

**Designing a translanguaging space within a remedial reading programme
at Quintile 1 primary schools**

By

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Abstract

The implication of South Africa's multicultural and linguistic diversity is that many learners' home language is not their language of instruction in school. Research has indicated that children learn best in their home language (UNESCO, 2020). In South Africa, however, language is seen as one of the biggest barriers to teaching and learning, as PIRLS 2021 results indicate that 81% of Grade 4 learners cannot read for meaning. In the historical context of South Africa's divided past, equal educational opportunities are still not afforded to every learner, with many learners learning in a language in which they are not yet proficient. Due to globalisation, multilingualism in education has become a major point of discussion in relation to research in education. Translanguaging, which is how multilingual speakers use more than one language in their everyday communication with others, is questioning 'monolingual practices and ideologies worldwide' (Makalela, 2013).

This study was conducted in two Quintile 1 primary schools in Eersterust, which is a Coloured township situated west of Mamelodi in the Tshwane South District. The study aimed to answer the following research questions: *How does implementing a translanguaging space as an intervention improve learners' ability to engage with the content taught?* And. *Is there a difference in learner performance after a translanguaging intervention is administered?* The research participants included Grade 3 learners, who took part in a translanguaging intervention. Data generation in this study included drawings and written products created by learners during the intervention sessions, and the results from a pre-test and post-test, as well as post-test questionnaires.

The results indicated that learners were able to represent their understanding of reading passages more clearly through their drawings than in their writing. However, learners displayed creativity and criticality in both their drawings and writings. The creation of translanguaging spaces allowed learners to harness their cultural backgrounds and personal histories during the act of learning. Although the post-test results did not yield significant statistical evidence for improvement in learning outcomes, the creation of a translanguaging space or 'third space' was transformative in nature for participating learners, the classroom teachers, and the researcher who observed the intervention.

Key words: translanguaging space, reading, writing, home language, drawings, remedial

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the Study

1.1 Introduction

South Africa is known for being linguistically and culturally diverse and is described as the ‘rainbow nation’. It has 12 official languages, including sign language, and most of the population can speak a multiplicity of languages. Thus, an attribute of being South African is that one is often multilingual, and one would expect that multilingualism would be promoted in South African schools. However, this is not the case, and most learners are taught through the medium of English. It is estimated that 67,7% of South African schools select English as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT), which means that it is the language used for teaching and assessment (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Balfour, 2019). However, many learners and teachers in South Africa are not proficient in English (Department of Basic Education, 2023). Hence, this study aimed to investigate, through a mixed-methods approach, whether creating a translanguaging space for multilingual Grade 3 learners in a remedial education programme could help improve their ability to engage with the learning content. The study also sought to offer a pedagogical perspective of translanguaging and indicate how teachers might create a translanguaging space of their own for their multilingual learners.

The results from the study showed that through the creation of a translanguaging space, the learners were more engaged with the content being taught and merged their personal histories and background knowledge with the act of learning. By creating a translanguaging space where classroom activities and discussion took place in a multiplicity of languages, the participating learners found enjoyment and were more confident in their reading and learning. Translanguaging is seen as a process through which ‘multilingual speakers use more than one language in their everyday communication with one another’ (Aung, 2021, p. 2). It questions the notion that only one language at a time should be used in South African classrooms (Makalela, 2013). Through translanguaging, multilingualism can be promoted, which allows learners to engage all their linguistic resources in the classroom during the act of learning.

It follows that translanguaging should be a relevant learning and teaching approach in the multilingual South African context. Based on the 2022 Census (Statistics South Africa, 2022),

South Africa has a population of 59.31 million people. According to the Department of Basic Education (DBE) (USAID, 2020), 45% of learners in South Africa speak either isiZulu (25%) or isiXhosa (20%) as their home languages, while only 10% of learners speaking English as a home language. Therefore, in South Africa, many learners do not use English as their everyday form of communication, yet English remains the main language through which they access literacy at school (Mouton, 2013; Rautenbach et al., 2019) and English is the LoLT chosen in most primary schools in South Africa. By this stage, both teachers and learners are expected to have achieved proficiency in their ability to communicate and write in English (Kretzer & Kaschula, 2019).

Mouton (2013) and Spaul (2016) state that for a country's education system to assess how well its learners are performing, reading literacy achievement should be considered. However, the challenges associated with socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic diversity, which influence learner performance, are widespread in South Africa and other African countries. Worldwide, individuals who are non-English speakers are rapidly increasing in schools today (Pacheco & Miller, 2015). Therefore, when it comes to literacy and low learner performance, the topics of language and multilingualism have been the main points of research (Charambo & Zano, 2019).

In the world today, there are over 7 000 languages that are in danger of fading away as many people think that there is no longer a use for them; therefore, it is important for the regeneration of minority languages to take place (UNESCO, 2001, 2020). The United Nations declared 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages to preserve indigenous languages and promote multilingualism (Assembly UG, 2019). Therefore, standardised assessments in education need to consider how minority languages are being renewed, and how assessment practices need to be altered to suit the needs of the minority language individual (Elosua, 2016; UNESCO, 2001). Once these aspects are taken into consideration, the status of the minority language will improve and thus lead to an increase in the number of individuals who speak that language (Elosua, 2016). Importantly, translanguaging as a practice considers the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of minority language learners so that they are able to engage in class, and it ensures that no learner is left behind (Garcia & Wei, 2014). Languages are tied to one's culture; minority language renewal leads to a preservation of that culture through which traditions are passed on from one generation to the next (Elosua, 2016; UNESCO, 2020).

1.2 Translanguaging Space

In this study, ubuntu translanguaging is employed as a lens to comprehend how, in South Africa, one language is incomplete without the other, and how interdependence is valued over independence. Cen Willimas first introduced translanguaging or *trawsieithu* in Welsh, in the 1980s, as a revitalisation so that the Welsh language would not die out. It is a practice in which the teacher provides instructions or ask questions in Welsh and learners answer in English. Therefore, the two languages are used simultaneously for teaching and learning. Later, it was conceptualised as ‘flexible multilingual practices’, in which all language practices were integrated into one linguistic system instead of being seen as separate (Fang et al., 2022; Kim & Song, 2019). According to Wei (2010), translanguaging as a practice moves beyond and between the various modes of sound, text, orality, gesturing, and movement. Multilingual users of language ‘combine all the structures and systems of their languages into one integrated performance, to communicate the beliefs, ideals, and viewpoints that they hold’ (Garcia & Wei, 2014, p. 20).

Through the use of translanguaging, a ‘third space’¹ is created, which is transformative (Wei, 2024) and which allows bi/multilingual individuals to integrate different aspects of their ‘background knowledge, personal histories, environment, beliefs, values, intellectual and physical capacity into one coordinated and expressive performance and to turn this performance into a lived experience’ (Dutton & Rushton, 2021, p. 113). Hua et al. (2017, p. 412) define this space as ‘the translanguaging space: a space created for the act of translanguaging, and a space created through translanguaging’. Within this space, people interact by communicating in diverse languages, gesturing for meaning making and drawing to communicate (Kim & Song, 2019; Noguerón-Liu, 2020). This collaborative use of multiple modes of meaning-making such as gestures, images, sounds, objects, and touch creates a richer array of messages than if only one mode is used (Jewitt & Kress, 2010).

In the South African context, a translanguaging space is closely linked to the concept of ubuntu translanguaging in which the African ontologies of community, kinship, and oneness are

¹ ‘The third space is a space for new imaginings and possibilities. Translanguaging as a practice is seen as a third space because it challenges prevailing school practices. In most schools, translanguaging can be viewed as a ‘third space’ practice with the ‘translanguaging space’ being a space characterised by openness and creativity’ (Dutton & Rushton, 2021, p. 112).

interwoven. Makalela (2015a) defines translanguaging as a ‘fluid communicative language practice where the languages of input and output are purposefully juxtaposed’ (p. 203). This fits well with the conceptualisation of a dynamic ‘space’ created by translanguaging. The ideology of ubuntu holds that language alternation constantly takes place in South Africa for meaning making and stresses the importance of the communal aspect in educating children (Oviawe, 2016). The use of multiple languages in the classroom creates a space that offsets the fixed boundaries that were created by the 12 official languages and creates a philosophy in which one language needs another language for meaning making (Makalela, 2017). From a young age, many learners in South Africa learn several languages simultaneously.

An ubuntu translanguaging pedagogy is a culturally responsive pedagogy which takes into consideration that multilingual learners need more than one language in the classroom in order to make sense of what is being taught (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2020). When a translanguaging space is created within the classroom, learners move between languages and modes (gesturing, speaking, and drawing) to improve their understanding of what is being taught (Hurst & Mona, 2017). African societies have always placed an emphasis on how the cultural background of the learner is directly related to their education. Using their home language, storytelling, games, problem-solving, rhymes, and dramas have been enacted (Ned, 2019). Subsequently, African indigenous languages are characterised for their wealth of multimodal texts that include parables, music, songs, games, stories, poems, and dance. Through the use of storytelling, rhymes, and riddles, young children develop social skills that lead to vocabulary development and literacy skills, making early childhood education enjoyable (Ned, 2019).

Children who participate in activities that involve storytelling in their home language are encouraged to become more expressive and to take part in the process of learning. When indigenous knowledge systems are embedded in the school curriculum, learners realise the importance of their cultural background and home languages (Schwinge, 2017). Crucially, a translanguaging space lacks cultural or linguistic boundaries, and consequently, teachers need to be encouraged to enter this democratic space with their learners and to view this as an acceptable practice (Garcia, 2020). In the creation of this translanguaging space in this study, the participating learners were able to share multicultural learning spaces that shaped and contributed to their ways of knowing. In this way, the participants’ understandings, lived experiences, and ways in which they made sense of new information took place as a ‘performance’ within the translanguaging space (Dutton & Rushton, 2021).

Learners are at a disadvantage when the language they learn from early childhood is not the same language used for learning (Heugh, 2017; UNESCO, 2020). Since UNESCO declared a policy for home language education to be promoted in the early 1950s, there has been an increase in the number of indigenous languages used as the LoLT. More languages are now being used at schools and universities worldwide (UNESCO, 2020). In the early 1950s, UNESCO reported that children learn best in their home language, which ignited an interest in multilingual education, especially in Africa (UNESCO, 1953, 2020). Translanguaging suggests a differing view of bilingualism, multilingualism, and literacy education (Garcia & Wei, 2014), which will be discussed in the following chapters of the thesis. Makalela (2018) states that translanguaging as a pedagogy and practice for teaching in multilingual contexts has received a lot of attention in the area of research, particularly in South Africa. Translanguaging offers a different view of literacy; as a practice, it moves beyond the written language to focus on the language and actions of individuals as they engage with what they are reading. Therefore, translanguaging allows the individual to apply their entire linguistic repertoire during the reading performance (Garcia, 2020).

1.3 The South African Education System

1.3.1 The Post-Apartheid Education System

South Africa's education system before 1994 was governed by the apartheid system, which was known worldwide for being rooted in inequality and injustice (Sayed & Kanjee, 2013). From 1949 to 1994, the country was divided into several social groups (Sayed & Kanjee, 2013). Under the apartheid government, the education department was also divided according to race groups, that is, White, Black, Coloured, and Indian. The Black African population had a separate system known as the Bantu Education system (Fawole & Pillay, 2019), the aim of which was to train Black African children for manual labour with little to no pay. The apartheid government deemed this type of labour to be appropriate, stating that Black Africans had to accept a lower position than that of their White counterparts (Sayed & Kanjee, 2013). Schools under the Bantu Education system were under-resourced, with a shortage of adequately trained teachers, and teacher-learner ratios ranged from 1 in 40 to 1 in 60. Literature texts were taught in English First Additional Language (EFAL) classrooms and were chosen to reflect an English rather than an African perspective or context; they seemed alien and unrelated, if not incomprehensible, to many learners and teachers (Newfield, 2023). Literacy practices in these schools produced learners who were not motivated to learn, and these practices had no regard

for the values of reading and learning, which produced learners with low literacy skills (Newfield, 2023).

During apartheid, White people had an education system of their own, which came with more privileges, such as better-resourced schools and entry into better universities (Spaull, 2019). What was also significant during the apartheid era was that languages were specific to each segregated area. For instance, in an area such as Eersterust, which was the research site for this study, Afrikaans is the main language spoken, whereas in the neighbouring Mamelodi, Sepedi was the main spoken language. The apartheid government also set language policies in which English and Afrikaans were the main LoLT. This led to the Soweto uprising, during which Black African learners protested in opposition to this policy (Fawole & Pillay, 2019). To them, Afrikaans was an oppressive language because it was the language of the oppressive apartheid government (Fawole & Pillay, 2019).

