the relationship between these concepts (Makoe & McKinney, 2014). This gap was evident in a mathematics lesson with a well-versed teacher in the language of the curriculum teaching Xhosa speaking learners; when it was a challenge to make the curriculum accessible to the learners. According to Guzula et al. (2016), translanguaging gave learners opportunities to make connections between registers for mathematics as well as enhancing receptive skills in the new register of multilingual education. Even though the teacher was not competent to handle the situation, she included different registers in her teaching, which allowed the learners to identify with the content taught.

2.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Vygotsky sociocultural theory, based on constructivist’s principles, emphasises the social environment as a mediator of learning and development. Knowledge in social constructivism is perceived as the product of language usage and social interaction,

and thus is a shared, rather than an individual experience (Woolfolk, 2010). Vygotsky supports the notion that development depends on a person's interaction with other people and the tools his context and culture make available to help these people form their own meaning (Vygotsky, 1986). The theory states that individual thinking and meaning-making is socially constructed and influenced by an individual's social interaction with their environment and in the process, both the individual and the environment are changed (Zhou & Brown 2015).

Vygotsky emphasises the importance of language on individual development. According to his theory, language is a psychological tool that enhances other mental functions and is also one of these mental functions, which undergoes cultural development (Vygotsky, 1986). Vygotsky's theory in education further argues that to learn a second language at school and to develop one's home language involve two different processes (Moll, 1990). However, according to Moll (1990), Vygotsky acknowledged that learners use word meanings developed in the home language while learning a foreign language. This implies that although learners are in a process to learn a different language, they use knowledge from their own language to translate and understand the foreign language. Therefore, scholars agree that advanced knowledge of a learner's first language assists in the learning of a second language, which should be considered in teaching multilingual classrooms (Moll, 1990).

The concept of mediation is an essential element of the Vygotskian sociocultural perspective. According to Mutekwe (2018), Vygotsky describes mediation as a learning situation aided by a mediator who ensures that the learners understand the content at stake. There are different forms of mediators: psychological; semiotic; material; and other human beings. The use of language and multilingual teaching strategies serve as a mediator in the learning process to develop the learners' skills from lower to higher cognitive functions (Kozulin, 2012). Learners can be mediated by using multilingual teaching strategies through the ZPD to understand content taught in lesson.

The ZPD is one of the most recognised and widely used concepts within educational research, in studies about teaching and learning about various subject matters including reading, writing and the acquisition of a second language. According to Kozulin, Gindis, Ageyev and Miller (2003), the Zone of proximal development is the distance between an individual's current developmental levels as determined by

independent problem solving and the level of potential development through the assistance of an adult. Thus, the notion of a ZPD in every learner involves the distance between learner's current developmental state and their potential development (Kozulin et al., 2003).

The ZPD describes new, unfamiliar tasks for a learner that he or she is capable of learning in a socio-cultural context with the right guidance and assistance. Therefore, ZPD is an important facet in teaching linguistically diverse learners because it describes tasks that learners cannot do on their own but could do with the assistance of more competent adults, which will include using multilingual teaching strategies. According to Muthivhi and Broom (2009), this implies that teachers must continuously evaluate a learner's progress in a learning activity and adjust the teaching strategies as required.

Vygotsky's theory provides the researcher with a tool to explore and understand the process of using language to mediate learning in a multilingual classroom. Most importantly, it provides a framework to explore teaching strategies used, with the view of discovering how these strategies promote effective teaching and learning in multilingual classrooms

2.10 SUMMARY

While the LoLT is a major consideration in the extent and nature of learner's participation in classroom interaction, the teacher's pedagogical approaches and styles are also very important in motivating learner involvement and participation in the teaching-learning process. This is evident in studies that explored and debated the use of multilingual teaching strategies such as code-switching and translanguaging in multilingual classrooms, which were not only effectively used in language lessons but also proved useful to foster mathematical understanding in high school learners (Childs, 2016; Garcia & Sylvan, 2011; Guzula et al., 2016; Mbatha, 2015).

Multilingual education-related studies across countries suggest that teachers welcomed the inclusion of multilingual teaching in schools; however, they preferred learners to have a certain level of proficiency in LoLT (Haukas, 2016; Hooijer & Fourie, 2009). According to Makoe and McKinney (2014), the challenge of using multilingual teaching strategies in teaching and learning is that classes are characterised by linguistically diverse learners, and some of the learners are not proficient in the school's chosen first language. Therefore, all learners may not have

the benefits of being taught in their first language but rather in the dominant language of the majority of learners in their respective schools or their community (Childs, 2016).

According to Brock-Utne, Desai, & Qorro (2003, p. 149), “the use of teachers’ and learners’ HL can also be seen as the best way of mediating learning by the teacher; in a language that everyone knows well”. To ensure that this awareness occurs, teachers need to gain the capacity to understand and mediate the structures that exist among languages in their classrooms and adopt an integrated approach to language education in the curriculum (Ferreira-Meyers, 2017).

2.11 CONCLUSION

Although the stated goal of the education policy is to promote multilingualism and facilitate inclusive education that caters for the diverse learning needs of learners in South African schools, many learners who are limited in their English proficiency are taught through the medium of English, instead of their HL. Even though schools have the right to choose their preferred LoLT in the first three years of learning, which is normally the HL of the majority of learners, some learners, however, are not accommodated with the chosen language. Teachers are then responsible for ensuring that their teaching practices are designed to be inclusive and to cater for multilingual classrooms. The challenging part about teaching in a multilingual classroom for teachers is meeting the demands of the curriculum and ensuring that individual learners are accommodated in their teaching. This according to Heugh (2013) is challenging because of a mismatch between language education policy and the curriculum intentions.

3 CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research process and procedures followed in this study. The chapter begins by reiterating the aims of the study. It then moves on to describe the research paradigms, including the advantages and potential challenges of the study. The chapter continues by outlining and discussing methodological approaches and case design, as well as their benefits for the study. The chapter then lists and explain the data collection and documentation tools and procedures used in the study. Lastly, it explains the data analysis and interpretation, followed by concluding remarks as well as a discussion of ethical considerations.

3.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study explored and investigated primary school teachers' perspectives on effective multilingual teaching approaches. In this process it was guided by the following primary research question:

“What are primary school teachers' perspectives on the effective multilingual approaches for inclusively teaching linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms?”

The following sub-questions guided the study further:

- How do teaching practices adequately accommodate linguistically diverse learners in classrooms?
- What challenges do teachers experience in teaching multilingual classrooms?
- How equipped are teachers in teaching multilingual classrooms?

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

3.3.1 Epistemology

Epistemology is the study of the process of knowing. To investigate and understand the degree to which knowledge is constructed, the study used a constructivist paradigm (Yin, 2011). According to Creswell, constructivism is an interpretive framework that assumes that reality is multiple, subjective and is derived through real life experiences (Creswell, 2014). According to the constructivist, “meaning of the world is formed through interactions with others and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives” (Creswell, 2013, p. 25)

Therefore, this paradigm endeavours to understand a phenomenon as it is perceived from the subjective experiences of individuals of the phenomenon in their real-life settings. Social constructivism states that constructed knowledge vary; thus, a researcher should attempt to understand a complex phenomenon from the perceptions of those who live in it (Mertens, 2010). This supports the notion of Maree (2012), who argues that “human experience can only be understood from the viewpoint of other people” (Mahlo, 2011, p.13). In social constructivism, researchers have to position themselves in the context of the study to ensure adequate interpretation of the meanings others have about the world. Constructivist uses open-ended questioning in questioning the meaning people attach to objects and things in their environment and in addressing the process of interaction among individuals. Social constructivists emphasise the importance of language, consciousness and shared meaning in creating a new understanding of reality (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

3.3.1.1 Advantages of Constructivism

The constructivist paradigm provided me with a platform to investigate, explore and understand teachers’ perceptions in multilingual teaching and learning approaches through the use of strategies such as participative observation and focus group interviews. The key assumptions of constructivism in the education context is that human beings construct meaning through engagement with the world they live in and knowledge is constructed based on individual cultural and historical perceptions (Creswell, 2014). This assumption thus serves as a foundation for understanding teachers’ perceptions as it may be shaped by their own culture (which involves language differences) and experiences (historical) in the use of different multilingual approaches.

The constructivist paradigm was relevant for the proposed study because it focuses on the process of constructing meaning through intersections of learners with the guidance of skilful teachers, which provided me with practical experiences of teachers’ multilingual teaching practices. Constructivism emphasises the importance of the role learners’ play as active participants in learning and teachers as mediators and supporters who need to tailor and adjust their teaching approaches to cater for the needs of learners. Another advantage of the constructivist paradigm is that data collected can be traced to their sources, and logic can be used to arrange interpretations (Mertens, 2010).

The constructivist paradigm required the researcher to investigate the proposed study and observe activities in the participants' natural settings, in a classroom during normal school subject periods. I tried to minimise observation time to suit all participants and ensure objectivity in the research.

3.3.2 Methodological Approach

The study aimed to gain as complete an understanding of the participant's views and experiences related to the topic as possible. For this reason, this study took a qualitative approach. Qualitative research approaches differ and depends on the nature of the study, Creswell (2014) defines qualitative research as a scientific approach that seeks to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the views of the participants (Mfuthwana, 2016). It is a participatory approach used in research to gain empathetic insight into other's viewpoints, beliefs and attitudes. According to Johnson and Christensen (2014), the qualitative approach holds a view that different groups construct different perspectives of a phenomenon, and these social constructions again from their side affect people's understanding of their world. The constructivists' view of knowledge in this approach is that is socially constructed through language and interactions.

Qualitative research strives to collect, integrates and represents data from a variety of sources (Tracy, 2013), and was therefore suited for the requirements of this study. The study aimed to obtain views and perspectives of teachers as the key participants on their understanding of multilingual approaches and effective use of the approaches in schools. The method enabled me to explore and investigate the topic through direct and detailed observation of the interactions and relationship between teachers and learners in a classroom, and the ways teachers managed teaching linguistically diverse learners.

3.3.2.1 Advantages of qualitative research

The benefits of a qualitative methodology approach for the study are that it provides complex documentary explanations of how people experience a given researched issue (Mack et al., 2005). According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), a qualitative approach provides a means through which the researcher can evaluate the usefulness of particular practices, policies and innovations. Another advantage of a qualitative approach is the flexibility of the open-ended questions that can be used, which encourages participants to answer using their own words rather than choosing

from fixed options. The researcher can also encourage participants' responses on topics of interest by asking why and how questions.

A qualitative approach requires the researcher to get involved in the context studied. It involves observation, selecting participants and getting permission from participating institutions. The research dealt with the sensitive subject of culture and the language of participants and some concepts used in the context differed for each participant. I tried to get detailed explanations of the meaning of words and concepts used to avoid misinterpretations. Furthermore, I ensured that ethical codes were strictly considered and cultural differences were acknowledged. I ensured that my personal feelings and opinions on the topic explored did not influence the research process.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN: COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY

Multilingual teaching involves using multiple teaching approaches aimed at ensuring that learners understand the concepts taught and achieve the learning outcomes set for them in that particular subject. For this reason, the study used a case study design to explore the dynamics of multilingual teaching and learning. According to Johnson and Christensen (2014), a case study design is a qualitative approach in which the researcher explores a multiple bounded systems over time and through detailed, in-depth data collection. The emphasis in the case study is on examining a set of related "events, activities and processes of a bounded system, as it exists in its natural settings" (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 44).