However, post-apartheid South Africa, which allows learning in the home language, also opened South Africa and the education system up to the challenges of having more than one language spoken in a classroom (Gish, 2015; Mafeje, 1978). Linguistically diverse classes, along with the challenges they bring, are still seen in schools today. If these challenges are not addressed, there is the potential for learners to fall through the cracks of the education system. In post-apartheid South Africa, some effort has been made to reconcile these past situations, although progress has been slow (Nugraha, 2019). The long-standing effects of the Bantu Education policy during apartheid are still seen today in that many parents, teachers, and learners view the use of their indigenous languages in the classroom as ineffective, especially for their future job prospects (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2021).

Since the start of democracy in 1994, many policy changes have been made in South African education to ensure that every learner receives a quality education (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2021). The aim of these new policy changes was to ensure that previously disadvantaged groups such as Black African and Coloured² learners received equitable education (Spaull, 2015). Post-apartheid South Africa has 12 official languages, namely English, Afrikaans, nine indigenous languages (isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati, Setswana, Sepedi, Sesotho Tshivenda, and Xitsonga), and sign language. This was set in place to redress the inequalities of the past and

² Refers to a multiracial ethnic community in South Africa

to promote multilingualism within South Africa (Nugraha, 2019). According to South Africa's Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (1997), multilingualism should be promoted in education to improve learner achievement in all official languages. Linguistic, socioeconomic, and cultural diversity was now celebrated for the first time in South Africa (Newfield, 2023).

The language in education policy, however, does not prescribe to schools which languages should be used as the official LoLT. This decision has been left to school governing bodies. Schools have different attitudes and motivations over whether African languages should be learnt at school (Spaull, 2015). These school governing bodies are comprised of parents or caregivers, principals, teachers, and learners who work together to make decisions regarding the language policies of schools; however, many of them are steeped in monoglossic language ideologies (Makalela, 2018).

South Africa's education system requires that learners are taught in their home language (mother tongue)³ from Grades 1 to 3, and then in English as the LoLT from Grade 4 onwards (Spaull, 2016). Cilliers and Bloch (2018) state that academics and scholars have suggested that learners should continue to receive instruction in their home language up to Grade 6. Many learners are not yet proficient in their home language by Grade 4, and literacy results remain poor, even in the home language (Cilliers & Bloch, 2018). However, many parents want an even earlier transition to English because they view English as a superior global language (Mohohlwane, 2020). Many parents prefer English because of its status as an international language and believe that it will secure their children's financial futures (Spaull, 2015). Many parents also believe that proficient English is preferable in the job market and at university. Most universities in South Africa only offer courses in English, where it is the primary mode of instruction and a prerequisite for entry into university (Cilliers & Bloch, 2018).

Yet, an early transition to English may come with many disadvantages for multilingual learners. English as the LoLT becomes an obstacle to learning different content subjects such as Mathematics, Science, and Geography; the use of English might also result in the loss of the learner's home language. It has been found that proficiency in the home language correlates with proficiency in English (Machimana, 2021). Many individuals also forget that non-Euro-American countries have thriving economies that still make use of their indigenous languages;

³The language the learner has grown up speaking from early childhood

Korea is an example of a country with a growing economy with many first-language speakers (Machimana, 2021).

Despite these efforts to promote multilingualism, learner achievement in South Africa is on the decline (Strauss, 2016). The legacy of apartheid has led to educational inequalities between the racial and ethnic groups (Amod et al., 2017). A small number of learners who live in towns or cities have access to quality education, while the majority of learners from rural or township areas receive low-quality education (Machimana, 2021). Contextual factors such as access to educational resources, inadequate schooling conditions, and language have played a role in the decline of learner achievement in South Africa (Chaka, 2020). The past still has an influence on the present because of the belief that monolingual English education, a globally held view, should be promoted (Chaka, 2020; Prinsloo & Krause, 2019).

Disparities still exist among schools due to the influence of apartheid in the past; this is seen in the matriculation or Grade 12 results where Black African and Coloured youth perform the poorest with only a 44% pass rate (Spaull, 2019). This is the result of many learners from previously disadvantaged communities not mastering the basic principles of reading in the Foundation Phase (Spaull, 2015). The lack of progress of learners from Black African and Coloured backgrounds is disconcerting, with statistics being strikingly different from those of White schools (Maarman & Lamont-Mbawuli, 2017). The dropout rate is the highest amongst Black African and Coloured learners, compared to their White counterparts (Spaull, 2018).

In South Africa, both public and private schooling systems are available for learners. The public schooling system is made up of the General Education and Training (GET) band and the Further Education and Training (FET) band. The GET band is comprised of three phases: Foundation Phase (Grades R or 0 to 3), Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6), and Senior Phase (Grades 7 to 9). Grades 10 to 12 are part of the FET band. From 1989 to 1994, South Africa saw a transformation in the education system that created new possibilities. This transformation was followed by the implementation of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) in 1997, from which the principles of the current Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) were derived. The previous curriculum set in place by the DBE was OBE. However, the DBE saw that there were several challenges with the implementation of the OBE curriculum, as it was lacking in focus and was not as structured as the present curriculum (DBE, 2011). The OBE

system failed because of a lack of resources and insufficient training in the implementation of the curriculum (Machimana, 2021).

These challenges led to the amendment of the OBE curriculum in 2000, which resulted in the 2002 Revised National Curriculum Statement (NCS-R) for Grades R-9 as well as the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) for Grades 10-12 (DBE, 2011). Both the NCS-R (Grades R-9) and NCS (Grades 10-12) experienced resource challenges, which led to further amendments in 2009.

In 2012, the continued amendment of the previous OBE curriculum led to the current NCS Grades R-12, also known as CAPS. CAPS expanded on the previous curriculum by providing clearer specifications regarding the content area to be covered in each school term (DBE, 2011). CAPS was a single policy document introduced in 2010 by the DBE as a guide for teachers on how to teach and assess learners (DBE, 2011). The primary aims and objectives of CAPS is to make sure that learners have the necessary values, skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for success in the 21st century (DBE, 2011). This curriculum was designed to help learners acquire the skills needed to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers in order to participate in a rapidly changing world (DBE, 2011). CAPS aims to provide equitable opportunities for all learners to fulfil their potential and takes into consideration that all learners have unique needs. In the next section, I discuss cross-national and international assessments in which South African learners participate that indicate whether CAPS has succeeded in its primary aim to improve educational opportunities for all South Africans.

1.3.2 South African Learner Performance

Owing to a rise in globalisation, individual countries and nations have to take cognisance of the quality of education that it provides to their citizens (Woulter, 2014). One way in which a country can measure the quality of its education system is by comparing it with that of another country (Chisholm, 2012). The shortcomings of a country's education system cannot, however, be attributed solely to one aspect but should be viewed holistically (Woulter, 2014). In South Africa, the shortfalls of the education system are revealed in learners' low performance in regional, national, and international assessments, which has led scholars to declare that the basic education system is in a crisis (Machimana, 2021). South Africa takes part in several cross-national and international assessments of educational achievement; these results have made it clear that learners find it difficult to read, write, understand, and solve problems in the

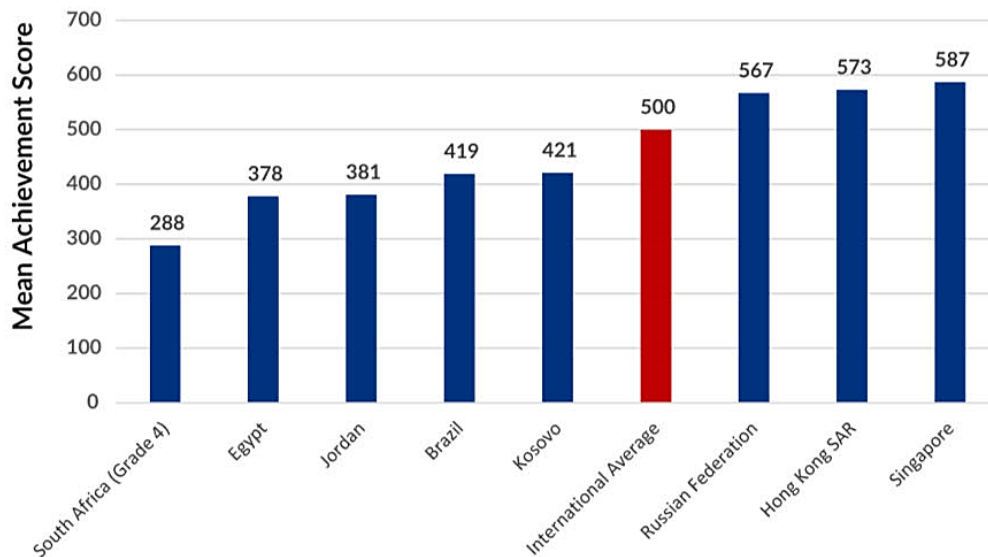
languages, Mathematics, and Science (Chisholm, 2012; Kutu & Nzimande, 2020; Maarman and Lamont-Mbawuli, 2017; Spaull, 2013).

South Africa's participation in national and international assessments makes it possible to compare South African learner performance with that of other countries. South African Grade 4 and Grade 6 learners have been participating in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) since 2006 and Grade 8 and Grade 9 learners in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) since 1995 (Pretorius & Spaull, 2016). These large-scale international assessments provide us with insight into the performance of South African learners compared to learners in other countries (PIRLS, 2021). Nationally, the performance of learners is tracked and measured through the matriculation results (Grade 12) and the Annual National Assessment (ANA) results (Grades 1-9) (Spaull, 2015).

According to the PIRLS 2021, South Africa is currently facing a severe literacy crisis. PIRLS 2021 measures the literacy and reading proficiency of Grade 4 learners internationally, and Grade 6 learners in South Africa. PIRLS 2021 found that 78% of Grade 4 learners could not read for meaning. South African Grade 4 learners scored 288 points and ranked last among the 57 participating countries. This score of 288 points is 32 points lower than the overall score of 320 points in PIRLS 2016. South African Grade 6 learners achieved a score of 384 points. With the centre point being 500 points, Grade 6 literacy performance was 116 points below the benchmark. These results prove that many South African primary school learners are well below the required literacy skills level for their grade; this can be attributed to the low quality of education in South Africa (Machimana, 2021). Figure 1.1 presents the overall PIRLS 2021 South African Grade 4 results.

Figure 1. 1

Grade 4 results on the PIRLS 2021



Notes. Source: PIRLS 2021 (NCES, 2021)

This means that over the past four years, learner performance has deteriorated instead of improving. Grade 4 learners who wrote the test in English and Afrikaans achieved the highest scores, which was also evident in previous PIRLS cycles; however, in comparison to the international average of 500, the average was still quite low (PIRLS, 2021). South African learners consistently score below average in these assessments that are conducted in all 12 official languages. Learners who completed the test in other indigenous South African languages scored below the overall South African score of 288 points. This means that eight out of 10 Grade 4 learners cannot read for meaning in any of the 12 official languages in South Africa. Therefore, the results show that many South African learners have not developed the basic literacy skills of reading and writing by the end of Grade 3 (PIRLS, 2021) with many learners being promoted to the next grade nonetheless (Spaull, 2019). The group of learners who were tested in English remained the only group in which the test language was the same as their home language (PIRLS, 2021). This points, perhaps, to the fact that many parents in South Africa are in favour of English as the LoLT.

In the PIRLS 2021 test, the Grade 4 learners filled out a questionnaire on whether the language they wrote the test in was the same language that they spoke at home. The learners who sometimes spoke the test language at home achieved the best score of 351 points. The learners

who always spoke the test language at home scored 292 points. The learners who did not speak the test language at home achieved the lowest score of 249 points. These results indicate the importance of learners comprehending and speaking the language of the test that they write. Previous PIRLS have also noted that learners achieve better results when the test language is the same language they speak at home.

The TIMSS is a valid assessment that has been conducted worldwide to evaluate how well learners in a particular country perform in terms of mathematics and science. The TIMSS offers a dual opportunity to benchmark South African learners' mathematics performance against other participating countries, and to monitor that performance over time. The South African Grade 8 learners first participated in the TIMSS in 1995 and 1999. In 2002 the TIMSS was administered to Grade 8 and Grade 9 learners, and in 2011 only to Grade 9 learners. In 2015 the TIMSS was administered to Grade 9 and Grade 5 learners for the first time. The most recent study in 2019 was administered to both Grade 5 and Grade 9 learners.