Case study research involves the use of multiple sources of information, such as observations, documents, interviews and reports (Ishak & Bakar, 2014). Case study research could involve one phenomenon which can be addressed through a single case study, or several phenomena which requires a collective case study. I chose to use a collective case study to gain as much insight as possible into the research topic. (Creswell, 2014). According to Hays and Singh (2012), a collective case study involves the use of multiple cases in investigating a more general or broad phenomenon or population. Since the case study views a case as a system influenced by both the internal and external context, it enabled me to examine the context of the case and assisted in understanding the function of teachers in multilingual classrooms. A collective case study offers "a multi-perspective analysis as it allows the views of other relevant groups of actors" (Maree 2012, p. 75), as well as "the interaction between groups in a specific situation and how they make

meaning of the phenomenon studied”, rather than just the perceptions of individuals (Creswell, 2007).

3.4.1. Advantages of Case Study Design

I chose a case for this because it allowed me to explore the topic in the natural settings of the participants. It utilised multiple data collection sources, which provided in-depth information on the topic being studied. Furthermore, the use of a multiple case study allowed different perspectives about the best multilingual teaching approaches in schools to be considered. Case studies accommodate the complexity of social truth through representing conflicts between the viewpoints held by participants and attending to social situations (Cohen et al., 2007). Secondly, case study research allows generalisations about the issue studied mostly because of “the use of multiple sources and techniques in the data gathering process” (Nieuwenhuis, 2007, p. 76). Thirdly, the collective case study provides important comparative information (similarities and differences) about the phenomenon studied (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

3.5 SELECTION OF SCHOOLS AND PARTICIPANTS

The selection of schools was based on the cases that offered the greatest accessibility and opportunity to learn. I conducted this case study at two primary schools. The first school (School A) was a full-service school and the second school (School B) was a mainstream school. A full service school is an ordinary school which is specially resourced and orientated to address a full range of barriers to learning in an inclusive education context. A mainstream school is an ordinary school that meets the needs of learners who do not have special needs and integrate learners into the normal class routine. The schools were chosen according to the category they fall in, e.g. full service school and mainstream school. They are both resource-constrained schools situated in a township called Orange Farm in Gauteng, the township is characterised by a diversity of nationality, language, cultural origins and socio-economic background.

Table 3-1: Participants' details

Name Code	Gender	Highest qualification	Teaching experience	Current Grade taught	Data Collection Method
School A					
SAP1	M	MEd(educational psychology)	4 years	4 and 5	Focus-group discussion, semi-structured interview, classroom observation
SAP2	M	BEd (senior & FET phase)	2 years	6 and 7	FG discussion
SAP3	F	BEd (intermediate phase)	3 years	5 and 6	FG discussion
SAP4	M	BEd (intermediate phase)	2 years	5 and 6	FG discussion
School B					
SBP1	F	BEd Honours (foundation phase)	14 years	3	FG discussion, semi-structured interview, classroom observation
SBP2	F	BEd (foundation phase)	2 years	3	FG discussion
SBP3	F	BEd Honours (intermediate phase)	18 years	4 and 5	FG discussion
SBP4	F	BEd (intermediate phase)	16 years	5 and 6	FG discussion
SBP5	F	BEd (senior & FET phase)	13 years	5 and 6	discussion

Nine teachers in total participated in the study, four of the teachers were from the full-service school teaching in the intermediate phase, and five teachers were from the mainstream school teaching in the foundation and intermediate phase. Convenience sampling was used to select the schools and participants because I teach at the full-service school and provide support to the mainstream school. The reason for choosing these teachers is that I was interested in teachers who taught languages and who were exposed to diverse languages in their classrooms. Nine teachers were selected based on the learning area the teachers taught, which includes languages, math, Social science, natural science and technology. This

enabled me to explore teacher's experiences and perceptions in using multilingual teaching approaches across school learning areas, especially subjects taught in English. Convenience sampling is non-random sampling where members of the target population are selected based on meeting a certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, and willingness to participate in the study (Etikan et al., 2016). I then used purposive sampling to select one respondent from each FG. The selection of individual teachers from each FG was based on the participants' active responses on using multilingual teaching approaches in their classrooms. Purposeful sampling is a non-random sampling method that depends on the researcher's judgement regarding the characteristics of the respondents and whether the chosen sample provides accurate information to better understand the phenomenon (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000).

3.6 DATA COLLECTION AND DOCUMENTATION

The study used three qualitative data collection methods, namely classroom observations, semi-structured interviews and FG discussions to gain detailed insight into the topic. The process of collecting data started with two separate FG discussions, one for each school, and then two teachers, one from each FG, were selected for interviews. Lastly, I observed the interaction between the teachers and their learners during lessons.

3.6.1 Focus Group Discussions

A focus group discussion is a form of an interview with three to twelve participants marked by guided group discussion, interview and answer, and an interactive dialogue (Tracy, 2013). The primary purposes of these FGs discussions in the study were to generate data from the interactions among participants who shared a common experience. The focus group discussions enabled me to understand how other people interpret key terms, agreements and disagreements with the issue raised (Mertens, 2010). The interactive nature of FG discussion produced insight on the beliefs, attitude and experiences of individual participants that could not be obtained from individual interviews. Thus, this data collection format was suitable for gaining a group perspective on the uses of multilingual teaching approaches to enhance learning in primary schools.

The focus group discussions allowed me to explore the perception and understanding of a group of teachers on teaching and using multilingual teaching approaches to accommodate learners from diverse language backgrounds in their

classrooms. There were two FGs; the first FG consisted of four intermediate teachers from a full-service school. The second FG consisted of five foundation and intermediate phase teachers from a mainstream school. The FG discussions were conducted for one hour per group. The FG discussions were tape-recorded with the full permission and consent of the participants, to ensure the reliability of the information collected during the interview and FG discussions.

The advantage of using FGs as a source of data collection for this study enabled direct contact between the researcher and participants. This direct contact created opportunities for me to ask follow-up questions and clarifying questions. According to Tracy (2013), FG discussions are useful in an educational setting because they provide a less expensive and less time-consuming way to reach a larger number of participants.

3.6.2 Semi-structured Interviews

I chose one participant from each FG to participate in a semi-structured interview and classroom observations after reviewing the data gathered during the FG discussion. Two semi-structured interviews took utilising the same interview schedule for both participants. To ensure that all important information or data was recorded, I used field notes and audio recorder. The individual semi-structured interviews with the selected teachers provided in-depth information on their ideas and knowledge on multilingual teaching and the approaches that can be used in accommodating learners in their classrooms

According to Maree, “an interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the participant’s ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviour” (Maree et al., 2009:83). A semi-structured interview allows the researcher to share the world of the interviewee and gain an insight into the participant’s construction of knowledge and reality (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). According to Creswell, semi-structured interviews utilise an interview protocol that functions as a guide and starting point for the interview experience (Creswell, 2014). The benefits of semi-structured interviews are that it allows the researcher to communicate directly with the participants, so questions can be clarified, and participants can elaborate on their answers (Hays & Singh, 2012). Furthermore, additional questions can be included to tailor the interview to fully accommodate the interviewee’s perceptions and experience

3.6.3 Classroom Observations

In addition to the information that was gathered from FG discussions and individual interviews of teachers from two primary schools, I observed lessons presented by the two selected teachers in their respective classrooms. Classroom teaching observations took place during each teacher's regular lesson periods in their respective schools. One lesson was observed in each school and it took 45 minutes. The grades and learning areas that were observed during classroom teaching observation are; in school A, grade 4 natural science and technology lesson was observed, while grade 3 English lesson was observed in school B. The purpose of this classroom observation was to get "an insider perspective of the group dynamics and behaviours of different settings" (Naiken, 2016, p. 33) and the practical teaching and learning interactions that occurs in a multilingual classroom.

The classroom observation data consisted of detailed descriptions of teachers' activities, actions, teaching approaches and resources, and the full range of interpersonal interaction between teachers and learners (Patton, 2001) during the classroom observations. "Observation is a systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects and occurrences without necessarily questioning them" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007, p. 83). It is based on using the researcher's senses and intuition to gather data related to the topic within natural everyday interaction of the phenomenon studied.

To refrain from disturbing the dynamics of the setting, I played the role of an observer as a participant. Observer as a participant means that the researcher's primary role is an observer with some interaction with the study participants. To ensure that all important information or data was recorded, I used field notes, an audio recorder and images. The advantage of observation is that the researcher can record the information as it occurs (Creswell, 2014). Observation allows the researcher to capture and understand the context rather than relying on others' conceptualisation. To avoid researcher subjectivity in recording data, I used the research questions and the aims of the study to guide the process regarding what is relevant to the topic during classroom teaching observations.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The process of collecting data, analysis and interpretation in qualitative research is interlinked. This study was analysed through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a systematic qualitative analysis method utilised to analyse classifications and

present themes or patterns (Alhojailan, 2012). According to Willig (2013), thematic data analysis involves identifying common threads of meaning, categorising the meanings and clustering them into themes to describe the phenomenon. It provides an opportunity for the researcher to obtain a broader understanding of the potential of any issue because it provides a detailed description of explicit and implicit ideas. An inductive approach of thematic analysis was used, which implies that the data collected began with precise content and then moved to wider generalisations (Alhojailan, 2012).

I chose thematic analysis because it is appropriate for a study that seeks to discover and understand themes using interpretation, as was intended in this study (Tracy, 2013). The collected data was transcribed and analysed using codes, categorised and sorted into themes. The advantage of thematic analysis is that it provides rich, detailed and complex information about the phenomenon studied (Braun & Clarke, 2013). “A thematic analysis process analyses the data without engaging pre-existing themes, which means that it can be adapted to any research that relies only upon participants’ clarifications” (Blacker, 2009, p.83). The benefit of using inductive thematic analysis is that it is interested in the participant’s experiences and views (Willig, 2013). I realised that my personal experience and views on the topic could have influenced the selections of codes and themes. Therefore, the research questions were used to identify codes and categorising the codes (themes), which assisted in ensuring that the process of analysing data was not subjective.

Data analysis involved the following steps

Step 1. Data processing and preparation. The process involved transcribing audio recordings of interviews and sorting and arranging the data into different types; FG discussion, classroom observation and semi-structured interviews.

Step 2: Read or look at all the data. Re-read the transcription to get a general sense of the information and reflect on its overall meaning. Triangulate the information from various sources to understand teachers’ perception of effective teaching strategies for multilingual classrooms.

Step 3: Coding. The Coding process involved organising the data into categories and assigning labels or codes to the identified categories.

Step 4: Collate codes to generate a description of themes for the research study. The generated themes display multiple perspectives of effective multilingual teaching strategies from the participants.

Step 5: The interpretation of the findings were discussed.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A qualitative approach requires the researcher to actively participate in the context studied and use data collection methods that involve institutions and human beings. For this reason, ethical considerations within qualitative research require careful consideration of applicable guidelines, contextual ethics and the ethics of working with research participants. I ensured that the welfare and rights of the participants were safeguarded through assuring them that they would be insured against physical and emotional harm (Elias & Theron, 2012). I ensured that the participants were fully appraised of their right to informed consent and the research procedure and gave their consent before participating in the research or any data collection took place. Informed consent was also obtained from all relevant authorities before the research was initiated. The consent form also requested permission to use an audio recorder during the FG discussion and semi-structured interviews as well as taking pictures during lesson observations.