Between 2002 and 2009 the Grade 5 learners' performance in mathematics and science improved (TIMSS, 2019). However, of the 64 countries that took part in the TIMSS, South Africa again performed the worst (Reddy et al., 2019) with 63% of the learners in South Africa having no understanding of the basic concepts of mathematics and 72% having no understanding of the basic concepts of science (Reddy et al., 2019). The results were similar to those of the PIRLS in that if the test language was the same language that the learners spoke at home, they performed better in the TIMSS assessment. Research connects higher performance in learning areas such as mathematics and science with being able to comprehend scientific concepts in the language one is most fluent in. Thus, the language that the learner speaks at home should be used in the Science and Mathematics classrooms (Charambo, 2019). According to Spaul (2019), 3% of South African high schools produce more distinctions in Mathematics than the remaining 97% put together. This could be an indication of how learners at better-resourced schools perform better, not just in language subjects, but in Mathematics and Science as well.

A national assessment that tracks learner performance locally in South Africa is the ANAs. These assessments are administered to learners in Grades 1 to 6 and Grade 9. When reviewing the ANA results, which were released in 2014, the report found that the Grade 4 learners achieved an average of 47% for EFAL and 44% for Mathematics. The Grade 4 learners were

deficient in the areas of language structure and literacy knowledge, being unable to differentiate between the different types of texts and they had poor writing skills. The Grade 6 learners scored 45% in EFAL with their knowledge of vocabulary below the required level; their performance in language structure and language comprehension was the lowest overall.

As indicated above, the several cross-national and international assessments in which South Africa participates show the low level of performance of the learners, not only in their ability to read and write but also in Mathematics and Science. There are, however, flaws with large-scale assessments such as the TIMSS, one factor being that they are mainly administered in English and Afrikaans (Machimana, 2021). The PIRLS assessments might also be difficult for South African learners due to language and context (PIRLS, 2021) Next, I consider a few factors that contributed to the dismal performance of the South African learners.

1.3.3 Factors Influencing Learner Performance

South Africa's learners' low performance in literacy can be attributed to multiple factors (Kutu & Nzimande, 2020). Key factors include a poor or impoverished socioeconomic background, home resources for learning, parent education levels, and teacher training (Machimana, 2021). Investigating these factors has to take place from a holistic perspective and take into consideration the many factors that can influence a child's learning such as the school, home, parent, and learner. The low performance of learners is closely linked to a connected set of issues in the learner's school, home, and community environments (Spaull, 2019). Another factor to take into consideration is that in South Africa, schools are divided into quintiles based on the socioeconomic status of its learners and the area in which the school is located (Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019). The government started the school quintile system for the purpose of resource allocation. Quintile 1 represents the lowest-income schools which have limited resources and they are no fee-paying schools. Quintile 5 represents the highest-income schools which charge more for school fees (Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019). In the next section, I discuss school and home environment factors, particularly the availability of resources, teacher qualifications, socioeconomic background, and parent education levels and how these factors influence learner performance.

1.3.3.1 Home Resources

When learning materials such as books and digital devices are available in the home, this can create an environment that is conducive to learning and can help support a learner's educational

development (Kutu & Nzimande, 2020). Children from low-income homes lack access to resources for learning, especially online resources (Adebayo et al., 2020). The PIRLS 2021 results found that there was a close association between Grade 4 learner performance and the availability of resources at home. Most learners in South Africa (72%) indicated that they had resources at home for educational development. The learners whose homes had many resources for learning scored the highest number of points, that is 530, while those with only a few resources performed the lowest (262 score points). The difference between the two scores was 268 points, which represents an estimated seven-year difference between those with few resources at home and those with several resources at home. This means that the learners who came from well-resourced homes were academically seven years ahead of their counterparts who came from homes with little to no resources. The previous PIRLS 2016 cycle had similar results, which indicate that educational resources at home affected learner performance. The results show that having educational resources at home (such as books and digital resources) contributes substantially to Grade 4 learner performance in comprehension skills.

1.3.3.2 Socioeconomic Background

The socioeconomic background of schools (especially the location of the school) is tied to learner performance (Chisholm, 2012). Research has found that the teachers who have received specialised training have no desire to work at Quintile 1 schools, as these schools are located in township and rural settings and are perceived to be unsafe (Spaull, 2019). Spaull (2019) has stated that most South African learners come from low-income households (Spaull, 2019). According to the PIRLS 2021 results, learners from higher-income households performed the best, scoring 455 points, while those from low-income households performed the worst, scoring 286 points. This represents a score difference of 165 points. Learners from higher-income households were afforded more opportunities, such as extracurricular activities, and parents and caregivers who encouraged them to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers (Lehrl et al., 2020). Many learners from low-income households had parents who were illiterate and had little to no understanding of the English language (Adebayo et al., 2020; Machimana, 2021). The result of this was that the illiterate parents were not able to provide academic support to their children.

1.3.3.3 Resources for Learning

For schools to create environments conducive to learning, adequate classroom facilities and working conditions are needed (Maarman & Lamont-Mbawuli, 2017). This includes the type

and quality of instructional resources that are available for learning. PIRLS 2021 estimated that 75% of the schools in South Africa have a scarcity of resources, especially for reading. This is much higher than the international average of 45%. Since the Progress in International Reading and Literacy Study began in 2001, the results have been consistent with learners from higher quintile schools performing better than those from lower quintile schools. The differences in learner performance between public and private schools show the importance of the availability of resources for learning and the socioeconomic background of learners (Kutu & Nzimande, 2020). Parents who have well-paying jobs will often decide to put their children into private schools where they can receive a good education, while those who have low-paying jobs take their children to under-resourced, non-fee-paying schools (80% of South African schools are estimated to be non-fee-paying schools) (Spaull, 2019). During the COVID-19 pandemic, learners who attended Quintile 1 schools lost between 70% to a full year of schooling as a result of school closures, as they had no access to online learning platforms.

During the PIRLS 2021, principals at participating schools were asked if their schools had adequate resources. Alarming, most of the Grade 4 learners in South Africa (89%) attended schools where a shortage in resources had an impact on their learning. These learners attained an average score of 272 points in the PIRLS 2021. The learners at well-resourced schools performed the best and obtained a score of 444 points. This meant that there was a score difference of 172 points between the two groups.

Another disadvantage of lower-resourced schools is that they have overcrowded classrooms (Adebayo et al., 2020; Mouton et al., 2013). In an environment in which resources are already constrained, more pressure is added by the fact that lower quintile schools are overcrowded, with a teacher-to-learner ratio of 40:1 (Spaull, 2015, 2019). Learners in smaller classes perform better academically than those in larger classes (Wolhuter, 2014). A reason for those in larger classrooms performing poorly can be attributed to but is not limited to disciplinary challenges as the teacher spends the majority of the lesson trying to control the class and is not able to support learners with one-on-one support (Machimana, 2021).

1.3.3.4 Teacher Education

A common factor that influences learner performance is the quality of teacher education and training (Spaull, 2013). Forty percent of South African schools reported having a shortage of qualified teachers in the PIRLS 2021. In their respective fields, teachers require expertise and

skills in areas such as teaching reading (Desai, 2016). Teachers should regularly attend workshops and receive training in pedagogies that focus on specific areas of learning (such as inclusive education, reading, and literacy) and how to cope with the diversity of learners in their classrooms (Wolhuter, 2014). However, in South Africa, teachers' knowledge of subject content is poor, which negatively affects the learners (Machimana, 2021). What has been an ongoing challenge in South Africa is that teachers are not trained to cope with the challenges in linguistically diverse classrooms and they are unaware of the appropriate strategies to implement in these diverse classrooms (Mohohlwane, 2020; Spaull, 2015). There are teachers in English LoLT contexts who use the learners' home language to communicate with them in the classroom, as English proficiency seems to be low amongst these teachers (Desai, 2016).

It can also be said that teachers who have received more training are, at times, unsuccessful in transferring meaning to their learners while those with fewer qualifications are, at times, more successful in getting meaning across (Machimana, 2021). Therefore, it is important to consider what teachers have learnt and what knowledge they possess (Wolhuter, 2014). The PIRLS reports on a relationship that exists between teachers who have received training on teaching reading skills to learners and improved learner performance. The PIRLS 2021 report showed that learners who received instruction from teachers who had obtained a bachelor's degree achieved a score of 315 points (38,7%), while learners who received instruction from teachers who did not have a matriculation certificate achieved a score of 281 points (0,1%).

1.3.3.5 Parent Education Levels

There is a strong association between learners' academic performance and the level of parental education, especially that of maternal education because mothers who are educated can create an environment at home in which shared reading takes place (Nawas, 2019). Learners with parents who are more educated have more access to increased educational opportunities compared to children with uneducated parents (Olive & de Dieu, 2022). Parents who have a higher level of education find different ways to promote their children's learning. These parents are aware of the disadvantages of not being involved in their children's literacy and learning development, and of the benefits of creating a stimulating environment (Nawas, 2019). Parents who enjoy reading model what good reading habits look like for their children, as they realise that modelled reading has a positive influence on how their children will read later in life. When parents model good reading habits to their children, they encourage their children to read for pleasure and to improve their reading skills (PIRLS, 2021).

In the PIRLS 2021 cycle, parents were asked to indicate whether they enjoyed reading or not. The learners whose parents enjoyed reading achieved an average score of 283 points while those whose parents did not enjoy reading achieved an average score of 270 points. Those whose parents really enjoyed reading and often read for pleasure obtained the highest average score of 342 points.

The DBE started the Read to Learn Campaign on 22 July 2015. The main aim of the campaign was to improve the reading skills of South African learners. This initiative was adopted due to the high illiteracy rate in South Africa. According to the DBE's Read to Learn campaign of 2015, parents can create a caring environment for their children at home by reading to them in the early stages of their lives. In this way, learners develop a love for books which lasts throughout their lives. In 2019, approximately 4,4 million adults in South Africa were illiterate (Statistics South Africa, 2019). When a parent is illiterate, they are not able to provide the necessary academic support for a child, such as reading to them or helping them with their homework; this continues the cycle of illiteracy. In a study by Olive and de Dieu (2022) conducted in Kigali, Rwanda, illiterate parents were interviewed. The parents who had not completed primary school stated that they were not able to assist their children with homework nor could they read to their children from a young age. In cases such as this, the cycle of poverty and illiteracy continues (Olive & de Dieu, 2022).

The factors affecting learner performance are vast and multidimensional, as previously mentioned; therefore, alleviating some of these factors needs to take on a holistic approach. The individual learner, home environment, school environment, and teacher factors need to be taken into consideration. South African classrooms are also made up of learners from diverse and cultural backgrounds. All these factors need to be taken into consideration when addressing the issue of the low performance of learners.

1.3.4 Educational Interventions

Two problems that the DBE (2021) wants to address in South Africa are the low performance of learners in reading comprehension skills and the socioeconomic disparities that exist in schools. Educational interventions are programmes that allow teachers and researchers to address gaps in learning that might be hindering a learner's progress (Phye et al., 2005). Once a certain need has been identified within the school or classroom, appropriate interventions can be used to overcome barriers to learning that children may face.

Key interventions known to provide good results are the Early Grade Reading Studies (EGRS) and Funda Wandu interventions. These programmes focus on equipping teachers by supplying them with the resources needed for their classrooms. The programmes also focus on professional development through mentoring and providing teaching assistants at schools. What one should take note of is that the EGRS mentoring intervention in home language classrooms provided an extra 40% of a year of learning. Improving home language instruction appears to have yielded better outcomes than only focusing on EFAL.

The Aweh! Intervention Programme for Early Grade Reading Improvement, developed by Oxford University Press South Africa, wanted to improve comprehension skills in Foundation Phase learners at Quintile 1 schools. This programme also focused on the home language. The programme combined intervention practices developed from the EGRS, such as mentoring teachers, providing resources for the classroom, and school management support.

One of the interventions currently being implemented by the DBE (2021) is the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA).⁴ The aim of the EGRA assessment is to track learner reading performance in the 12 South African languages which are used as the LoLT. The results from the assessments are also used to inform reading interventions aimed at learners in Grades 1 to 3. Separate EGRA benchmarks were also developed for the Nguni and Sotho languages. The South African EGRA instrument comprises four assessment components: letter sounds, high-frequency words, and a culturally relevant comprehension passage with supporting questions. My study employed the EGRA comprehension passages with questions during the pre-test and post-test and during the intervention sessions.

Another intervention is the Early Learning National Assessment (ELNA), which is a sample-based study developed to gather information on early childhood education and the principles of reading. The intervention took place from May to June 2021. Approximately 100 fieldworkers were trained at a workshop, which took place in Boksburg, Gauteng from 19 to 23 April 2021. Each fieldworker was given a tablet and an ELNA test kit to conduct the

⁴ For more information, visit the following website for early-grade reading assessments: Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) (education.gov.za).

assessments with Foundation Phase learners. Dr Mark Chetty (Director for Assessment) coordinated this project.

Meiklejohn et al.'s (2021) review of primary school interventions gives several pointers for successful educational interventions. First, the intervention should be aimed at teaching pedagogies, especially those that modify existing teaching pedagogies, classroom instructional techniques, and assessment practices. Secondly, the LoLT and the importance of offering bilingual approaches to education, and the need to scaffold learning in both the home language and English should be considered. Thirdly, parental involvement should be encouraged, as many parents in South Africa have low levels of education and work low-income jobs that require them to work long hours. The result of this is that they are not able to be involved in their children's education. Fourthly, teacher professional development should be encouraged as many Foundation Phase teachers in South Africa do not know the basic principles of reading or how to teach reading in a systematic way to young learners. Lastly, regarding school administration and efficacy, teacher effectiveness should be addressed to take the broader school context into account. This includes management of resources, capacity of learner intake, parental involvement, leadership, classroom management and discipline, collaborative lesson planning, reading, and writing homework. My study took these principles for the best educational intervention practices into account, as discussed in the literature review and findings.

1.4 Rationale and Motivation of the Researcher

My personal rationale for wishing to conduct this study is that I have been part of a non-profit community development organisation that has been working in Eersterust for the past six years. The organisation endeavours to support schools, teachers, and learners by providing remedial support through special education programmes. The organisation is involved with two Quintile 1 primary schools in Eersterust and one Quintile 1 primary school in Mamelodi. My professional rationale was sparked by my 2020–2021 master's study, which was conducted at two Quintile 1 schools in Eersterust, where I investigated teachers' perceptions of translanguaging (Aung, 2021). According to Machimana (2020), South African Quintile 1 schools are underfunded, and learners in these schools receive a quality of education that is sub-standard. Quintile 1 schools originate in communities where learners do not receive adequate support at school or at home, and, subsequently, many non-profit organisations have

a tutor system set up to provide the necessary academic support at these schools (Aung, 2021; Machimana 2020).

Through this master's study (Aung, 2021), I was able to identify the difficulties that the teachers and learners at the two participating Quintile 1 schools faced and how this influenced translanguaging in the classroom. Common observations by the participating Grade 4 English teachers included the language challenges that many of their learners faced, as the language-learning groundwork had not been laid during the Foundation Phases (Grades 1-3). With the support of the principals at both schools, I designed a remedial learning programme to assist struggling Grade 3 learners with their reading comprehension and writing in English.

The 2021 study implemented the remedial programme through translanguaging and multimodal interventions with the Grade 3 learners. This intervention aimed to prepare the Grade 3 learners for the Intermediate Phase and to incorporate all the different facets of learning (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) into one act of learning. I worked closely with the Grade 3 head of departments and classroom teachers who helped me to identify learners who needed extra remedial support. My reason for choosing Grade 3 learners was that I was part of the scoring team for the PIRLS 2021. By scoring over 1 000 booklets from Grade 4 learners, I was able to see first-hand how many learners were not able to draw meaning from the texts.

My conceptual rationale for conducting this current study was that the term 'translanguaging space' had not been contextualised in the South African or African context. This space was created through the intervention sessions during which learners were able to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire, cultural identity, and background knowledge in the process of learning. This translanguaging process was revealed in many of their drawings and writings, as presented in Chapter 5. Therefore, this study indicates how a translanguaging space was conceptualised in two South African classrooms. The findings should assist teachers in using translanguaging as a pedagogical practice that could help improve learners' reading levels and engagement with content knowledge. Through conceptualising and implementing a translanguaging space linked to culturally responsive pedagogy, I hope that more teachers will incorporate this approach as a teaching practice into their multilingual classrooms.

1.5 Problem Statement

South Africa remains one of the most unequal countries in the world, from income disparities to access to health and receiving good-quality education (Adebayo et al., 2020; Spaull, 2019). Huge disparities are present in the education system where learners from low-income households continue to receive second-rate education (Spaull, 2013). A large part of the population of learners reside in informal settlements and rural areas, while a small group of privileged South African learners live in urban areas and have access to better quality education such as private schooling and previous Model C schools (previously White, well-resourced schools from the apartheid education era).

From 2020 to 2021, COVID-19 placed many constraints on the education system worldwide. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds were impacted the most due to diminished family income, scarcity of food, domestic violence, and other community and societal issues (Reimers, 2022). Owing to social distancing and limited contact, learning became disengaged; many practices, such as group learning, were not possible in the online learning environment (Dube, 2020). In South Africa, learning was not optimised for the poorest 70% of South African children due to the lack of access to technology and educational materials at home (Dube, 2020). Additionally, many teachers were not prepared for distance teaching during the lockdown (Spaull, 2020).

For learners from more disadvantaged backgrounds, little curriculum learning took place during the lockdown (Spaull, 2020). Even before COVID-19, parents and caregivers displayed little to no desire to be actively involved in their children's education (PIRLS, 2021). My research indicated that many teachers echoed these sentiments during COVID-19, in that learning was not taking place at home, and parents did not have access to data to communicate with teachers (Aung, 2021). Ways in which families influence children's learning include the language spoken at home, parents' attitudes regarding how well their children perform at school, and the emotional support and intellectual stimulation children receive at home (Donald et al., 2014, p. 48).

According to Rautenbach et al. (2019), the ability of a child to read forms the foundation for schooling, therefore, it is important to develop good reading habits in young children and to encourage children to read for pleasure. This will determine a learner's ability to succeed academically at school and develop critical-thinking skills. The PIRLS 2012 showed that

learners' literacy performance in South Africa is low. Many learners are below the required grade level for reading and writing and have not developed comprehension skills by the end of Grade 3. As they reach the end of Grade 4, their reading fluency is below the grade level, and they are not able to engage with the content in the curriculum. In the Foundation Phases (Grades 1 to 3), learners are taught to read. Once they reach the Intermediate level, Grades 4 to 9, they have to read to learn (Breton-Carbonneau et al., 2012). With many not grasping the basic levels of reading, they fail to make the changeover where they have to read to learn; this dilemma is attributed to the language imposition that multilingual learners face (Makalela, 2015; Mgijima & Makalela, 2017).

Other factors contributing to the poor literacy skills of South African learners are that many Foundation Phase teachers do not possess the required knowledge of the basic principles of reading, nor do they know how to teach reading to young learners in a systematic way (Cilliers & Bloch, 2018). Another problem stated by Pretorius and Spaul (2016) is that teachers rely on whole-class oral chorusing for reading, where constructivist notions of teaching are not applied. Reading then becomes mechanical with little allowance for translanguaging and multimodal experiences. There is also insufficient time spent on the meaning of words and reading comprehension; these findings have been shared by many education stakeholders in South Africa (Rautenbach et al., 2019).

1.6 Research Site

The two participating schools in this study are classified as Quintile 1 South African schools, which serve the poorest population. Quintile 1 schools are also schools where parents are not required to pay school fees. Both schools are situated in the township of Eersterust and are situated in a 1 km range from each other. Eersterust was established during apartheid by the National Party government for the Coloured community. The Coloured community in South Africa is classified as having mixed-race ancestry (Eersterust Our Community, 2020). In South Africa, a township is an area that has low standards of living and is racially segregated; these areas were reserved for Black African, Indian, and Coloured people during apartheid (Donaldson, 2014). Many learners at the participating schools were part of a feeding scheme and received a meal at school every day as they came from disadvantaged backgrounds. With high rates of unemployment, parents also depended on South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) grants. The main home language spoken in Eersterust was Afrikaans (78%), while 10% speak English at home (Statistics South Africa, 2022). The parents and caregivers from

Mamelodi and Nellmapius sent their children to schools in Eersterust as they believed that their children would have a better chance of learning English. Both schools were also comprised of foreign nationals. Both schools in the study had a ratio of 60% Coloured to 40% African learners, which created a linguistically and culturally diverse school community. The teachers and learners communicated in two to three languages.

South Africa's history is characterised by linguistic and ethnic diversity. In 1500 BCE, African communities from West and Central African regions (Bantu-speaking people) crossed the Limpopo River (World Elections, 2015). Coloured people are known to have Khoisan ancestry and are considered the indigenous people of South Africa. They reside in regions of the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Northern Cape provinces. Today, the Khoisan are found in the Kalahari regions of Namibia, Botswana, and northern South Africa (Klaasen, 2018). Coloured people share an ancestry with the Khoisan as well as European, Indian, Chinese, and Southeast Asian (such as Malays) communities (Klaasen, 2018).

As stated above, the apartheid National Party set up the area of Eersterust as a location for the Coloured community (Statistics South Africa, 2022). In 1962, a farm area in Pretoria East named Derdepoort was selected, its location being 5 km from the church square. At first, the area was not considered to be a municipal area of Pretoria due to its distance from the city centre. However, it remained within the city's magisterial district (Rautenbach et al., 2019). There are various assumptions as to where the name Eersterust came from. The first is that mail coaches from the Lydenburg goldfields (Mpumalanga province) made their 'first stop' at Eersterust or 'first resting place' (Rautenbach et al., 2019). The other reason is that it was the 'first resting place' where Black workers from the homelands were housed (Springveldt, 2008).

The 1950 Population Registration Act, which imposed racially segregated areas, led to many devastating circumstances for families who lost their homes. These circumstances gave rise to an increase in poverty, which resulted in crime, unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, and malnutrition (Rautenbach et al., 2019). According to Statistics South Africa (2022), Eersterust has a youth unemployment rate of 15%. However, despite all these circumstances, the community of Eersterust boasts a unique and distinct culture. Community life in Eersterust involves its people being part of religious organisations that foster kindness and friendliness among community members. The community itself has also set up many social welfare organisations such as faith-based organisations aimed at addressing many of the social issues

that plague the community. The values of ubuntu, which emphasise community participation, play a major role in the Eersterust community. Members of the community work together to address social issues and share the responsibility to help one another (Springveldt, 2008).

As previously mentioned, Afrikaans is the main language spoken in this community. However, even learners with Afrikaans as their home language perform poorly in reading and literacy (Pretorius & Spaul, 2016). The PIRLS 2021 cycle echoes these sentiments, even though Grade 4 learners who tested in Afrikaans and English performed better than those who tested in the African languages by exceeding the score of 288 points still performed below the international mean score of 500.

The intervention at these schools took place during school hours in the library. Even though both schools had libraries, no culture of reading had been established there. According to Howie et al. (2016), an improvement in reading and literacy is closely related to school library facilities and the number of books that are available for the learners to take out. PIRLS 2016 states that libraries that stock over 5 000 books create a culture of reading that leads to learner improvement in reading and literacy. However, both schools involved in the study have not yet reached the 5 000 library-book benchmarks. Furthermore, one of the schools does not have a full-time librarian. Research shows that this is a common issue at South African schools, with only 7% of schools have a functioning library (Cilliers & Bloch, 2018).

1.7 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to design and implement a translanguaging and multimodal space through an intervention in a remedial education programme. Therefore, the study investigated how designing a translanguaging space facilitated the ability of Grade 3 learners to engage with the learning content and how offering a pedagogical perspective on translanguaging could assist teachers in creating a translanguaging space of their own.

1.8 Research Questions

The study posed two main research questions — one to answer the qualitative part of the study and the other to answer the quantitative part of the study.

1. Qualitative Research Question

How does implementing a translanguaging space as an intervention improve learners' ability to engage with the content taught?

2. Quantitative Research Question

Is there a difference in learner performance after a translanguaging intervention is administered?

1.9 Hypothesis

A hypothesis refers to a proposed explanation for a phenomenon or a set of observations. The study proposes two hypotheses below:

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test.

H₀: There is no difference between the pre-test and post-test following the intervention.

1.10 Concept Clarification

1.10.1 Translanguaging

Translanguaging can be defined as 'a practice, theory, or phenomenon [that] allows the individual to use her full linguistic repertoire to make meaning, shape experiences and, negotiate communicative contexts' (Vogel & Garcia, 2017, p. 4). As a pedagogical practice, translanguaging allows the learner to receive instruction in one language and apply the instruction through the medium of another language (Lewis et al., 2012a). For instance, learners read and listen in one language, while they speak and write in another, allowing learners to understand the learning content (Makalela, 2016). Translanguaging is also conceptualised as the 'deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages' (Otheguy et al., 2015, p. 283).

1.10.2 Multilingualism

Multilingualism describes the way in which an individual knows and communicates in more than two languages, either in social or formal situations (Garcia & Wei, 2014, p. 11). Consequently, it represents an individual achieving fluency in more than two languages

(Cenoz, 2013). The languages in which the individual is fluent include ‘state languages but also local languages, minority languages, immigrant languages, sign languages, and, in its broadest sense, dialects’ (Franceschini, 2011, p. 345). Therefore, a multilingual person is an individual who can speak and understand multiple languages with some level of fluency (Garcia, & Wei, 2014). In the South African context, many people are able to speak more than two languages.