Furthermore, I ensured that participants were not misled into participating in the study. I assured the participants that they would remain anonymous throughout the study, and any personal information obtained from the participants during the study would be kept confidential. They were assured that participation in this study was voluntary and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason without any prejudice to themselves.

3.9 QUALITY CRITERIA

According to Nowell, Norris, White and Moules (2017), it is important for researchers utilising qualitative research to ensure the trustworthiness of their study, to ensure that readers can satisfy themselves that the findings of the study are worthy of their attention. The trustworthiness of a study depends on the transferability, credibility, dependability and confirmability of the study. (Nowell et al., 2017).

3.9.1 Credibility

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the credibility of a study is determined when the study presents meaningful and correct descriptions of human experiences which can also be recognised by others. The researchers also suggested several mechanisms to improve credibility, including lengthy engagement, persistent observation member checking and data collection triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To safeguard the credibility of the study, I used multiple sources of data

collection, namely FG discussion, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations and member checking. I also relied on the guidance of an experienced researcher, namely my supervisor, to guide me throughout the study. In addition, I also used member checking to verify that the information given by the participants was reflected correctly, and to offer participants the opportunity to add further information.

3.9.2 Dependability

Dependability is a parallel to the concept of reliability, and “refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated with similar subjects in a similar context” Merriam (1998, p. 205, as cited in Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Dependability can be accomplished through a logical, traceable, and clearly documented research process (Tobin & Begley, 2004). To improve the reliability of the study, I ensured that all FG discussion and interviews were recorded. I also provided detailed information about the aim and objectives of the research, the research strategy and methods. I documented the procedures of my case studies to present more reliable evidence

3.9.3 Confirmability

Confirmability is the degree to which readers can satisfy themselves that the findings of the research are supported by the data, and the data reflect the reality as perceived by knowledgeable participants rather than just the view of the researcher. According to Nowell et al. (2017), confirmability involves ensuring that the research findings are derived from the data, which require the researcher to show how conclusions have been reached. I ensured confirmability by sending the participants the transcriptions of the interviews to review and assist with reviewing the data collected by the looking into all the data collected by the instruments such as the FG transcripts, interview transcripts, and the observation notes affecting themselves, and reaffirmed the information provided before concluding on the findings

3.9.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to the ability of readers of the research to make judgments based on differences and similarities when associating the research situation to their own (Mertens, 2010). According to Creswell, to ensure transferability, a rich and detailed description of the data and the whole research process should be made available to the readers to enable them to compare it with their own context being studied and make an informed decision about the applicability of the findings to their

research (Creswell, 2014). To ensure transferability, I provided sufficient details on this research so that readers could compare the context of the research setting and participants with their research parameters.

3.9.5 Triangulation

“Triangulation involves checking information that has been collected from different sources for consistency of evidence across sources of data” (Mertens, 2010, p.183). The use of multiple methods assisted in comparing data to decide if it corroborates and thus, to validate research findings (Creswell, 2014). Triangulation was attained by collecting the data from different sources using a variety of procedures, including: FG discussions, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observation.

3.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I discussed the methodological design, research design, data collection, and method of data analysis and interpretation in detail. The various data-gathering instruments such as FG discussions, observations and individual interviews were also presented and discussed. The procedures of data collection, the sampling techniques and the choice of the sample size were also discussed.

4 CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the study results obtained from the data collected during the FG discussions, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations, on perspectives of the primary school teachers on effective multilingual teaching approaches. The first section of the chapter provides a detailed definition of the themes and subthemes identified from the data analysis, including inclusion and exclusion criteria for each theme. The chapter continues by providing an in-depth discussion of the study results and summarises the key issues emerging from the data analysis.

4.2 RESULTS OF THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Four main themes and ten sub-themes were identified during the TA process. The identified themes emerged from the teachers' perceptions of effective multilingual teaching strategies in primary school. The chapter is structured according to the four themes.

- Theme 1: Perceived effective multilingual teaching approaches
- Theme 2: Competence in teaching in multilingual classrooms
- Theme 3: Challenges teachers experience in teaching multilingual classrooms
- Theme 4: The benefits of using multilingual teaching approaches

Table 4.1 below outlines the different themes, sub-themes and the data sources used in the study. The themes and subthemes presented in the table are defined, including the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 4-1: Visual representation of themes, subthemes and sources of data

Themes	Subthemes	Data sources				
		Focus Groups		Semi-structured individual interview		Classroom observations
		1	2	1	2	
Effective multilingual teaching approaches	Code switching Visual aids and concrete objects Peer teaching Rhymes and songs	X	X	X	X	X
Competence in teaching in multilingual classrooms	Personal experience and developmental training Conduct research			X	X	
Challenges teachers experience in teaching multilingual classrooms	Systemic challenges Learning skills challenges	X	X	X	X	X
The benefits of using multilingual teaching approaches	Academic benefits social benefits	X	X	X	X	X

4.3 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Table 4.2 below presents a summary of the codes utilised to describe the participants and the referencing system of the verbatim quotes used in this chapter. Pseudonyms such as SAP1, SAP2, and SBP1 were used to denote participants during the verbatim quotes. In coding, the coding system begins with data source code, then the participants code followed by line number, for example, an individual interview from School A is (INT1 SAP1, line 12-15) while data from FG discussion teacher 2 from school B is (FOC2 SBP2, line 26-31).

Table 4-2: Codes used to describe the participants

Schools	Participants	Code	Focus group codes	Semi structured individual interview codes
School A	Teacher 1	SAP1	FOC1 SAP1	INT1 SAP1
	Teacher 2	SAP2	FOC1 SAP2	
	Teacher 3	SAP3	FOC1 SAP3	
	Teacher 4	SAP4	FOC1 SAP4	
SCHOOL B	Teacher 1	SBP1	FOC2 SBP1	INT2 SBP1
	Teacher 2	SBP2	FOC2 SBP2	
	Teacher 3	SBP3	FOC2 SBP3	
	Teacher 4	SBP4	FOC2 SBP4	
	Teacher 5	SBP5	FOC2 SBP5	

4.3.1 Theme 1: Effective Multilingual Teaching Approaches

Table 4.3 reflects the criteria for selection for multilingual teaching approaches.

Table 4-3: Criteria for selection multilingual teaching approaches

Working definition	
Multilingual teaching strategies: innovative teaching techniques and special methodologies oriented on developing learners' understanding of language use, writing, reading and arithmetic skills (Gvelesian, 2017)	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to perceived effective teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating to perceived effective teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms

This section starts by reporting on the results related to teachers' perceptions on the effective multilingual approaches for inclusively teaching linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms by reporting selected prescribed quotes from the interview.

The teachers in this study explained that they perceived using any teaching strategies as a tool to accommodate individual learner's learning needs. According to the teachers, using multilingual teaching approaches starts with planning lessons and differentiating their lessons according to their learners' home languages.

“Accommodating my learners mean being flexible and being able to engage in those other languages in my lesson. This simply means that the strategies I am going to use and the languages need to vary” (INT1 SAP1, line 19-23).

According to Gracia and Sylvan, “teaching in today's multilingual/multicultural classrooms should focus on communicating with all students and negotiating challenging academic content with them by building on their different language practices, rather than simply promoting and teaching one or more standard languages” (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011, p. 387). Therefore, multilingual teaching approaches enable teachers to engage in and negotiate challenging content with all linguistically diverse learners in their classroom.

The teachers who participated in this study identified the following multilingual teaching approaches: Code switching, visual aids and concrete objects, peer teaching and rhymes and songs as effective approaches for inclusively accommodating learners from linguistically diverse backgrounds. These four perceived multilingual teaching approaches will now be presented as subthemes.

4.3.1.1 Selection for code switching

Table 4.4 reflects the criteria for selection for code-switching

Table 4-4: Criteria for selection, code switching

Working definition	
Code-switching: “The alternative use by bilinguals or multi-linguals of two or more languages in the same conversation” (Phatudi, 2015).	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to code-switching perceived effective teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating to perceived effective teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms

The most common multilingual teaching approach that was evidently used across schools and subjects was code-switching. The participants used code-switching to explain the concepts learners did not understand, and to explain tasks instructions. According to Mbatha (2015), code-switching might be advantageous to explain grammar rules and other aspects of the English language framework. It is also beneficial in the early stages of teaching and learning L2, and it accommodates the transition from the FP to the intermediate phase in schools that use HL during the first three years of school. Hence teachers use it frequently. The teachers commented:

“Code switching is one of the approaches I use as mam has just said is one of them , where you have to explain in their home language, for example when I am teaching in English I have to explain in Sesotho, isiZulu, isiXhosa and Sepedi. Most of the time I found that code switching helps”.(FOC2 SBP3. Line 32-37)

“I strongly believe in code-switching because if you code switch 60% of the challenges are minimised” (FOC1 SAP4, line 163-164.

Code switching is not simply a combination and mixture of languages, but it is creative approaches by teachers in a multilingual classroom; it requires knowledge and competence in all the language involved (Wei, 2011). The teachers indicated that they find creative ways to use language and to circumvent or remove learning barriers experienced in their classrooms

“When I realise that they don’t understand I switch to their languages, at least a few that I know” (INT2 SBP1, line 15-16).

“I know how to speak isiZulu and Sesotho, then there and then I engage them in English even though it is a little bit difficult to understand English” (FOC1 SAP1, line 63-65).

These teachers recognise that it is challenging for their learners to understand and participate in lessons when the lessons are just taught in English; thus they switch from the LoLT to learners’ home languages during their lessons. The teachers confirmed that they perceived code-switching as a useful teaching approach that supported learning where learners experience language-related learning barriers.

“Using their own language, that is support on its own because most of the time or what we know in our system is that if we teach, we teach in English, that’s the medium of instruction. So for the mere fact that you are you are code switching into Tswana , that simply means that you are supporting them”. (INT1 SAP1, line 53-59)

In addition, the teachers provided explanations or examples of how they used code-switching to accommodate the learners.

“Code switching really helps a lot, for example if you say book and a learner does not know what book is if you do not have the means the means to have visual aids then code switching is saying the word in their home language in accommodating their learning and the way of understanding”. (FOC2 SBP4. Line 42-48)

“The only thing I do is to teach in English when we do Geography, I first teach in English and then elaborate in isiZulu and Sesotho because there are learners who don’t understand English” (FOC1 SAP2, line 68-72).

“I speak in English and after allow them to ask questions in Sesotho and encourage them to ask question in Sesotho or isiZulu but we use English” (FOC1 SAP2, line 74-76).

During observation, it was evident that code-switching did not only enhance learners’ understanding, but it promoted active learning. Once the teacher switches languages and asks questions in learners’ home languages learner engagement in the lesson increases.

“As much as we need to familiarise them with English we also need to code switch when the need arises. It is not the matter of speaking English whereas they don’t understand anything” (FOC1 SAP4, line 123-126).

Teachers recognise that they cannot use the same teaching approaches for all lessons, but they should adapt their approaches to best fit the lesson content. Furthermore, the teachers reported that their role in teaching multilingual classrooms is to ensure that learners acquire the skills and knowledge their lessons focus on; thus, code-switching enables learners to reach their full potential. The findings indicate that code-switching is a commonly used strategy in teaching multilingual classrooms. These findings also correlated with Mbatha’s (2015) study which suggested that code-switching was frequently used in classrooms to impact knowledge by using linguistic resources available.

4.3.1.2 Subtheme 1.2: Visual aids and Concrete objects

Table 4.5 reflects the criteria for inclusion for visual aids and concrete objects.

Table 4-5: Criteria for inclusion, visual aids and concrete objects

Working definition	
Visual aids and concrete objects: Any material used to illustrate or provide a visual and concrete representation of information in classrooms such as but not limited to pictures, micrographs, models and charts (Shabiralyani, Hasan, Hamad and Igbal, 2015)	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to visual aids and concrete objects perceived as an effective teaching approach in multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating to visual aids and concrete objects perceived as an effective teaching approach in multilingual classrooms

In addition to using code-switching, teachers use visual aids and concrete objects to accommodate learners from multilingual classrooms. According to teachers that participated in this study, visual aids are more effective in accommodating learners who experience difficulties with writing and reading, and it enhances learners’ understanding during lessons.

“By using visual, I use words and pictures because I believe when I child sees a picture and a word they learn better” (INT2 SAP1, line 11-13).

“Using visual, I use words and picture because I believe when I child sees a picture and a word is able to understand what I am talking about” (INT2 SBP1, line 62-64).

“One strategy that I use is making sure that I have enough visual aid so that I can show them. Also I usually say what to you call this in Shona?” (FOC2 SBP3. Line 50-52).

In addition, other teachers incorporate the use of visual aids with abstract objects to accommodate linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms.

“The approaches that I usually use to teach and support these learners, the one I quoted first of visual things like pictures, and I also make sure that they interact with some of the things which I want them to learn”. (FOC2 SBP3. Line 91-95)

“For an example, we are teaching mathematics in isiZulu in the Foundation Phase, so in order for them to understand the number 5 there is an abstract thing that I put together that they know these number when I count it is up to 5”. (FOC2 SBP3. Line 95-99)

Another teacher incorporated code-switching with visual aids. It is important to use teaching approaches that can be used to discuss explanations, clarify questions and enable learners to think through how to tackle problems.

“I think if you can use a picture based on what you are teaching it must talk to them in their own language. For instance if you are teaching body parts you can place a picture, instead of writing English you write their own language. Instead of saying a hand, you say ‘isandla.’ (INT1 SAP1, line 70-75)

In addressing the challenges teachers and learners experience during the transition from Grade 3 to Grade 4, which in most schools require learners to change language of teaching to English, teachers use visual aids to explain concepts and enhance learners’ proficiency in the LoLT (English).

“So we end up using approaches that first teach basics, like sounds and using visual aids like pictures and words all together so they grasp word building in English” (FOC1 SAP3, line 197-199).

According to Mbatha (2015), incorporating code-switching and visual aids is beneficial in the early stages of teaching and learning with an unfamiliar LoLT, and it accommodates the transition from the foundation phase to the intermediate phase in schools that use HL during the first three years of school.

4.3.1.3 Subtheme 1.3: Peer teaching

Table 4.6 reflects the criteria for inclusion for peer teaching.

Table 4-6: Criteria for inclusion, Peer teaching

Working definition	
Peer teaching: a process in which learners with more abilities help less able learners to understand the subject matters in pairs or small groups cooperatively. It involves a teacher mandating learners from similar social or language groupings, to help each other to learn and learning themselves by teaching (Al-Qadi, Al-Oun and Al-Barri, 2013)	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to peer teaching perceived as an effective teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating to peer teaching perceived as an effective teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms

Other teachers mentioned that they believe that learners learn better when they interact with their peers and actively engage in discussions with their peers. The teachers indicated that they could only speak a few languages and not all the languages spoken in their classes, therefore they are involving other learners to assist some learners in their HL to enable them to accommodate all of their learners.

“Another strategy is to mix them. The high performers are mixed with the weak ones so that they can assist each other” (FOC1 SAP1, line 144-146).

“They can be able to assist those who do not understand the concepts. They will be able to assist them in their own language” (INT1 SAP1, line 86-88).

“you realise that they still do not understand you ask one or two learners who understand to explain to the rest” (FOC1 SAP3, line 152-154).

The teachers recognise that they are not competent in all languages the learners speak in their classroom, thus using peer teaching works for them across subjects. Learners can explain to their peers in their HL and on their level of understanding

“Yes, it works because 50% do isiZulu and the other is Sesotho so if you mix them they are able to explain to each other” (FOC1 SAP1, line 149-151).

“A learner may feel a little bit free when a peer says to her madam means this and this. They do well when their peers help them, they understand much better, in their language and level. So peer teaching in various languages works for me”. (FOC2 SBP5. Line 176-181)

The teachers further provided examples of peer teaching in their classrooms.

“Grade 5 learner was supposed write in expanded notation the learner was writing in words I asked Themba grade 4 learners to assist in interpreting the questions in the learner’s home language. The learner got 46 out of 50 through the help of a grade 4 learner”. (FOC1 SAP1, line 155-160)

Apparently, the teachers in this study make use of peer teaching to accommodate all the learners in their lessons, irrespective of the teacher’s limited proficiency in other languages. This indicates that teachers make efforts to analyse and understand their learners when they plan.

4.3.1.4 Subtheme 1.4: Rhymes and songs

Table 4.7 reflects the criteria for inclusion for rhymes and songs.

Table 4-7: Criteria for inclusion, rhymes and songs

Working definition	
Rhymes and songs: as pedagogical tools, are a form of language that use tones and rhythm in order to facilitate learning	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to rhymes and songs perceived as an effective teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating to rhymes and songs perceived as an effective teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms

According to the teachers, using songs and creating rhymes in their lessons doesn’t only enhance learners’ understanding but promote active learning as well. Learners learn better and recall what was taught easier when they are involved in the lesson.

“Songs and rhymes is another strategy that I use because I believe that as they sing these songs they able to understand and sometimes I allow them to formulate their own rhymes in some of the topics”. (INT2 SBP1, line 89-92)

“I realised that involving them through songs, dramatizing some of the things. With that they learn much better. They are able to remember because they have interacted” (FOC2 SBP3. Line 150-152).

“that’s what works the most when they engage in the lessons they tend to remember when they are less stressed, when they do something for fun, then they can recall much easier” (FOC2 SBP4. Line 163-166).

The teachers mentioned that although rhymes, songs and drama are used in teaching multilingual classrooms, they recognise that they are more effective and practical in teaching FP and Grade 4 learners.

“Rhymes and music, songs, just for them to learn the songs that we use it is much easier and practical for the Foundation Phase most of the time. They are able to learn with joy” (FOC2 SBP4. Line 117-120).

It is clear from this data that the teachers that participated in this study understood their learners and were willing to do as much as possible to ensure that they create a conducive environment for linguistically diverse learners to reach their full potential. The teachers indicated that they use teaching approaches that allow every learner to use their HL orally in the classroom through peer interaction and alongside target language (English).

4.3.2 Theme 2: Teachers’ Perception of their Competence in Teaching Multilingual Classrooms

Table 4.8 reflects the criteria for inclusion for teachers’ experience and training

Table 4-8: Criteria for inclusion for teachers’ experience and training

Working definition	
Teacher experience and training: Teachers’ professional experience and competence in teaching multilingual classrooms	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to peer teaching perceived as an effective teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating to peer teaching perceived as an effective teaching approaches in multilingual classrooms

This section provides data that relates to teachers’ perspectives on their abilities to use effective teaching strategies to accommodate linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms.

Teachers expressed their confidence in teaching multilingual classrooms:

“So yes, I think I am equipped” (INT1 SAP1, line 38).

“I can say I am now equipped” (INT2 SBP1, line 19).

In this study, the theme “Competence in teaching in multilingual classrooms” indicated that participants considered their competence in teaching multilingual classrooms in two ways, through their personal teaching experience and training, and personal development. These two teacher competencies will now be presented as subthemes.

4.3.2.1 Subtheme 2.1: Personal experience and training

Table 4.9 reflects the criteria for inclusion for personal experience and training.

Table 4-9: Criteria for inclusion, personal experience and training

Working definition	
Personal experience and training: Having skills, knowledge, attitude and expertise required to teach effectively in a multilingual classroom	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to relying on their personal experience and training to teach multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating to relying on their personal experience and training to teach multilingual classrooms

The teachers stressed the importance of relying on various sources to equip themselves with skills and knowledge that will assist them in teaching learners from diverse language backgrounds:

“I have been interacting with these learners for many years and I have learned that I have to get more knowledge so that I will be able to teach them effectively” (INT2 SBP1, line 19-22).

“I have attended a workshop that focused on teaching multilingual classrooms and dealing with language barrier” (INT1 SAP1, line 31-33).

“I have been attending different workshops whereby I have learned to pronounce some of the words in a different language, for example, I have attended IOL it’s a program whereby there are introducing a third language in primary schools where the LOLT is English and first additional language is Afrikaans”. (INT2 SBP1, line 22-28)

Based on their engagement with learners from diverse language backgrounds and on the developmental workshops they have attended, the teachers indicated that they feel equipped to teach learners from diverse language backgrounds. The study findings contradict Ferreira-Meyers’ (2017) study, which reported that teachers indicated that they felt that they had no training and skills for promoting multilingualism in education.

4.3.2.2 Subtheme 2.2: Personal development

Table 4.10 reflects the criteria for inclusion for personal development.

Table 4-10: Criteria for inclusion, personal development

Working definition	
Personal development: The process of improving your skills and increasing the amount of experience you have in a job. This involves engaging in activities that develop an individual’s skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher teaching multilingual classrooms.	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to engaging in personal development activities to be able to teach multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating to engaging in personal development activities to be able to teach multilingual classrooms

Teachers recognise that they must constantly pursue activities that advance their professional skills and knowledge, especially in conducting their research to be able to accommodate learners from diverse language backgrounds effectively in their classrooms.

“I conduct research on multilingual classrooms and language challenges and I also ask experienced teachers for guidance on how to approach or deal with language differences in my teaching” (INT1 SAP1, line 34-38).

“I do conduct my own researches like if I want to say this in this language what do I say” (INT2 SBP1, line 31-33).

Teachers have expressed the importance of self-development, not relying on the DoE only but conduct their own research and collaborate with other teachers who have more experience in teaching multilingual classrooms. Just like using peer teaching in accommodating learners in multilingual classrooms, sharing knowledge related to teaching multilingual classrooms advances their skills in teaching learners from diverse language backgrounds with different learning needs.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Challenges Teachers Experience in Teaching Multilingual Classrooms

Table 4.11 reflects the criteria for inclusion for classroom challenges.

Table 4-11: Criteria for inclusion, classroom challenges

Working definition	
Multilingual classroom challenges: Difficulties teachers experience in creating a conducive learning and teaching environment in multilingual	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to challenges teachers experience in multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating to challenges teachers experience in multilingual classrooms

The data analysis provides compelling evidence that teachers experience challenges that negatively affect presentations of lessons in a multilingual classroom. Teachers find it challenging to accommodate linguistically diverse learners within an expected period. Teachers face the challenge of incorporating the curriculum’s demands with the language education policy in their teaching.