1.10.3 Remedial Education

Remedial education is designed to help children achieve their expected level of competency; remedial learners are not struggling because of intellectual abilities but in subject-specific areas such as reading, writing, or mathematics (Chauhry, 2021). Taken from the word ‘remedy’, remedial has the end goal of healing or fixing by helping disadvantaged learners achieve competency in reading that is appropriate for their age. Remedial education assists learners who perform below average due to a variety of factors, such as developmental delays, disadvantaged backgrounds, or learning disabilities that cause them not to cope with the prescribed school curriculum (Hemmons, 2021).

1.10.4 Home Language

The home language is the language in which the learner is the most fluent, the language spoken at home with parents, and the language in which the learner is most proficient in speaking, reading, and writing (Stein, 2017). In South Africa, many learners are taught in a home language at school (sometimes English) however, the home language taught at school is not necessarily the language that is spoken at home (Stein, 2017). Another term for home language is the learner’s mother tongue, the language they were taught at birth by their parents or caregivers (Smits et al., 2008). Home Language (in the upper case) is a learning area or subject at school (CAPS, 2011). In this study, Home Language refers to the level on which the language is taken at school.

1.10.5 Literacy

According to UNESCO (2018), literacy is the ability of an individual to read, write, speak, and listen in order to make sense of their surroundings and to communicate effectively in varying contexts. Literacy also involves numeracy, that is, the ability to recognise and work with numbers. When an individual has developed literacy skills, they are able to expand on their knowledge of certain topics and skills, participate fully in society, and give back to their

communities (UNESCO, 2017). In this study, literacy is a learner's ability to read, write, speak, and listen at the required grade level.

1.10.6 Reading

According to the science of reading, reading is the ability of a learner to identify a word on a page and then sound it out (Hallowell, 2023). It consists of four main skills: phonological awareness, sight words, decoding, and orthographic mapping. The science of reading states that although children learn how to talk naturally, the same cannot be said about reading. Children require specific and explicit reading instruction to build the neural pathways (a series of connected neurons that send signals from one part of the brain to the other) of the brain to develop the skills they need to read (Hallowell, 2023). In this study, theories of reading acquisition and comprehension skills are discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2).

1.11 Research Design and Methodology

1.11.1 Research Design

A mixed-methods design was used in this study to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of the study, which is the translanguaging space. Convergent mixed-methods design is the process in which the researcher collects, merges, and analyses both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously (Babie, 2010). In this study, both data sets were collected simultaneously. Statistical techniques were used to analyse the quantitative data, and this was followed by thematic content analysis, which was used to analyse the qualitative data. A questionnaire was administered to the learners post-test, and then the two data sets were compared.

1.11.2 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm is a model for conducting research. The paradigm influences what the researcher believes about a study's phenomenon, the study participants, and the methods implemented to study the phenomenon (Given, 2008). This study was conducted through a pragmatic epistemological paradigm. The central tenet of pragmatism is its focus on purposeful human activity. A pragmatic paradigm does not claim that one research approach is best but that it is determined by the research questions, and the purpose and requirements of the research (Allmark & Machaczek, 2018). Seeking to integrate qualitative and quantitative research methods, pragmatism allows for the use of multiple data collection methods. This study

required the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods to answer the research questions. This enabled the researcher to gain a deeper representation of the world and the study's phenomenon of translanguaging spaces (Allmark & Machaczek, 2018).

1.11.3 Data Generation and Collection

Data generation in this study included drawings and written products by the learners during the intervention session, which are presented in Chapter 5. Results from a pre-test and post-test, along with the questionnaire responses, are presented in Chapter 6 of the study. The table below lists the stages at which the intervention for the study took place, which also informed the methodology for the study. It started with a quasi-experimental design that involved a pre- and post-test and concluded with post-intervention questionnaires to ascertain the learners' perceptions of the intervention and their beliefs regarding reading.

Data collection methods for the study	
Pre-test	Reading Comprehension (54 words)
Intervention	Multimodal instruments (reading, writing, listening, and speaking)
Post-test	Reading comprehension (126 words)
Post-intervention	Questionnaires were administered to the learners (consisting of 'yes' or 'no' items on whether learners spoke English at home, enjoyed reading, had books at home, and so on)

1.11.4 Sampling

A non-probability sampling technique known as purposive sampling was used for this study. Purposive sampling involves electing participants who might provide insight into the research question or contribute to the analysis (Creswell, 2007). The researcher had a specific purpose in mind, which was to determine whether a treatment condition in the form of a translanguaging intervention with Grade 3 learners would make a difference in their engagement with the learning content. The Grade 3 learners were specifically chosen for this study as the researcher had provided remedial support for them at both schools. This group was also chosen because

it was envisioned that an intervention might better prepare them for Grade 4. The researcher approached the two Grade 3 teachers she had previously worked with and received permission from them to conduct the intervention with their classes during class times. In total, 63 Grade 3 learners participated in the translanguaging intervention during school hours.

1.11.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to the process in which the researcher tries to make sense of the data that was collected (Creswell, 2014a). For the qualitative data of the study, thematic analysis was used. Themes were identified that were related to the research questions and which would assist in answering the research questions (Bryman, 2012). The themes for this study were generated during the intervention sessions and in analysing the learners' drawings and written products. The researcher developed the following four themes by planning and designing the intervention sessions according to the objective for each session: creating a translanguaging reading space through drawing, translanguaging and the extension of vocabulary, translanguaging and comprehension skills, and translanguaging and four-box organisers.

For the quantitative part data of the study, the results from the pre-test and the post-test were compared. The effect size score was also calculated to determine the relationship between the two participating groups; this was done using Cohen's d-measures. The descriptive Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to obtain measures of central tendencies (mean) and dispersion (standard deviations) (Muijs, 2004). In statistics, central tendencies are the measures that represent the centre or middle of a set of data values (Maree, 2016). The central tendency is calculated by using three measures: mean, mode, and median. The mean is the average value, the median represents the middle value of the data set, and the mode refers to the most frequently occurring value (Creswell, 2009). The mean, mode, minimum, and maximum scores are presented in Chapter 6 of the study. The standard deviation, which represents the difference between the data value and the mean, is also presented and indicates whether learners gained or lost scores between the pre- and post-test following the translanguaging intervention (Maree, 2016).

1.12 Organisation of the Thesis

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study and defines the term 'translanguaging space and what that space looks like in the South African context'. This chapter also covers the background and context of the study, discussing the intricacies and challenges of education in post-

apartheid South Africa. It gives a detailed account of several cross-national and international assessments of educational achievement that South African learners participate in and the factors that might affect learner performance. The personal, professional, and conceptual rationales were given for why the researcher wanted to conduct the study. The problem statement was also defined and how several educational challenges still exist in South Africa. The location and context of the study are described for the reader, along with concepts that are relevant to the study in order to provide the reader with a clearer understanding of the topic. Finally, a description of how the researcher gathered and analysed the data that was collected for the study is provided.

Chapter 2 discusses the literature review for the study. This literature review provides insight into the origins of translanguaging in the Welsh context as a resource for meaning making. The benefits of translanguaging are discussed and how it is a resource of knowledge construction. Language, pedagogy, and theory are then discussed, with how Western theories of language acquisition dominate the South. Additionally, translanguaging and its origins in the South African context are discussed along with the debate on the successes and challenges encountered in implementing translanguaging in the classroom. The literature review then discusses the transformative nature of translanguaging spaces for multilingual speakers by incorporating multiple modes of communication. It also indicates how a translanguaging view of literacy can help multilingual speakers improve their reading and literacy. Translanguaging as a pedagogy has not been without criticism, therefore, the challenges are also discussed to provide a balanced view of translanguaging. Remedial education is then discussed, along with theories of reading acquisition in young children. Furthermore, multilingualism in education is considered, and how daily social interactions took place in multilingual contexts in precolonial Africa. Next, I discuss South African classrooms as diverse spaces with heterogeneous learners and teachers. Finally, the literature review indicates how the African worldview of ubuntu views education as taking place on communal and social levels in African societies.

Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical framework chosen for the study. The study chose four theories due to their common underlying assumptions. These four theories are constructivism, translanguaging theory, multimodality, and ubuntu translanguaging theory. All four theories place an emphasis on how learning takes place from a social and multimodal perspective. Combined, the four theories create a space that is transformative and involves creativity and criticality. The chapter also delves deeper into the concept of a translanguaging space and

conceptualises it in the South African context. These theories have also been used by other scholars and were used as a guide for the researcher to interpret the findings.

Chapter 4 outlines the research design and methodology of the study. A mixed-methods design was chosen for this study. It started with a quasi-experimental design that involved a pre- and post-test. After the pre-test, a translanguaging intervention was administered to a total of 64 learners. It concluded with post-intervention questionnaires to ascertain the learners' perceptions of the intervention and their beliefs regarding reading. Finally, the quality and ethical assurance measures are described.

Chapter 5 presents the findings from a translanguaging intervention that took place at two Quintile 1 primary schools in Eersterust. In two classrooms, 64 learners in total participated. At School A, 34 learners from an EFAL classroom participated. At School B, 30 learners from a Home Language class participated in the study. The intervention aimed to incorporate all the facets of learning: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in a translanguaging reading intervention. This section includes screenshots of the EGRA passages that were used and the drawings and writings of the participating learners.

Chapter 6 presents the quantitative findings of the study; the results are presented as descriptive statistics from the questionnaire items administered to learners, and inferential statistics, which includes results from the pre- and post-test and data from a non-parametric t-test. Lastly, the pre -and post-test comprehension assessments were analysed to ascertain their difficulty for the Grade 3 learners.

Chapter 7 is the discussion of findings; this chapter presents the discussion which measures the qualitative and quantitative results of the study against the four themes: creating a translanguaging reading space through drawing; translanguaging and the extension of vocabulary; translanguaging and comprehension skills; and translanguaging and four-box organisers. The chapter discusses the integration of the results and relates the literature review and theoretical framework to the findings and to similarities and differences with case studies in the literature. The chapter also discusses new insights that the study contributes to translanguaging research.

Finally, **Chapter 8** concludes with a summary of the study for the reader, revisits the research questions and limitations of the study, and provides recommendations for future research and the implications of the study.

1.13 Conclusion

In this chapter, the study, which discusses a translanguaging space in the South African context, was presented and contextualised for the reader. Background information and context were also provided for the reader of the current educational dilemma in South Africa. Results from cross-national and international assessments in which South African learners participated were provided. This indicates the quality of education that learners are receiving in South Africa. Factors influencing learner performance were also provided against the backdrop of the PIRLS 2021 results. The location of the study, which is the community of Eersterust, was discussed along with its history and the many challenges faced by the community. The personal, conceptual, and professional rationale for conducting the study were also discussed. The purpose of the study was to design a translanguaging space and what that space would look like in South African classrooms. Finally, an overview was provided of the research methodology that was carried out to collect data for the study. In the next chapter, the literature review for the study is discussed.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Denny and Tewksbury (2013, p. 218) describe a literature review as follows:

A literature review is a comprehensive overview of prior research regarding a specific topic. The overview both shows the reader what is known about a topic, and what is not yet known, thereby setting up the rationale or need for a new investigation, which is what the actual study to which the literature review is attached seeks to do.

In essence, a literature review includes all the main themes and sub-themes on a particular topic. These themes are gathered from a compilation of books, journal articles, and theses relevant to the area of focus or research question of the study (Denny & Tewksbury, 2013). It was, therefore, important for the researcher to conduct a literature review to find existing gaps in the research on translanguaging (Rewhorn, 2018).

This literature review provides insight into the origins of translanguaging in the Welsh context, as a resource for meaning making in the classroom. The benefits of translanguaging are discussed and how it is a resource for knowledge construction. Language, pedagogy, and theory are then discussed, with how Western theories of language acquisition dominate the South. Additionally, translanguaging and its origins in the South African context are discussed along with the debate on the successes and challenges encountered in implementing translanguaging in the classroom. The literature review then discusses the transformative nature of translanguaging spaces for multilingual speakers by incorporating multiple modes of communication. It also indicates how a translanguaging view of literacy can help multilingual speakers improve their reading and literacy. Translanguaging as a pedagogy has not been without criticism, therefore, challenges are also discussed to provide a balanced view of translanguaging. Remedial education is then discussed, along with theories of reading acquisition in young children. Furthermore, multilingualism in education is considered and how daily social interactions take place in multilingual contexts in precolonial Africa. Next, I discuss South African classrooms as diverse spaces with heterogeneous learners and teachers. Finally, the literature review indicates how the African worldview of ubuntu views education as taking place on communal and social levels in African societies.