The participants indicated that they perceive the challenges they experience in teaching multilingual classrooms as systemic and learning-related challenges. Thus, these two identified challenges will now be presented as subthemes.

4.3.3.1 Subtheme 3.1: Systemic barriers

Table 4.12 reflects the criteria for inclusion for systemic barriers

Table 4-12: Criteria for inclusion, systemic barriers

Working definition	
Systematic barriers: Systematic barriers to learning and teaching are barriers created by the education system itself in the multilingual classroom. It is “those factors which lead to the inability of the [educational] system to accommodate diversity, which lead to learning breakdown or which prevent learners from accessing educational provision” (Landsberg, Krüger & Nel, 2005, p. 17),	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to systematic barriers experienced in multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating systematic barriers experienced in multilingual classrooms

a) Teaching multilingual classrooms is time-consuming

The teachers who participated in this study identified one of the main challenges in teaching multilingual classrooms as time

“Time constraints, you will find that you work on explaining one word because you are trying to reach them, all of them. For example, you will say mukoma this is tshidulo, chair, setulo, you are only saying the word but you have not touched what the chair is meant for. Then time will be against you”. (FOC1 SBP1, line 248-253)

“Even when you are teaching them, you will need more time so that you will be able to include all of them in a lesson. There is no sufficient time in class” (INT1 SAP1, 184-187).

In addition to time contributing to challenges experienced by both teachers and learners in multilingual classes, learners’ lack of proficiency in the LoLT is also an additional challenge.

“The biggest mistake that our education system has committed is to start the learners with home language at the Foundation Phase and out of the blue (unexpectedly) now, they are introduced to something new. We are expecting them to perform whereas it is not easy”. (FOC1 SAP4, line 164-169)

In relation to utilising time to cover the curriculum, other teachers perceive the transition of Grade 3 learners to Grade 4 challenging for both teachers and learners.

According to the teachers, learners could benefit more if the LoLT (English) is introduced earlier to them instead of using their home languages as LoLT in the foundation phase.

“Before you start with your lesson, you start by teaching language and you are not a language teacher and you want to push to cover your curriculum but it will not be possible whereas learners do not understand what you are teaching them”. (FOC1 SAP4, line 170-174)

“They are not being taught sounds in English but they are expected to understand English in Grade 4. So how do you understand a language without knowing sounds, how do you grasp that language?” (FOC1 SAP3, line 164-167)

Teachers perceive using HL in the FP and switching the medium of instruction later instead of earlier as one of the contributing factors to the challenges they experience in teaching multilingual classrooms. The teachers indicated that their biggest challenge is incorporating the curriculum’s demands with language education policy in their teaching. They are required to meet curriculum demands that were set without considering the demands on their time from all the learners in their classrooms with diverse language needs. Makgamatha et al. (2013) revealed that curriculum and assessment development in South Africa continued without effective mechanisms for including the ideologies of the language education policies.

b) Increased workload

Teaching in any classroom requires an educator to plan for the lesson; this includes the content of the lesson, targeting skills and knowledge and teaching approaches used to achieve learning goals. According to the teachers who participated in this study, planning for a lesson in a multilingual class requires them to use different teaching approaches to accommodate diverse languages, which is perceived as adding to their work.

“There is too much work. It requires you to go an extra mile. You need to do more than is expected because a lesson you were going to plan for twenty minutes now it is going to take you an hour and twenty minutes because you are now catering for each and every learner in class”. (INT1 SAP1, line 176-181)

“Planning. If you are teaching multilingual classrooms, your planning will be broader and you will need more methods of planning. It gives you more wor.” (FOC1 SAP4, line 317-319).

According to the teachers, lesson planning for a multilingual classroom is broader because all the linguistically diverse learners need to be considered in their planning.

“you are not just focusing on one language and the approaches are going to vary, so now you need more time to do that, your planning takes more time” (INT1 SAP1, line 182-184).

c) Overcrowded classrooms

Overcrowded classrooms also contribute to the challenges teachers experience in teaching multilingual classrooms. The teachers feel they are unable to accommodate all the learners as they are pressed for time to cover the curriculum. This consumes their time because they have to consider each learner when they plan for their lessons.

“The other challenge is the overcrowded classes. We sometimes tend to forget about these learners who come from diverse languages because we feel it’s the waste of time” (INT2 SBP1, line 173-177).

“Then the number of learners in a classroom, you have got 54 learners or 48, so imagine working on those digits. It really consumes your time” (FOC2 SBP1, 255-257).

Subtheme 3.2: Learning barriers

Table 4.13 reflects the criteria for inclusion for learning barriers

Table 4-13: Criteria for inclusion, learning barriers

Working definition	
<p>Learning barriers: Factors that lead to learning breakdown that prevents learners from accessing the general educational provisions as defined by the curriculum. It involves difficulties in basic processes involved in understanding language, resulting in thinking, reading, listening, speaking and writing problems</p>	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to learning barriers contributing to the challenges teachers experience in teaching multilingual classrooms	Any comment made by participants not relating to learning barriers contributing to the challenges teachers experience in teaching multilingual classrooms

Some of the challenges teachers experienced in teaching linguistically diverse learners are related to learner's proficiency in the LoLT (English). Learners' proficiency negatively influences teaching and learning in class, especially in writing and reading

a) Multilingual teaching approaches creates confusion

Although teachers recognise the importance and impact of using multilingual teaching approaches in their classes, they think it also confuses their learners. They reported that this confusion is evident during assessment when learners struggle to read and follow instructions as well as their perception of preferred languages in class.

"I understand multilingual teaching to accommodate all learners in the classroom but I think it confuses learners especially when it comes to assessment" (FOC1 SAP3, line 40-42).

"Let me say confusion [is] on the learner side. It seems as if when we switch we are promoting the other language in the class because remember the other kids in the class know Zulu and I am Sotho speaking and I am trying to accommodate these Zulu ones then the other Sotho kids will be focusing on the Zulu words instead of their own." (FOC2 SBP2, line 266-272)

In addition, using multilingual teaching approaches, such as code-switching, is not only perceived as confusing the learners but it is also perceived as promoting other languages or preferring other languages instead of each learner's language.

"Switching to their languages when we are explaining things helps the learners understand but in return it become negative because they no longer going to focus on what they are doing. Also we are Promoting the other language other than focusing on their own". (FOC2 SBP1, line 293-298)

b) Learning skills challenges

The teachers indicated that they understand and recognise the benefits of using multilingual teaching approaches in their classrooms; however, they feel it contributes to writing, reading and verbal expression delays experienced by their learners. As they commented:

“We have a serious challenge in writing” (FOC2 SBP3, line 311).

The teachers provided examples related to writing and spelling challenges they experience in multilingual classrooms.

“To an extent that you give them pictures and a word, they have to fill in the correct word. The picture gives them an idea but you only want the word, they will copy the instruction instead of writing the answer.” (FOC2 SBP3, line 320-325)

“I have a learner in my class who speaks Setswana. Tswana and Sesotho are similar somewhere, for example lapile, it is tired in Setswana and hungry and Sesotho so when it comes to forming a sentence it means two different things, when it comes to Sesotho its wrong because she can't use that word as tired”. (FOC2 SBP4, line 331-336)

The challenges thus become spelling rules, teaching learners to differentiate spelling rules between their home languages and the LoLT, and they skip vowels when they write in English.

“In English I usually say every time it's a consonant, a vowel, and a consonant, so I'm trying to emphasise those things. You find that in Sesotho the o's are u's. They must know when o changes to u” (FOC2 SBP3, line 376-380).

In addition to the challenges in writing experienced by teachers in multilingual classrooms, they mention that learners struggle to understand them or instructions when they speak in English. Furthermore, learners struggle to clearly communicate their view in English because they use their home languages during lessons in their classes.

“It makes it difficult for learners to express themselves in English as they are used to expressing themselves in their own languages” (FOC1 SAP3, line 323-325).

“It becomes difficult for these learners to follow the instructions because they are used to be taught in African languages and English” (FOC1 SAP1, line 43-45).

This correlates with the findings of other studies, for example, where a teacher reported that she avoided using African languages in the classroom as these ‘interfered’ with learners’ accurate spelling and pronunciation of English (Makoe & McKinney, 2014).

4.3.4 Theme 4: The benefits of using multilingual teaching strategies

Table 4.14 reflects the criteria for selection for multilingual teaching approaches.

Table 4-14: Criteria for selection for multilingual teaching approaches

Working definition	
Multilingual teaching strategy benefits: The impact multilingual teaching approaches have on learners’ overall language and social development	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to perceived benefits in using multilingual teaching approaches	Any comment made by participants not relating to perceived benefits in using multilingual teaching approaches

It appears that multilingual teaching approaches have various benefits for both teachers and learners. The participants indicated that multilingual teaching approaches enhance learning (academic development) and promote classroom interaction (social development). Thus, these two multilingual teaching approach benefits will be presented as subthemes.

4.3.4.1 Subtheme 4.1: Academic development benefits

Table 4.15 reflects the criteria for selection for academic development efforts.

Table 4-15: Criteria for selection, academic development benefits

Working definition	
Academic development benefits: A process by which a learner gain academic-related knowledge and skills through the use of effective multilingual teaching practices by teachers	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to perceived academic benefits in using multilingual teaching approaches	Any comment made by participants not relating to perceived academic benefits in using multilingual teaching approaches

According to the teachers that participated in this study, using multilingual teaching approaches doesn’t only provide an opportunity for them to interact with the learners in different languages but promotes and enhances learning in their classrooms.

“I think multilingual teaching approaches have benefits because both the teacher and learners are learning. It is incidental; we do not plan

for whatever because sometimes when you are focusing on a topic we have a lot of topics covered during that time because a child will be sharing this with this”. (FOC2 SBP1. Line 189-194)

“Another benefit is that if you teach them in their own language they tend to excel and they tend to learn better than when you are teaching them in a different language” (INT1 SAP1, line 114-117).

“One benefit is that they aid creativity. Because we mentioned about visuals, auditory, I think it allows teacher and learners to be creative in how they acquire their information” (FOC2 SBP4. Line 185-188).

“The benefit is for the learners to pass when you use multilingual teaching strategies” (FOC1 SAP1, line 258-259).

In addition to the improvement in academic performance of learners, teachers mentioned that multilingual teaching approaches promote active learning, the engagement of learners in their lesson increases when they use multilingual teaching approaches.

“It also gives them an opportunity to ask questions. It becomes more simple to engage with you and because they get more comfortable” (INT1 SAP1, line 119-121).

“We gain insight about different views in relation to the topic, they are more active” (FOC2 SBP4. Line 195-196).

4.3.4.2 Subtheme 4.2: Social benefits

Table 4.16 reflects the criteria for inclusion for social development benefits.

Table 4-16: Criteria for inclusion, social development benefits

Working definition	
Social development benefits: a process by which a learner gain skills to interact with others and process their actions. This allows for more opportunities to practice and learn speech and language skills	
Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any comment made by participants relating to perceived social development benefits in using multilingual teaching approaches	Any comment made by participants not relating to perceived social development benefits in using multilingual teaching approaches

It also appears that multilingual teaching approaches promote the use of learners' home languages in schools and provides opportunities for both learner and teachers to learn from each other.

“Our children are being brainwashed and told that English is “thee” language. I think if we are code switching we are showing them that there is nothing wrong with their home language” (INT1 SAP1, line 98-101).

“The benefits are learning and teaching in two ways because when I involve these learners who come from diverse languages I ask them to tell something in their own language, and even other learners are learning”. (INT2 SBP1, line 97-101).

“Another benefit is that at the end of the year some of the learners who didn't know a language know isiZulu or Sesotho” (FOC1 SAP4, line 260-262).

The data analysis suggests that teachers recognise that multilingual teaching approaches don't only accommodate learners from diverse language backgrounds but it also provides support to the entire class. Furthermore, teachers acknowledge that multilingual teaching approaches can be an effective way to address writing barriers. These issues were identified earlier as the main difficulties that linguistically diverse learners and their teachers face.

4.4 DISCUSSION

4.4.1 Effective Multilingual Teaching Strategies

The study's findings indicate that teachers welcome the inclusion of multilingual teaching in their schools and believed that using multilingual teaching approaches would accommodate the diverse needs of all learners. According to the participants, this inclusive process would be achieved by adults through encouraging participation in learning and reducing exclusion within education, it further involves changes and adaptations in content, structures and approaches (Rutar, 2014). According to Makoe and McKinney, current research on language practices in multilingual classrooms also points out to the use of 'mixed' codes to facilitate access to the curriculum (Makoe & McKinney, 2014). Teaching approaches such as

translanguaging, code switching, and other assistive language practices may be perceived as undesirable to language development (Childs, 2016). .

4.4.1.1 Code-switching

The findings indicate that teachers see code-switching as the most common multilingual teaching approach across schools and subjects. The participants have shown that they recognise and understand the challenges their learners experience due to limited proficiency in the LoLT (English); thus, code-switching is used to address learners' language barrier. Du Buisson (2017) states that "many studies, specifically around language learning, have found that using the local forms of the language could be helpful in learning the 'proper form thereof (Bahous et al., 2014, p. 357, as cited in Du Buisson, 2017). The participants state that the main objective of this teaching option is to interact with learners and so allow them to develop their communication skills. Furthermore, code-switching promotes active learning, once the teacher switches languages during a lesson, learner engagement increases.

According to the teachers, code-switching helps them clarify meaning to learners and accommodate learners to enhance the degree of mutual understanding. In agreement with the study findings, Hedge (2000, p.40, cited in Lugolobi-Nalunga, 2013) states that "through active teacher-talk and systematic code-switching, the teacher can provide clarification, explanations and meaning while learners respond accordingly, interpreting and negotiating meaning of the target language skill which in its turn leads to a communicative classroom". Lee's (2012) study found code-switching by teachers led to better learning outcomes than the use of English-only instruction. It had greater benefits for the young participants.

4.4.1.2 Visual aids and concrete objects

In addition to using code-switching to accommodate linguistically diverse learners, teachers indicated that visual aids are effective in teaching learners in multilingual classrooms, especially learners with reading and writing challenges. According to the teachers, visual aids teaching resources make the lesson clearer or easier to understand and know. Furthermore, visual aids are perceived as effective, encouraging students learning process and making it interesting for linguistically diverse learners. Good learning resources could help to address specific problems with language barriers as they can make learning easier for the learners through prompting via supportive visual images (Shabiralyani et al., 2015).

The teachers further revealed that using visual aids in multilingual classrooms is even more effective in addressing the challenges teachers and learners experience during the transition from Grade 3 to Grade 4, which in most schools require learners to change the language of learning. Therefore, teachers bridge the gap by using visual aids to teach basics, sounds and simple sight words in the target language. Childs' (2016) study reveals that learners from linguistically diverse backgrounds experience challenges during the transition from Grade 3 to 4.

4.4.1.3 Peer teaching

The participants revealed that they acknowledge that they have limited proficiency in the languages spoken in their classrooms; thus they make efforts to use more collaborative teaching approaches to bridge the gaps. According to the teachers, peer teaching enables them to accommodate all learners, especially in a multilingual classroom. Peer teaching is a model that can be used in English first Language classes to engage learners during class activities. It enables learners to understand the subjects better, and they explain to their fellow students or more accurately to their peers who cannot comprehend teachers' explanations correctly (Karim & Mohammed, 2018).

There are limited studies that have been conducted to explore the results of implementing peer teaching in multilingual classes from teachers' and students' perspectives. This study's findings correlate with a study conducted by Mathey (2010), as the teachers indicated that they have attempted to solve the problem by using language that is common to both the learners and teacher when explaining concepts, using dictionaries and asking other learners to explain the work. Pluddemann, Mati and Mahlalela-Thus (2000) also revealed that teachers used peer interpreting/teaching (English to Xhosa) to address shortcomings in the oral interaction in the classroom for learners when it was evident that the learner did not understand the questions or instructions from the teacher in the LoLT or a language.

Despite the effective use of peer teaching in multilingual classrooms, it appears to have mixed results. In some cases, the interpreter enabled the other learner to understand the content and question; at other times, the interpreter offered more than required by volunteering the answer as well (Pluddemann et al., 2000). However, teachers in this study perceive peer teaching as an approach that improves learner competence in the subject area, develops autonomous learning skills,

builds confidence and self-esteem; and enhances team-working skills. This is because peer-teaching actively engages learners in the learning process.

4.4.1.4 Rhymes and songs

In addition to the above mentioned perceived effective multilingual teaching approaches, the teachers identified songs and rhyme as an effective approach. The findings of the study indicate that using songs and rhymes in lessons enhances learners understanding and promote active learning as well. Singing songs not only helps learners to recall the material covered in class, but it also ensured that they enjoyed the learning process more and retained their interest. Using rhymes and songs give children an additional link with the classroom environment and played a significant role in strengthening their language skills (Conesa & Rubio, 2015). Conesa and Rubio (2015) state that songs and rhymes are useful to enlarge the vocabulary background of learners improve learners listening and speaking skills pronunciation and teach different language functions. Furthermore, songs and rhymes motivate learners to participate and stimulate children's interest in the LoLT. The above statements support the perceptions of study participants about the benefits of using rhyme and songs to teach in multilingual classrooms

4.4.2 Teacher Education and Experience

Managing a multilingual classroom compels teachers to manage the imparting of subject knowledge while also paying attention to language development as well as individual learner requirements and needs. The teachers indicated that they draw on their personal experience in teaching in a multilingual classroom to enable them to use instructional strategies effectively to accommodate diverse learning needs. They mentioned that engaging in self-development activities such as conducting their own research on multilingual teaching and learning strategies and resources and consulting other experienced teachers is helpful. Multilingual classrooms are demanding; therefore, special attention is required to ensure that the teachers are adequately trained to meet the specific demands of the teaching environment.

Rasheed, Zeeshan and Zaidi (2017) argue that teachers who are professionally trained and, can cope with the pressure of teaching multilingual classrooms as compared to the teachers who are not trained. Ferreira-Meyers' (2017) study show that one of the major challenges in the implementation of multilingual education is caused by limited training of teachers in African languages and the lack of training resources for teacher education. The study shows different results compared to

previous researches, as the teachers indicated that they are equipped and are trained to ensure that the learning process in a multilingual classroom is productive and delivers the required results. The overall results indicate that the teachers agree with a study from Hansen-Pauly (2002) that asserts that teachers “aspire to develop is a professional level of language proficiency for the promotion of subject learning in (multilingual) teaching situations”.

4.4.3 Challenges Teachers Experience in Multilingual Classrooms

Despite the benefits and the efforts of using multilingual teaching approaches to accommodate linguistically diverse learners, teachers still experience challenges in multilingual classrooms. The findings indicate that some of the challenges teachers’ experiences are beyond their control, being more systematic challenges. The teachers in this study mentioned that it is difficult for them to accommodate learners with diverse language needs in their lessons due to class workload and time factor. Teaching multilingual classrooms compels teachers to accommodate each learner in the planning and use various teaching methods, approaches and resources to accommodate all learners. The study findings correlate with Dhillon and Wanjiru’s (2013) study, which revealed that teachers experienced curriculum pressure to meet the demands of a syllabus that forces teachers to use any available teaching resources to cover the curriculum content. This results in teachers failing to accommodate all learners in overcrowded multilingual classrooms.

According to Dhillon and Wanjiru’s (2013), one of the major challenges that contribute to the challenges teachers face in multilingual classrooms is that school language policy is not fully reinforced. According to Makgamatha et al. (2013), the principles of the language education policies were not incorporated in the development of education curriculum and assessment policies. Hence there are limited teaching resources assigned to multilingual teaching. This shows that despite the development and implementation of policies that support multilingual teaching in schools, multilingual teaching might still be a challenge.

The majority of teachers agreed that multilingual teaching approaches confuse their learners; this confusion is evident during assessments when learners struggle to read and write. Furthermore using various instructional teaching methods to accommodate linguistically diverse learners contribute to the writing, reading and verbal expression delays experienced by their learners. In support of the study findings, Makoe and McKinney (2014), found that a teacher reported that she

avoided using African languages in teaching in the classroom as these ‘interfered’ with learners’ accurate spelling and pronunciation of English. Dhillon and Wanjiru’s (2013) stated that mixing and using various languages in the classroom contribute to the challenges experienced by learners and teachers in teaching and learning in multilingual classrooms. The participating teachers identified the following types of code-mixing and switching in their classrooms: Phonological interchanges, and code-mixing (mixing learners’ home language and English).

4.4.4 The Benefits of Teaching in a Multilingual Classroom

The study findings revealed that teachers recognise and acknowledge the benefits of using multilingual teaching approaches in their classrooms. The teachers state that multilingual teaching approaches do not only support the use of learners’ HL in lessons but enhances learners’ understanding of concepts as well and encourage participation in class. In relation to the study findings, Rulon and McCreary (1986, as cited in Dhillon & Wanjiru, 2013) state that peer activities create opportunities for learners to improve each other’s language skills, offering learners a safe environment which enable them to negotiate the language they hear free from the rapid pace of the teacher-fronted classroom.

Multilingual teaching approaches attempt to develop linguistic ability in the target language through the use of deliberate attainment efforts (Dhillon & Wanjiru, 2013). According to Lee (2012), the use of teaching approaches such as code-switching, peer teaching and visual aids promote the use of the target language efficiently and clearly. Furthermore, Lee (2012) affirms that language learning approaches determine the success level of learners, it is even more so for linguistically diverse learners.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter reported the results obtained from the study data sources. I reflected direct quotations and compared the results with the literature review, and illustrated the themes that emerged from the thematic data analysis. The results and findings indicate that teachers use various multilingual teaching approaches to accommodate learners from diverse language backgrounds in their lessons. Although teachers experience challenges in teaching multilingual classrooms, they perceive the use of multilingual teaching approaches as beneficial in teaching linguistically diverse learners.