2.2 Origins of Translanguaging

There is a growing interest in the phenomenon of translanguaging, which stems from a change in viewing bilingualism and multilingualism in education. Translanguaging as a practice questions pedagogical ideologies from the West that have favoured monolingualism in education (Fallas Escobar, 2019). Monolingualism in education has emphasised that languages in the classroom should be kept separate (Wei, 2017). However, the world is increasingly becoming multilingual, with a rise in migration and borders becoming more fluid. Over the years, UNESCO (2008, 2020) has continued to provide proof that children learn best in their home language. Baker (2001) states that a multilingual learner should not be viewed as having two languages stored separately in the brain, but rather as one whole linguistic body (Baker, 2001). Multilingual learners use various languages throughout their day-to-day communication with others depending on the numerous reasons and contexts in which they find themselves (Cummins, 2019).

The acquisition of a second language has always been seen from a ‘subtractive or additive approach’. The first is an approach where the home language is replaced by a dominant language in society, which, in most cases, might be English (Cummins, 2019). The second approach, on the other hand, is when those from privileged backgrounds who are already proficient in one language decide to take on another language and add it to their linguistic repertoire (Vogel & Garcia, 2017). In the private schooling sector in South Africa, learners are afforded the privilege to learn languages such as French, German, and even Swahili. However, when it comes to the process of how bi/multilingual learners learn an additional language, neither of these approaches provides a valid explanation (Nogueron-Liu, 2020; Vogel & Garcia, 2017). The viewpoints that society imparts to learners will influence their language learning, such as which language they would prefer to learn in (Baker, 2001). Teachers, administrators, researchers, and politicians have perceived bilingual learners as ‘two monolinguals in one person’, however, Baker (2001) suggests that a holistic view of bilingualism is needed. As previously stated, bilingual learners do not possess two languages stored separately from one another but rather as a unified whole. These learners have acquired the skills to use their two languages with different individuals, being able to alter their level of proficiency depending on who they are speaking to (Nogueron-Liu, 2020; Wei, 2022).

Translanguaging describes the language practices of bilingual and multilingual people and holds that language is a process filled with action and practice and not a fixed set of skills or a

system of structures (Garcia et al., 2012). Hence, translanguaging uses the ‘-ing’ suffix form, placing an emphasis on the action and practice of languaging by bilinguals (Garcia et al., 2012) and multilinguals. The pedagogy and practice of translanguaging were first brought about in the Welsh context to resist the idea that bilingualism caused intellectual confusion in learners (Wei, 2022). Cen Williams, a Welsh educator, started a revitalisation of the Welsh language and coined the term *trawsieithu* (Wei, 2022). It was a purposefully planned method in which the teacher would teach and ask questions in Welsh and the learners would respond in English; this was done to preserve the use of the Welsh language. In other words, it was the systematic use of two languages as a teaching and learning practice (Conteh, 2018). This practice of using Welsh alongside English was seen as a holistic and additive approach to teaching and led to the evolution of translanguaging (Conteh, 2018).

The concept of translanguaging was later translated into English by Baker (2001) as *trawsieithu*. In essence, it was the ability of bi/multilingual speakers to move between different languages to form ‘a dynamic and integrated system to make meaning, shape experiences, and gain understanding’ (Leung & Valdes, 2019, p. 359). Translanguaging was later defined as a practice in which speakers use their full linguistic repertoire without adhering to the political boundaries set for named languages, such as categorising between indigenous and international languages (Otheguy et al., 2015). This description of translanguaging encourages researchers to reassess standardised methods of assessment in language education and instruction methods that do not benefit bi/multilingual learners worldwide (Wei, 2022). Pedagogical translanguaging practices are beneficial for bi/multilingual learners, as the learners’ home language and LoLT are used simultaneously (Cenoz, 2017). Teachers implementing pedagogical translanguaging purposefully design and plan lessons where links are made between the learners’ home language and LoLT. This way, knowledge is transferred when new concepts are learnt, leading to a better understanding of the subject matter being taught and fluency in two languages (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020).

There are four ways in which translanguaging as a pedagogy can be promoted in the classroom as suggested by Gorter and Arocena (2020). First, underlying principles of translanguaging as a theory and pedagogy should be implemented in teacher education programmes. Teachers should also be encouraged to attend workshops where they can be shown how to create translanguaging spaces of their own in their classrooms. Secondly, it is important for translanguaging to be adapted and implemented to existing school programmes, this will be a

gradual process. Thirdly, the successful implementation of translanguaging as a practice depends on the school context – in South Africa, each school is unique, with different languages being spoken, depending on the area in which the school is situated. Finally, pedagogical translanguaging allows for the renewal and revitalisation of indigenous languages being used in the classroom (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017).

When classrooms promote translanguaging practices, knowledge is developed, and learners have a deeper understanding of the subject matter (Leung & Valdes, 2019). This was shown in Williams's (1994) desire to promote bilingual education. Learners in his classroom were allowed to answer questions in Welsh while writing down answers in English, transferring knowledge from Welsh to English (Leung & Valdes, 2019). Through this practice, the Welsh language was preserved. Translanguaging as a practice was seen as a process of 'making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge' using at least two languages (Lewis et al., p. 641). More importantly, translanguaging views bilingualism as beneficial, as it advances dual language capability without causing mental confusion, as was previously argued (Prilutskaya, 2021). Therefore, the focus shifts from how many languages individuals can speak to how they meaningfully use their languages for different purposes (Conteh, 2018).

2.3 Benefits of Translanguaging

Lewis, Jones, and Baker (2012b) provide us with four benefits that translanguaging as a pedagogy and practice provides. First, translanguaging aids learners in gaining a deeper understanding of the subject content (Seals, 2021). There are learners who are able to write answers correctly on a test or write an essay without completely understanding what is being taught. This can be done by copying answers from what is written on the board or from a book. Through this process, learners do not meaningfully engage with the content and instead become passive recipients of knowledge. Translanguaging as a practice counters rote and chorus learning. Knowledge is transferred when teachers allow learners to ask questions in the language, they are most competent in and when the teacher clarifies concepts for them. Through the use of two languages, learners' linguistic and cognitive capabilities are maximised (Gonzalves & Koskiranta, 2021).

Secondly, translanguaging helps learners develop the literacy skills of language structure, vocabulary, and comprehension skills in the additional language (Nyimbili & Mwanza, 2020).

The goal of translanguaging is to develop the ability to communicate, read, and write in both languages, not just the stronger one (Gonzalves & Koskiranta, 2021). To achieve this biliteracy, classroom tasks should incorporate both the home language and LoLT (Seals, 2021). When learners acquire a new language, they automatically link new information to their prior knowledge (Nyimbili & Mwanza, 2020). When learning an additional language, teachers make the process easier by pointing out similarities between the home language and LoLT. For example, looking at the words ‘name’ in English, ‘naam’ in Afrikaans, and ‘leina’ in Sepedi, the first two start with an ‘n’ sound for English and Afrikaans; however, in Sepedi, the sound is different. Pointing out similarities and differences in language increases vocabulary and cognitive development, which could result in greater competence in the LoLT, especially if it is a language that is different from that of the learner’s home language (Seals et al., 2020). In the end, the goal is to have learners develop the ability to listen, speak, read, and write in two languages, thereby promoting bilingualism and biliteracy development.

Thirdly, translanguaging may create a link in which home literacies are connected to classroom literacies, especially for learners who do not speak the LoLT at home (Kucukali & Koçbaş, 2021). One of the benefits of translanguaging is the creation of a space in which home-based practices and school-based practices are brought together. This is also in line with the concept of ubuntu translanguaging, in which knowledge that is passed down from family or community elders is valued and can be brought into the classroom. Ebe (2016) conducted a study to show the benefits of using translanguaging in developing literacy skills. The teacher wanted to improve on her learners’ biliteracy and initiated a family literacy project. The learners were asked to write short poems which incorporated the different home languages of the learners as well as English. The learners then had to go back home and share the poems they wrote with their families. The families were then asked to assist by making corrections on any grammar or spelling of words and to add any additional ideas they might have. This created a link between the school and home and included the learners’ families in the task. In Song’s study (2016), Korean immigrant parents purposefully made an effort to develop biliteracy skills in their children. The parents under observation in this study assisted their children with their homework. The parents and children translated English words into Korean to negotiate and clarify meaning. The creation of these translanguaging spaces made home–school links where meaning was transferred from Korean to English and also provided opportunities for parents to participate in the learner’s education.

Lastly, translanguaging as a practice allows fluent speakers of a language to be integrated with those who are emergent bilinguals; this develops learners' indigenous language, be it their first or second language (Gonzalves & Koskiranta, 2021). Language is often tied to one's identity and expresses the unique ways in which certain groups of people choose to communicate; when a language dies out, a sum of human knowledge will be lost (Ridanpaa, 2018). Thus, translanguaging as a practice enables learners to co-construct their identity (Nyimbili & Mwanza, 2020).

2.4 Language, Education, and Theory

In many schools and tertiary institutions throughout the world, English is privileged as the LoLT. This is not only evident in the 'Outer Circle but also in the Expanding Circle' (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020, p. 302). The Outer Circle comprises nations or states that have a post-colonial history, and where English is not the mother tongue for a considerable section of the population, such as in South Africa, Nigeria, and India. The Expanding Circle are countries where English is used as a means of communication and for education, however, many are not native speakers of English, for example, in countries like South Korea, Japan, and China. English is the most spoken second language globally; hence it is closely linked to multilingualism. English as a language has gained prestige in the global workforce and as a means of communication – this has resulted in a decline in the learning of national languages (Duarte, 2019). Globally, there is also the belief that the ultimate goal of teaching English is for English to become the primary language of communication (Wei, 2022). For many who are bi/multilingual, English is one of the languages that form part of their linguistic repertoire, but it is not their home language (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020). By spreading the idea that monolingualism is the goal, learners' home language is then discarded (Liu & Fang, 2020), leading many scholars to re-examine the ways in which English is being taught, and how methods such as translanguaging can facilitate English language teaching without the loss of the learner's home language (Kao, 2023).

As previously mentioned, learners acquire knowledge best in the language they grew up speaking at home from a young age, and the use of more than one language in the classroom promotes critical-thinking skills (Kiramba, 2015). However, what is widespread in most African schools is chorus learning, which produces unmotivated learners who do not meaningfully engage with the teacher or the content in the classroom. This leaves no room for questions or reflection on the part of the learners (Kiramba, 2015). This type of learning leads to an environment that does not stimulate learner curiosity or their involvement in class

discussions (Guzula et al., 2016). The pedagogical style by which learners learn new information is also informed by the school's language policy, school governing bodies, teachers, and the learners themselves (Krause & Prinsloo, 2016). Language teaching should take an approach that incorporates culturally relevant texts that spark the learners' interests. Translanguaging as a theory and practice can be related to the South African and African context where the learners' home language can be seen as a resource for knowledge construction (Charambo, 2022; Childs, 2016; Kerfoot & Simon-Vandenberg, 2015; Makalela, 2017; Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2023; Ndlangamandla & Chaka, 2020; Probyn, 2019; Sefotho, 2022).

Sub-Saharan Africa is known as one of the most linguistically diverse regions in the world, yet many learners are still educated in English as the LoLT (Probyn, 2019). In many of these regions, Western educational theories are applied to an African context. One particular theory is from Cummins (1979), who explored how migrant learners in Canada acquired English as an additional language. His theory conceptualised two terms in language learning: basic interpersonal communications skills (BICS), and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). This theory was beneficial to teachers in the First World context to understand the challenges faced by immigrant learners in acquiring an additional language. The theory was also helpful in providing a time frame for how long it took these learners to catch up with their classmates in relation to schoolwork (Cummins, 1999).

Cummins' (2000) theory postulated that BICS involves basic linguistic skills needed for everyday social interactions that are context-embedded, such as the language used during break time, on the phone, or casual social interactions with peers or family members. This type of language is used during social interactions and casual conversations and can be developed over two years. On the other hand, CALP refers to language that is used in the classroom for academic purposes and which is required for activities such as essay writing or understanding the content read in a textbook. For CALP, higher-order thinking is needed for content in the curriculum to be grasped (including questioning, interpreting, evaluating, and making judgements about what one reads). CALP requires that the learner develop more complex language capabilities, which would take five to seven years (Cummins, 1999). Baker (2001) believes that Cummins' theory has been beneficial for scholars, educational policies, and practices. However, to apply this theory universally and to every context is not practical. As

previously stated, Cummins' (1999) work was carried out in a First World context with immigrant learners, so one is still not sure if this theory can be applied to the African context.