5 CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This concluding chapter of this study of limited scope reviews all the previous chapters, including the summary of the findings discussed in Chapter 4. It continues by discussing the study findings using the main research question and sub-questions in conjunction with the study's theoretical framework. The chapter further discusses the contributions of the study to the body of knowledge. It states the limitations of the study and provides recommendations for further research. The study aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of teachers' experiences and perspectives on effective multilingual strategies in teaching multilingual classrooms.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study. It provided background information on the research problem and why it warranted study. The chapter also outlined the purpose of the study, the research questions and research design. **Chapter 2** focused on the literature review, which investigated the literature based on teaching multilingual classrooms and teachers' perceptions of using effective multilingual teaching strategies in primary schools. The literature reviewed discussed previous research nationally and globally in multilingual education; however, the context of those studies differed from this study. The study then moved to **Chapter 3**, which focused on the research process, research design and research methodology. The study used qualitative research methods and collected data by interviews, FG discussions and observations. **Chapter 4** focused on presenting the collected data, analysed AND discussed the study findings.

5.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section focused on discussing the research findings by using the study's primary and secondary questions in conjunction with the existing literature and theoretical framework. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory allowed the researcher to explore and understand the process of using language to mediate learning in a multilingual classroom. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory states that knowledge and meaning are constructed in a social, historical and cultural context (Nel, 2013, p. 23). This implies that development requires an individual's interaction with other people and the tools culture provides to help them form meaning. Multilingual teaching approaches in this theory serve as tools that mediate the process of constructing

meaning and knowledge. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory provides a framework to explore the teaching approaches used by teachers, with the view of discovering how these approaches promote effective teaching and learning in multilingual classrooms.

This section offers a discussion of the research findings, arranged according to the secondary research questions. Section 5.3.1 provides an answer to the study's secondary research questions, which includes; "How do teaching practices adequately accommodate linguistically diverse learners in classrooms?", "What challenges do teachers experience in teaching multilingual classroom?", and "How equipped are teachers in teaching multilingual classrooms?" Section 5.3.1 provides an answer to the main research question, namely; "What are primary school teachers' perspectives on the effective multilingual approaches for inclusively teaching linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms?"

5.3.1 Research Sub-questions

Sub-question 1: How do teaching practices adequately accommodate linguistically diverse learners in classrooms?

The participants in this study confirmed that they used various teaching approaches in an attempt to accommodate linguistically diverse learners in their lessons. They mentioned that learners struggle to understand and engage in lessons when multilingual teaching approaches are not utilised. Teachers indicated that they utilised multilingual teaching approaches such as code-switching, visual aids, concrete objects and peer teaching across subjects as an accommodative or teaching support tool.

The teaching practices are used to enable teachers to engage in and negotiate challenging content with their learners. Teachers switch the LoLT during the lesson to learners' HL to enhance understanding. Furthermore, they mentioned that peer teaching or collaborative learning has proven to be effective, learners understand better in their language and at their level of understanding (when a peer explains to them). Using visual aids, concrete objects, and songs also enable learners to learn to read, spell and understand new concepts better. Hedge, (2000, pp. 43-74, as cited in Lugolobi-Nalunga, 2013) affirms that "through systematic code-switching the teacher can provide clarification, explanations and meaning while learners respond accordingly, interpreting and negotiating the meaning of the target language".

Using song, rhymes and peer teaching improves learners' listening and speaking skills, teach different language functions, enables learners from diverse language background to understand the subjects better and develops autonomous learning skills (Conesa & Rubio, 2015; Pluddemann et al., 2000). The findings can be affirmed by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which argues that learning occurs through social interaction with a skilful educator or more experienced peer who can assist the learner to extend himself and master the content at stake. The use of the identified teaching practices thus adequately accommodates linguistically diverse learners through the ZPD and scaffolding, which is the process where a teacher assists learners to independently construct new meanings to social context (Woolfolk, 2010). The ZPD enables learners to participate in their own learning, and in discovery and development of new understanding (Sibanda, 2015).

Sub-question 2: What challenges do teachers experience in teaching multilingual classrooms?

The teachers seemed to agree about the various challenges that they experience in teaching multilingual classrooms. According to the participants, multilingual classrooms require them to use multiple multilingual teaching approaches to ensure that all the learners are accommodated in their lessons, which is time-consuming and add to their workload. The teachers mentioned that it is difficult to plan lessons for multilingual classrooms and to cover the curriculum within a limited time. This challenge also emerged in a study conducted by Dhillon and Wanjiru (2013), when teachers indicated that they had limited time to cover the syllabus and that this difficulty increases when the class is multilingual. According to Makoe and McKinney (2014), curriculum demands and language diversity in classrooms further create a gap between the learners and the teacher during lessons

The teachers also raised the challenge of addressing the learning barriers influenced by learner's limited proficiency in the LoLT. Rasheed et al. (2017) affirm that limited proficiency in the target language is a major challenge, which cause learners to struggle with instructions given in the English language only. The teachers felt that using some of the multilingual teaching approaches created confusion in their classrooms and contributed to writing, reading and verbal expressions challenges. This challenge was evident during written assessments as learners struggled to read instructions and write in English. This correlates with the findings of Landsberg (2016), who argued that translanguaging and code-switching are helpful. However,

he argued that it could be confusing when there was a variety of home languages in one classroom since some learners might not understand the language switched to by the teachers in code-switching. The findings show that despite the development and implementation of policies that support multilingual teaching in South African schools, teaching in a multilingual classroom might still be challenging.

Sub-question 3: How equipped are teachers in teaching multilingual classrooms?

Teachers expressed their confidence in teaching multilingual classrooms. They felt that their engagement with learners from linguistically diverse backgrounds was supported by the developmental workshops they attended, which adequately equipped them with the skills and knowledge required to teach multilingual classrooms effectively. This contradicts the findings of Hooijer and Fourie's (2009) study, which revealed that teachers proclaimed that they had difficulties with teaching multilingual classes and claimed that they were not adequately skilled to deal with a complex pedagogy such as multilingual teaching. Furthermore, a study conducted by Rasheed et al. (2017) also revealed that teachers felt that they were not adequately trained to teach multilingual classrooms effectively and to cope with the associated difficulties.

The teachers further indicated that it was necessary to continually be involved in activities that advanced their professional skills and knowledge on effective multilingual teaching approaches. They mentioned that conducting their own research on multilingual education-related matters and consulting other teachers, or sharing effective multilingual teaching approaches with other teachers was helpful. Despite the contrasting views of this study compared to previous researches, it is clear that teachers aspire to develop their skills to be able to strategically use their linguistic resources to enhance teaching and learning in their classrooms.

5.3.2 Response to the Main Research Question

The main research question was: What are primary school teachers' perspectives on the effective multilingual approaches for inclusively teaching linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms?

The study findings indicate that although the use of multilingual teaching approaches comes with multiple challenges, teachers perceive multilingual teaching strategies as an effective teaching and learning support tool. They found that multilingual teaching approaches don't only enhance the quality of learning in learners with diverse

language backgrounds but it also creates a safe environment for learners to engage actively in class discussion.

Teachers recognise that the language of instruction, pedagogical approaches and styles they use, influence the extent and nature of learner participation in classroom interaction, teaching and learning process. Hence they indicated that they don't perceive any single teaching strategy as effective in teaching multilingual classrooms but incorporate various multilingual teaching approaches and resources in their lessons. In supporting the study findings, a study conducted in Kenya by Dhillon and Wanjiru (2013) shows the tremendous efforts and activities of teachers in finding successful approaches for teaching in a multilingual classroom. At the classroom level, individual teachers use varied instructional approaches, such as peer teaching, code-switching and multi-media approaches to promote a warm language-learning atmosphere which initiates a positive classroom interaction.

Effective teaching and learning tools

The teachers indicated that they perceived multilingual teaching approaches as the most useful teaching and learning support tool to learners with language-related learning barriers. Erling, Adinolfi and Hultgren (2017) confirm these perceptions by arguing that learning and teaching in a multilingual classroom should be inclusive, learner-centred and promote the use of language supportive teaching approaches. These language teaching approaches would allow teachers to generate opportunities for dialogue and inquiry during lessons, extend learners' understanding of the content as well as develop their competency in English. Various multilingual teaching approaches were identified and considered to be effective depending on the content and the subject taught in class. These include approaches such as code-switching, peer teaching, visual and concrete objects, rhymes and songs.

According to the participants, these approaches are effective in providing all learners equal access to academic knowledge and encourage full, meaningful participation in school. Lugolobi-Nalunga (2013) affirmed the study findings by stating that through “systematic code-switching the teacher can provide clarification, explanations and meaning while learners respond accordingly, interpreting and negotiating meaning of the target language” (Hedge, 2000, pp. 43-74, as cited in. Lugolobi-Nalunga, 2013). According to Lee (2012), the use of approaches such as code-switching, peer teaching and visual aids helps the learners understand subject content better and promotes the use of the target language efficiently and clearly.

The multilingual teaching approaches that have been identified by teachers enhance the quality of learning, assist learners in understanding concepts, promote active participation in class activities and creative thinking, and encourage collaborative learning. This perception is affirmed by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which states that development depends on a person's interaction with others and the tools the culture provides to help them understand their environment and form their own meaning (Zhou & Brown 2015). Teachers "thus guide the learner to the nearest higher level of development" (Einarsson, 2013, p. 169, as cited in Lugoloobi-Nalunga, 2013). Mutekwe (2018) describes mediation as a learning situation facilitated by a mediator who makes sure that the learners understand the content taught. There are different types of mediators: material; psychological; semiotic; and individual mediators using various other approaches. Thus, the identified multilingual teaching strategies serve as a mediator in the learning process of transforming learners' abilities from lower to higher cognitive functions (Kozulin, 2012).

Promotion and enhancement of learning

The teachers perceived the identified multilingual teaching approaches as effective teaching practices that enhance learning and further enable teachers to engage in challenging academic content with the learners. Erling et al. (2017) argue that using supportive teaching approaches, including classroom code-switching as well as translanguaging, are potential means of enhancing learning. The participants felt that learners found it stimulating and learned better when they used pictures and concrete objects during their lessons. Shabiralyani et al. (2015) affirm that visual aids are excellent learning resources and they could help solve specific language barrier problems, as they provide accurate visual images and can make learning easier for the learners. Teachers further mentioned that using visual aids and concrete objects helps to address learners' writing and reading difficulties.

The use of multilingual teaching approaches enables teachers to make lessons more interactive for learners, which helps them to learn and understand concepts better. Although teachers perceived learners' limited proficiency in English as a contributing factor to the challenges they experienced in teaching multilingual classrooms, they indicated that multilingual teaching approaches enabled them to address language learning related barriers. A study conducted by Rasheed et al. (2017) reached similar conclusions, teachers attempted to address challenges related to learners' limited proficiency in English and a poor understanding of instructions by using visual

aids as well as code-switching from English to Urdu and other languages. Despite the challenges teachers face in multilingual classrooms, they still perceive multilingual teaching approaches as effective in providing linguistically diverse learners equal access to the curriculum.

5.3.3 STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

Most of the literature focused on teachers' beliefs and attitudes on second language teaching and learning in a bilingual or multilingual classroom rather than teacher's perspectives on the effective teaching approaches used in multilingual classrooms. The main strength of this study is that it focused on the perception of teachers about the use of and effective teaching approaches for inclusively teaching linguistically diverse learners. The existing literature is mostly silent about teachers' perspectives on effective teaching approaches used to accommodate learners from diverse language background.

This study made use of different data collection methods, which ensured the triangulation of the data that was collected. The data collected for this study contained rich descriptions of teachers' perceptions and experiences, which enable me to gain a deeper understanding of how teachers perceived effective teaching approaches for learners in multilingual classrooms. Furthermore, the small groups used in the study provided an equal opportunity for all the participants to make an in-depth contribution to the research.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Some limitations were identified during this study.

The study was conducted within a small group of participants who work in different Johannesburg south schools; therefore, the results cannot be generalised to the population of SA as a whole. Considering my experience in working within an IE environment, I may have used my subjective views and understanding of the use of multilingual teaching approaches to accommodate learners from a diverse language background with limited proficiency in English. However, I used the research questions as guidance against generalisation.

5.5 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study have provided an insight into the experiences and perceptions of teachers regarding effective teaching approaches to accommodate learners from diverse language backgrounds inclusively in a full-service and

mainstream school environment. The study findings also provide an example of actual classroom practices that teachers could adopt to support linguistically diverse learners and develop English language competence while using both the official textbooks as well as resources beyond the textbook.

Considering the challenges the teachers mentioned in the study which affect teachers and learners, the study may assist in raising awareness about what teachers are confronted with daily to create an inclusive and conducive learning environment for linguistically diverse learners. This awareness might assist policy developers to adapt and develop inclusive, learner-centred education policies. It is hoped that this study will contribute to shared discussions between teachers and school management to provide teachers with skills and knowledge to become more confident in teaching multilingual classrooms. Furthermore, this could encourage school management to promote the use of multilingual teaching approaches to help learners reach their full potential.

The study provides a greater understanding of the use and benefits of multilingual teaching approaches in resource-constrained schools, particularly the role of local language use, classroom code-switching and visual aids in supporting and understanding, English language speaking and writing skills. This awareness could assist the DoE to provide specific resources, including local language books, to teachers to teach effectively in multilingual classrooms.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.6.1 Teacher Training and Development

Although some of the participants indicated that they feel competent to teach linguistically diverse learners, the challenges they reported suggest a need to develop their teaching skills to enhance the quality of learning in multilingual classrooms. Rasheed et al. (2017) argue that teachers, who are professionally trained and groomed, can, handle their multilingual classrooms in a much better way than the teachers who are not trained. Therefore, the implementation of flexible multilingual education would require changes in teacher development and support. Teacher education programmes should focus on enabling all teachers to access a range of supportive language pedagogies to support the learning of content across school subjects. The DoE supports schools, providing resources (videos, guides, local language books and adaptable lesson outlines) for teachers that exemplify flexible multilingual education in practical situations in classrooms. This will provide

practical guidance for teachers about making their lessons more accessible to learners with lower language competence or limited proficiency in the target language (The LoLT).

5.6.2 Support for Teachers

The teachers that participated in this study raised a concern that they struggled to accommodate linguistically diverse learners in their classroom because of the pressure caused by systemic and learning challenges. Schools could write a proposal to the DoE curriculum unit and explain what they require as a school to support learners with diverse linguistic backgrounds, as well as how to incorporate this into the language education policy with the curriculum content.

The teachers also indicated that language proficiency in the LoLT is one of the challenges that contribute to learning difficulties experienced by learners in multilingual classrooms. The study findings also suggested that the classroom practices participants employed were rooted in a desire to support learners in their learning. However, their means of providing that support were limited due to systemic challenges. Considering the development of WP6 in IE in 2001, which aims at ensuring that a range of diverse learners' needs must be accommodated in school, the schools could incorporate the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) in the implementation of the syllabus. All stakeholders in education must be informed about the policy, understand the rationale underlying it, and develop more positive associations with learner-centred, inclusive teaching strategies. The DoE should provide clear messages to all stakeholders in education about the language in education policy and how had to be implemented.

5.6.3 Further Research

This research has been limited to two schools (a full services school and a mainstream school), and only one district within those contexts. Similar research conducted with a larger sample group elsewhere might reveal different perspectives and challenges. Future research could focus on providing a greater understanding of the relationship between language and learning, and how to effectively implement various teaching approaches to multilingual education, particularly in resource-constrained contexts. The study focused on the perception of teachers on effective multilingual teaching strategies, and the findings indicated that teachers perceive various obstacles to use teaching strategies effectively in enhancing learning in multilingual classrooms. Given that there was a near absence of learners' views in

this study, research based on how learners perceived effective learning teaching strategies could be beneficial.

5.7 CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study of limited scope indicate that teachers perceive various teaching strategies as effective in teaching linguistically diverse learners. The teachers' perceptions are important as they contribute to existing literature and expand insight into how teachers inclusively accommodate learners from diverse language backgrounds with limited language proficiency in their lessons. It provides insight into the actual teaching and learning interactions in multilingual classrooms. Despite the perceived benefits of using multilingual teaching strategies in multilingual classrooms, the teachers expressed their concerns regarding the challenges they faced in teaching multilingual classrooms. This indicates that there is a need for school management and teachers to establish a means to incorporate multilingual teaching strategies in the implementation of the curriculum and training. This research benefitted me as a researcher. I gained a better understanding of the perspectives of teachers on effective teaching strategies in accommodating linguistically diverse learners.

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7 APPENDICES

7.1 APPENDIX A - CODED TRANSCRIPTS

This is just a sample of the analysed transcript of the individual semi structured Interviews and FG discussions. The complete transcript is included on the compact disc (CD) attached to the mini-dissertation.

Individual semi structured interview (School B).

		Themes
1 2	Facilitator: what is your understanding of the term multilingualism?	
3 4 5 6 7	SBP1: I think it comes from the term multilingual, which describes the ability of speaking different languages or being able to engage with others using various languages. Therefore, the term means the practice of multiple languages	
8 9 10	Facilitator: there are different learners from diverse language backgrounds in your classroom. How do you accommodate them in your lessons?	
11 12 13 14 15 16	SBP1: By using visual, I use words and pictures because I believe when I child sees a picture and a word they learn better. I also use different languages when I teach them. When I realise that they don't understand I switch to their languages, at least a few that I know	
17 18	Facilitator: How equipped or confident are you in teaching learners in a diverse multilingual classroom	
19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32	SBP1: I can say I am now equipped, because I have been interacting with these learners for many years and I have learned that I have to get more knowledge so that I will be able to teach them effectively. I have been attending different workshops whereby I have learned to pronounce some of the words in a different language, for example, I have attended IOL it's a program whereby there are introducing a third language in primary schools where the LOLT is English and first additional language is Afrikaans. I had of opportunity of learning some of the words in Tshivenda due to that I see myself as being equipped. Also I can say I am a teachable somebody, I do conduct my own researches like if I want to say this in this language what do I say	

7.2 APPENDIX B – PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

The SGB and Headmaster

..... Primary School

P.O.Box

.....

.....

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO CONDUCT THE RESEARCH

I hereby request permission to conduct a research study in your school. My name is Colleen Makolane, I am currently enrolled as a masters student in educational psychology at the University of Pretoria. The topic of my research is: perspectives of primary school teachers on effective multilingual teaching approaches. The purpose of this research is to explore the effect of teaching and learning methods used in accommodating linguistically diverse learners in primary schools classrooms.

My research methodology will include focus group discussions, interviews and lesson observations. The findings of this study will assist in meeting the challenges faced by teachers and learners in multilingual classrooms .Pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of the school, teachers and learners. All information collected will be securely stored in line with the University of Pretoria's regulations. Your co-operation will be appreciated. For more information feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the below contact details:

Colleen Makolane
colleenius@gmail.com
072 236 3454

Dr Funke Omidire (Supervisor)
Funke.omidire@up.ac.za
012 420 5506

Yours faithfully
Ms. C. S Makolane

7.3 APPENDIX C - PARTICIPANT CONSENT LETTERS



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA
Faculty of Education

Dear Teacher,

I, Colleen Makolane, Masters Student in Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria, would like to ask for your participation on this research project. The aims of the study is to explore teachers' experiences and views the role language teaching strategies plays in the classroom, for appropriate learning to take place. The title of my project is ***perspectives of primary school teachers on effective multilingual teaching approaches***

Your involvement will be limited to focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations to understand your perspectives on the issues indicated above within your specific context. Workshops on teaching and learning in multilingual classrooms will also be organised at your convenience. The interviews will take place after school hours and will be audio recorded. The interview and focus group discussions should take approximately 45 minutes and will be scheduled when you are available. The information obtained during this research project will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and will be used solely for this research only. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

Pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of the school, teachers and learners. All information collected will be securely stored in line with the University of Pretoria's regulations. The video recordings made during this time will only be viewed us and will be stored securely at all times. The recordings will never be reproduced or broadcast to any third party now or in the future.

There are no risks involved in participation. The benefits lie in our further understanding of the various issues surrounding teaching and learning in a multilingual context and possible contribution to knowledge in this field. I look forward to your participation and contribution to this project.

Yours sincerely,

Colleen Makolane
colleenius@gmail.com
072 236 3454

Dr Funke Omidire (Supervisor)
Funke.omidire@up.ac.za
012 420 5506

Declaration of consent

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter as a declaration of your consent. Signing this letter indicates that you understand that your participation in this project is voluntary and that you may withdraw from the research project at any time. Under no circumstances will the identity of the school or research participants be disclosed or published to any party/organisation that may be involved in the research process.

I, _____ (your name), teacher at _____
agree to take part in this research. I agree to allow the researcher to take video recordings of my lessons and audio record the interviews for the duration of the proposed study. I understand that the researcher subscribes to the following principals:

- **Voluntary participation**, - participants may withdraw from the research at any time during the study.
- **Informed consent**- research participants will at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in this research.
- **Safety in participation**- Participants will not be placed at risk or harm of any kind.
- **Privacy**- meaning that the confidentiality and anonymity of human respondents will be protected at all times.
- **Trust**, Participants will not be subjected to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Teacher's name: _____

Teacher's signature: _____ Date: _____

7.4 APPENDIX D - PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Title: perspectives of primary school teachers on effective multilingual teaching approaches

1.1 School demographics

Questionnaire no:	
Name of the school	
Number of learners in each in the school	
Number of learners in class	
Number of learners that speak English at home in class	
Home language (s) offered at the school	
The FAL offered at the school	
Different languages spoken by learners in class	

1.2 Biographical information: (mark appropriate boxes with an x)

Name & Surname						
Gender (M/F)						
Highest qualification						
Subject(s) taught						
Current grade taught						
Teaching experience (years)						
Teaching experience in the current school						
Age	20-25	25-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60+

Questions to be asked

1. What is your understanding of the term multilingualism?
2. There are different learners from diverse language backgrounds in your classroom, how do you accommodate them in your lessons?
3. How equipped/confident are you in teaching learners in diverse multilingual classrooms?
4. What is your understanding of multilingual teaching and learning approaches?
5. Which teaching approaches do you use to support learners from diverse language backgrounds?
6. What do you think are the benefits of using multilingual teaching approaches in resource constrained classrooms?
7. Which multilingual teaching approaches do learners respond well to?

8. What resources do you believe would be effective in enhancing learning and teaching in multilingual classrooms?
9. What do you like/ enjoy about teaching learners who speak diverse home languages?
10. What challenges do you experience in teaching multilingual classrooms?
11. What kind of support do you receive from the school management team in promoting and supporting teaching learners from diverse language backgrounds?