Cummins' research took place in Canada, where the immigrant participants in his research spoke a language at home that was not English; however, in a country like Canada, the participants are exposed to English in their everyday lives. The way in which learners in South Africa take on English as an additional language is different from the migrant learners in Cummins' research (Desai, 2016). Brock-Utne (2018) gives the example of learners who live in Khayelitsha, a township situated in the Western Cape, a province of South Africa. Learners who live in Khayelitsha are not exposed to English in their everyday interactions. They often communicate with their parents, friends, and teachers in isiXhosa, the main language spoken in that region. The same can be said for learners in Tanzania. If the school policy has English as the LoLT, the learners might only hear and communicate in English at school. In their daily interactions, they hear many of the indigenous African languages being spoken. Learners in South Africa are expected to have CALP in English, a language in which they have not developed BICS. BICS and CALP are more relatable to societies in the Global North, where the learners have already acquired the language on a level of BICS as experiential knowledge (information, skills, and abilities one acquires through experience) to support CALP.

In South Africa, learners would need to have developed a level of CALP in their home language and LoLT (mainly English), as CALP is required for academic purposes. The question arises as to whether South African learners, by the end of Grade 3, have developed a level of CALP in the home language and LoLT (Probyn, 2019; Sibanda, 2018). After three or four years of schooling, learners who have English as a second language are expected to be on the same level of proficiency as those who have English as a first language. Those who speak English as their mother tongue would have had five to seven years to achieve fluency, which would not be possible for second-language speakers (Sibanda, 2018). Language policy makers have also not considered that in South Africa many learners enter school without being able to read or write in their home language. This places further hindrances on their ability to master reading and writing in the LoLT (Leask, 2019). Policymakers have the mistaken notion that by the time a learner leaves Grade 3 and enters Grade 4, they have already developed literacy skills in their home language (Sibanda, 2018).

Having a multilingual society represents richness in culture, diversity, and wisdom that has been accumulated over the years and a community in which individuals from different backgrounds live harmoniously with others (Bokamba, 2015). When multilingualism is not encouraged, individuals living in a particular society are not able to develop meaningful and long-lasting social relationships. This negatively impacts their ability to find jobs and opportunities that require them to be proficient in multiple languages (Probyn, 2019). Policymakers in Africa should plan for and implement language policies based on protecting and promoting indigenous languages (Machimana, 2021; Ngcobo et al., 2016).

2.5 Translanguaging in South Africa

Long before Europeans and Bantu-speaking people arrived in South Africa, the Khoi and San people were the first inhabitants of Southern Africa, and these groups of people began the history of language in South Africa (Makalela, 2017). After the Khoi and San, Bantu speakers arrived which further amplified the linguistic diversity of Southern Africa. Bantu speakers hold to a value system known as ubuntu or botho, a philosophy promoting community and interconnectedness (Makalela, 2017). Before the arrival of Europeans in South Africa, ‘language systems coexisted alongside one another; there was also inward and outward mobility present between various ethnic and tribal communities’ (Sefotho, 2022, p. 2). Languages worked in harmony and coexistence with one another (Sefotho, 2022).

Africa is known for its diverse societies, which have resulted in the formation of multiple languages, and the prevalence of multilingual classrooms (Charambo, 2022). For instance, the southern African Mapungubwe civilisation of the 12th century employed various languages for communication and trade (Mbiri-Hungwe, 2021). Individuals in this community were interconnected by using multiple languages – no policymakers set language policies in place or made rules on grammar – instead various languages were used during trade and communication (Mbiri-Hungwe, 2021). When the ‘trans’ in translanguaging is closely connected to South Africa’s multilingual setting, movement between languages is a natural occurrence. For example, in South Africa, there is a movement from Zulu to Sepedi, then a switch to English (Heugh, 2015).

In a multilingual country such as South Africa, the use of one language is not sufficient to make sense of a person’s identity and lifeworld (Mgijima & Makalela, 2017). A person’s identity is closely tied to the language or languages they speak. Hence linguistic diversity plays a vital

role in South Africa (Ngcobo et al., 2016). This relates to translanguaging, which holds that prescribed boundaries between languages are non-existent (Sefotho, 2022). To address the language in education dilemma in South Africa, in which 12 official languages, including sign language, are present, Gumbi (2021) suggests that school language policies should implement the integration of African languages as official languages for teaching, learning, and assessments. Translanguaging, which is a fluid, flexible, and manifold discursive resource, has been proposed as an alternative teaching strategy in super-diverse multilingual classrooms (Makalela, 2015). This entails classrooms becoming open or inclusive spaces in which more than one language in the same lesson is employed to maximise learning and teaching outcomes. It has been found that when translanguaging spaces are opened up, learners' higher cognitive skills in reading development improve (Mgijima & Makalela, 2017).

A translanguaging space in South Africa is related to the term 'linguistic fluidity', a 'social practice that goes beyond classroom interactions and includes all meta-discursive regimes that are performed by multilingual speakers in making sense of the world around them' (Makalela, 2015, p. 16). Curricula that oppose the use of multiple languages might not be cognitively stimulating for multilingual learners. This excludes transformation, creativity, and criticality (Ngcobo et al., 2016). In South Africa, learners grow up with a mixture of dynamically linked languages where the notion of home language and first additional language has become largely irrelevant in this complex multilingual context (Makalela, 2019). Importantly, translanguaging spaces stretch beyond the classroom. For example, a school gardening project takes place outside of the classroom walls, with opportunities for cross-linguistic and cross-cultural social and cognitive growth. Here, learners are afforded an opportunity to take part in a practical task and work together with their peers through social interaction and collaboration (Phatudi, 2018).

Yet, translanguaging has not been without opposition in South Africa (Mwaniki, 2016). Languages are still viewed as separate and are still kept separate in classrooms and school language policies. South Africa is also still being influenced by the Global North when it comes to teaching practices and curriculum statements (Childs, 2016). South Africa, like most African countries, follows the traditional monolingual pedagogy where the predominant LoLT, English, is not the home language of more than 80 per cent of the population, as most communities are multilingual (Charambo, 2022). This points to a need for the DBE and teacher training institutions to design programmes that prepare teachers to teach in linguistically diverse classrooms (Maseko & Mkhize, 2019). Even though translanguaging brings value to

the classroom, teachers are not always supportive of implementing translanguaging strategies (Childs, 2016). Teachers are often pressurised when it comes to working through the content in the curriculum and prefer to give instruction in one language (Childs, 2016).

Research in South Africa has indicated the value of creating translanguaging spaces in classrooms. Makalela (2016) created a translanguaging space consisting of Grade 6 learners at a rural school in Limpopo. During the classroom activity, translanguaging was implemented in vocabulary exercises, reading comprehension, and read-aloud exercises, by using both Sepedi (the home language of most of the learners at the school) and English (the LoLT at the school). During the reading comprehension exercise, the learners were provided with the text in Sepedi and English. They gained a deeper understanding of the text by rewriting, summarising, and retelling the story in English and Sepedi. This study indicates how translanguaging integrates multiple voices, languages, and modes to enhance meaning-making in the classroom (Makalela, 2016).

Scholars are conducting more research on how translanguaging can also be implemented in content subject classrooms such as Science, Mathematics, and Geography and not just within the language classrooms. Research has also proved that there is increased participation among learners, even in Science classrooms when their home language is used (Charambo, 2020). When a learner's home language is acknowledged they are better able to comprehend scientific concepts, which could lead to an increase in academic achievement (Charambo, 2019). Scientific and mathematical concepts are better grasped by learners when translated or explained in their home language. African societies also have creative ways in which scientific concepts are expanded on, such as through the use of riddles or folk stories narrated by elders of the community (Ndungo & Mwangi, 2014). In many Science classrooms today, learners are taught through a Western worldview which fails to bring in the learners' community and background knowledge (Shava & Manyike, 2018).

A study was conducted by Charambo (2020) to investigate pre-service teachers' perceptions on the use of African languages to clarify scientific concepts. The participants came from schools in Soweto, a township in Gauteng, South Africa. All the pre-service teachers agreed that when the learners' home language was used to clarify concepts and transfer meaning, they were better able to grasp the scientific terms. The teachers would give the learners a task in English and then allow them to write the answer in their home language. The pre-service

teachers also agreed that by using a multiplicity of languages in the Science classroom, the academic achievement of the learners might be improved. Translanguaging was seen as a resource in the Science class, making links between the learners' home language and LoLT, which increased their understanding of the complex scientific concepts.

Charambo and Zano (2019) conducted a translanguaging intervention with Grade 10 pupils in a Physical Science class at a farm school in the Free State. For the pre-test, the learners were given a multiple-choice test comprising 30 questions that were all related to the subject of Physical Science. During the four-week intervention, the learners were asked to work in groups using Sesotho (the main language spoken in the Free State) and English, the LoLT at the school. The classroom teacher taught the learners in their home language (Sesotho), and the learners were also given learning materials written in their home language. The learning materials included texts that had Sotho and English side by side, as well as multilingual science dictionaries. After the intervention, the learners were given another multiple-choice test, and the results showed that there were learning gains and the size of the scores was highly affected.

Teachers in Probyn's (2019) study, however, had differing views. A case study of eight township and rural schools in the Eastern Cape explored whether eight Grade 8 Science teachers made use of translanguaging to support their learners' understanding of scientific concepts. Through classroom observations, only one of the eight Science teachers who participated in the study made regular use of translanguaging. The teacher viewed the learners' home language as an important resource for meaning making. The teacher first wanted to build understanding in the learners' home language and then transfer that understanding to English. The other seven teachers continued to teach in English, even when they could observe from learners' facial expressions that they were lost. Although one teacher was enthusiastic in his practice of incorporating the learners' home language in a Science classroom, the study found that translanguaging alone was not sufficient to improve the learners' understanding of the subject content. The learning of science also depended on the learners' interest in scientific content and their willingness to engage.

Some teachers believe that where English is the LoLT in the South African classroom, translanguaging is not beneficial to learning and teaching. Krause and Prinsloo (2016) conducted a study in Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and Geography classes in the Western Cape. The participating teachers indicated that translanguaging was an obstacle to teaching.

The learners were taught Mathematics in English by adding the Xhosa prefix ‘u’ in front of the number (for example, *usixteen*). The teacher did this as the Xhosa words for numbers are very uncommon amongst Xhosa speakers, who tend to know the English words for numbers. The teachers stated that the learners would mix Xhosa and English in their responses during Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and Geography tests and examinations when an English response was required. This could be a positive quality if the examinations did not require responses in English only. Translanguaging, in this instance, confused the learners as their responses to the tests and examinations were a mixture of English and isiXhosa, where only an English response was required. Nonetheless, the teachers could not deny the benefits of translanguaging as it helped in getting the message across to the learners. However, the problem was that the translanguaging practices clashed with the learners’ language requirements in monolingual (English) written examinations.

A translanguaging intervention was carried out by Mgijima and Makalela (2016) with 64 Grade 4 learners at a primary school in the Eastern Cape. Through the intervention, the investigators wanted to improve the learners’ ability to reason verbally by helping them to apply background information. The results of the pre-test and post-test showed that the translanguaging intervention had a positive impact on the participants’ performances in the two languages used at the school, namely isiXhosa and English. The translanguaging intervention was a comprehension passage which included texts in English and isiXhosa. Both languages were included in different paragraphs of the same text and in different sentences in the same paragraph. During the reading of the passage, the teacher paused to ask the learners questions in both English and isiXhosa, and they had to substantiate their answers. Having the learners explain their answers in either English or isiXhosa enhanced their cognitive abilities and allowed them to draw inferences when reading in English and isiXhosa, which positively influenced the score of the post-test.

Mgijima and Makalela (2021) conducted a translanguaging intervention in the Eastern Cape to examine the effects of translanguaging on learners’ ability to reorganise texts after reading passages in isiXhosa (the learners’ home language) and English. Before the commencement of the intervention, the learners were provided with a pre-test in the form of a comprehension passage in which they had to answer questions in English only. The same was done for the post-test. The translanguaging intervention was conducted over two weeks, during which time the learners were taught how to draw inferences (conclusions) from the text by applying their

background knowledge. Texts were provided for the learners in both English and isiXhosa, and the learners were able to read and see both languages side by side. The learners were also asked to work in pairs to answer the questions after reading the texts. They were allowed to answer the questions in either English or isiXhosa. After the intervention, the learners wrote the post-test, and the results showed that the learners performed better in the post-test than in the pre-tests.

Another study was conducted by Strauss (2016) at two high schools in the farm town of Upington. The main language spoken in this town is Afrikaans. It is also the LoLT in most of the schools. The study investigated how the teachers and learners perceived translanguaging in the classroom. The teachers often moved between English and Afrikaans, especially when clarifying more complex concepts that the learners might not have been familiar with in English. The learners found this to be especially helpful as it deepened and transferred meaning from English to Afrikaans. The constant shift between English and Afrikaans allowed the learners to transfer the meaning of certain words or phrases which they initially would not have understood if no translanguaging had been done.

Guzula et al. (2016) conducted a study at an after-school reading club for Grade 3 to Grade 6 learners in Khayelitsha in the Western Cape. The learners were tested for literal comprehension, which is the ability to recall information in the text. The learners had to recall five elements that took place in the passage that was read. The teacher allowed the learners to provide the answers in their home language, which, in this case, was isiXhosa. The teacher then translated their answers into English. The teacher wrote the English words next to the Xhosa words on the blackboard. The learners were also encouraged to translate their own responses and the responses of their peers. Allowing the learners to see these languages written side by side developed their knowledge of language structure, not just in their home language but also in the LoLT. The learners were able to transfer meaning from isiXhosa to English. This type of activity accommodated the diverse group of learners both linguistically and academically.

Notwithstanding these positive results in the research in the South African context, there is still a debate as to whether translanguaging increases learners' knowledge of subject content in the classroom. Furthermore, studies looking into the use of two languages being used in the same lesson for reading comprehension are scarce (Makalela, 2015; Mgijima & Makalela, 2021). The studies by Mgijima and Makalela (2016, 2021) and Probyn (2019) were conducted in the

Eastern Cape, the poorest and lowest-performing province in South Africa. Insufficient studies have been conducted in other provinces as to whether translanguaging improves the reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills of multilingual learners. With many South African learners in Grade 4 struggling to read for meaning, more research should be done on whether translanguaging improves reading among primary school learners (Probyn, 2019). Mgijima and Makalela (2021) indicate that in multilingual contexts such as South Africa, reading is taught in one language, irrespective of the multiplicity, coexistence, and interconnectedness of all the indigenous languages.

By not affording learners the opportunity to bring in their linguistic and cultural backgrounds, there is a sense of loss of their cultural identity, resulting in learners being left behind in lessons (Fawole & Pillay, 2019). Most learners in South Africa come from homes with limited resources and school is the only place where they are able to speak English (Mgqwashu, 2009; Spaull, 2015). Some learners only learn English once they officially start school. By not being able to comprehend English, the LoLT becomes a barrier to learning, with many learners merely going through the motions and yet still being promoted to the next grades (Fawole & Pillay, 2019). This places learners from underprivileged backgrounds at even more of a disadvantage (Mwinda & van der Walt, 2015).

2.6 Creating Translanguaging Spaces

What has been coined as the ‘multilingual turn’ has brought with it the acknowledgement of translingual and multimodal teaching practices (Gorter & Arocena, 2020). Teachers should be willing to adapt to an ever-changing and ever-increasing multicultural world. Translanguaging offers a pedagogical perspective that is transformative (Wei, 2024) as it involves the use of the home language alongside the LoLT, which leads to an increased understanding of content (Pacheco & Miller, 2015). In the classroom, translanguaging approaches draw on all the linguistic and semiotic (gestures, images, or objects) resources of the learner to improve understanding and learner performance (Perera, 2018). Garcia et al. (2021) conceptualise translanguaging pedagogies as teachers creating a ‘space’ within the classroom that leverages the language and knowledge systems of bilingual learners. Thus, both or various languages are used in a ‘dynamic and functionally integrated manner to organise and mediate understanding, speaking, literacy, and learning’ (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2020, p. 2).

As an act that engages in multilingual practices, translanguaging includes all modes of communication and centres not only on the languages spoken but also on the observable practices of language, for example, in gestures (Holdway & Hitchcock, 2018). Translanguaging can be both learner- and teacher-directed, depending on the modality, interactional representations, and subject content, as well as on the nature of the broader socio-political language context (Gorter & Arocena, 2020). Furthermore, translanguaging takes place in the classroom as an intentional and spontaneous practice, and in multilingual societies, teachers naturally translanguage with their learners by shifting between languages (Li & Luo, 2017). However, Li and Luo (2017) acknowledge that the pedagogy of translanguaging has been underdeveloped and that translanguaging is seldom acknowledged in schools.

Many multilingual learners also face a disadvantage as there is a disconnect between their multilingual out-of-school and often monolingual in-school language and literacy practices (Zhao & Flewitt, 2019). An example of pedagogical translanguaging is allowing learners to read a book in one language while a discussion about the book takes place in another. Through this process, the teacher creates a translanguaging space, which enables learners to make multilingual sense of the text and allows them to participate in classroom discussions. This process also allows learners to draw on their home literacies to negotiate and make sense of the ‘new’ knowledge that has been introduced.

When learners translanguage, they use ‘various languages to gain knowledge, make sense of, and articulate their thoughts in order to communicate; they incorporate all the available linguistic, semiotic, social, and cognitive resources to construct meaning and make sense of their social reality’ (Kaufhold, p. 3). Kaufhold (2018) suggests that a translanguaging space can be used as a pedagogical tool. According to Wei (2018,) a space created by translanguaging involves creativity and criticality:

Creativity extends and breaks the boundaries between the old and the new, the conventional and the original, and the acceptable and the challenging. Criticality refers to the ability to use available evidence appropriately, methodically, and insightfully to inform considered views of social, and linguistic phenomena, to question received wisdom, and to express views adequately through reasoned responses to situations. (p. 22)

There are various examples of creating translanguaging spaces in the literature. In a study by Bradley and Moore (2018), which included an informal poetry workshop for the learners, a poem was designed that included English and French. Speech and music were integrated as the poet, who was also the participant, sang the introduction to the poem. Therefore, the research participant used her own multilingual linguistic repertoire across different resources and modes by including the written, verbal, and aural modes. At an Indian religious school for children, where the medium of instruction was Tamil, the teachers and learners of different ages used various signs and modes to communicate with each other (Perera, 2018). Translanguaging and multimodality played an integral part in the communicative repertoires of the participants. In a lesson in which the teacher and her learners engaged in a discussion about funeral rites, the learners moved between English and Tamil and used gestures to convey the type of object they were talking about, which, in this case, was a coffin.

In another study by Kim and Song (2019), a family literacy project in New York City was initiated where the parents and children from immigrant backgrounds worked together to create a multilingual storybook. The families collaborated multimodally in various languages through dialogue, text, and by listening through gestures and visual illustrations in the form of drawings to design their storybooks. This study by Kim and Song (2019) highlights the significance of the family's involvement in the child's acquisition of a new language. As seen in the above case studies, the collective use of various modes of communication, such as gestures, images, sounds, objects, and touch, creates messages with a deeper understanding than if only one mode had been used (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2019)

Table 2. 1

The What? Why? And How? of a Translanguaging Space

What?	Why?	How?
• Mobilise multiple languages to process content. • Communicate using multiple languages in the same sentence. • Use words, phrases, or	• Support learners to be bi/multilingual. • Increase learner comprehension. • Empower learners to participate.	• Allow learners to read home language resources. • Encourage learners to work together with peers using their home languages. • Show home languages together with English.

sentences from another language to communicate.	• Create storytelling opportunities for learners’ families to read or share stories in their home language.
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Table 2.1 illustrates the what and why of how a translanguaging space can be created in the classroom and which aspects of multiple languages are important for teachers to incorporate in order to create a space where learners feel accepted and valued. Teachers can communicate by using multiple languages in the same sentence or learn certain phrases or words in the learner’s home language. Therefore, learners may feel a sense of belonging in the classroom, as their home language is valued. The how aspect is created by supporting learners’ bi/multilingualism to enable them to feel empowered to participate in classroom discussions and bring their personal histories and background knowledge into the act of learning. This was evident in this study when the learners incorporated their background knowledge into their drawings and written products, which are presented in Chapter 5. By supporting bi/multilingualism, a teacher introduces their learners to new words and concepts in both the home language and LoLT, which, in the end, improves comprehension skills. Lastly, the how aspect incorporates a space where families can be encouraged to become involved in their children’s schooling by incorporating the value and funds of knowledge brought in by community elders. When learners are given a task in which they have to go back home and collaborate with family, this leads to the acquisition of new knowledge and terms that the learner might not have known. These collaborations support children’s learning and development.

2.7 A Translanguaging View of Literacy

Barton (2001) and Champlin (2016) indicate that a literate individual can use their knowledge of language and social settings to communicate with various groups of people. As borders become more porous, the world has become more linguistically and culturally diverse, new communication channels are opened, and literacy should be seen in ways that go beyond conventional language-based approaches (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2019; Jonsson & Blasjo, 2020). In the literacy classroom, pedagogies that embrace translanguaging can assist multilingual learners in a variety of ways. These include increasing metalinguistic awareness, strengthening the understanding of language features, and promoting the use of reading strategies such as

summarising and clarifying terms and concepts (Pacheco & Miller, 2015). Incorporating translanguaging is also beneficial in helping learners become strategic language users. Teachers should model for learners how translanguaging can be beneficial to their learning and encourage diverse language practices in the various uses of language or literacy in school (Holdway & Hitchcock, 2018).

A translanguaging lens ‘enhances fluency and cross-linguistic proficiency as learners select the language features that best facilitate their communication, academic discussion, and reading comprehension’ (Li & Luo, 2017, p. 142). Generally, the verbal or written mode is privileged over the visual or gestural mode of meaning-making systems (Garcia, 2020; Jonsson & Blasjo, 2020). Conversely, Barton (2001) states that literacy embraces more than acts of reading and writing. For instance, the visual and aural modes play a significant role in the construction of knowledge and content (Jewitt & Kress, 2010). A teacher who is not familiar with a learner’s home language can create a translanguaging space in which she tells simple stories in the LoLT and incorporates visuals to support the text; these strategies can be accompanied by using various tones and expressions and a variety of gestures to capture the learners’ attention (Phatudi, 2016).

According to translanguaging, languages are not a set of categories that name tags can be ascribed to, such as Spanish, Portuguese, English, or German. They are repertoires of ‘multilingual, multimodal, multisensory, and multi-semiotic’ resources that multilinguals use to make sense and meaning of their surroundings (Jonsson & Blasjo, 2020; Hua et al., 2017). These eclectic spaces are created by translanguaging. Importantly, translanguaging views literacy as being developed through a complexity of actions that depend on varying social, cultural, political, and economic contexts (Hua et al., 2017). Consequently, literacy performance is allowing a learner to bring their entire self and their languages into the act of learning, irrespective of the language of writing. Translanguaging recognises the importance of both spoken and written language resources, as well as multimodal resources and life experiences in literacy development (Garcia, 2020). As Freire (1985) has indicated, teaching learners to read and write should be an artistic and contextualised event. Instead, many teachers transform these experiences into oral choruses or mechanical events, without emotions, expressions, invention, creativity, or social relevance. It is necessary to relate what is read to the learners’ social and emotional context so that they can see the relevance and value of what they are reading and learning (Jonsson & Blasjo, 2020).

According to Ebe (2016), translanguageing takes place across four main approaches which involve reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The teacher-to-learner translanguageing approach is when the teacher gives the learners an activity in the form of a reading or writing exercise. The teacher then translates certain words from the reading or writing activity into the learners' home language to ensure they understand what they need to do. The learner-to-learner interaction is when learners are placed in groups with a peer who speaks the same home language as they do. They then scaffold one another and discuss the activity together in their home language. Learners who are also more proficient in the LoLT can be grouped with a peer who is an emergent bilingual learner in order to support understanding. Learner-to-teacher or learner-to-class interaction requires that learners are requested to provide feedback in the form of a presentation, role play, or drama. A class discussion unfolds which can take place in both the home language and LoLT, thus encouraging an interactive class experience. A learner-to-self translanguageing interaction occurs when the learners discuss a topic as a group, however, the learner takes notes on their own in the form of a bilingual journal or book on what they have discussed or written multilingually. Finally, the fourth mode is learner-to-community which involves the learner's family and community. Here the learner and teacher can interview community members or elders on ancient storytelling or traditions and present these stories to the class.

Table 2. 2

The Different Translanguageing Modes of Learning

1. Teacher-to-learner The teacher reads a comprehension passage to the learners and points out similarities and differences in words between the home language and LoLT. If the teacher is not familiar with the learners' home languages, they can ask a learner in the classroom who does speak the language to translate. In this interaction, the teacher provides scaffolding by helping the learners with vocabulary development, that is, introducing the learners to new words in a reading exercise or focusing on one particular word that the learners may not be familiar with and transferring meaning to the home language of the learners.
2. Learner-to-learner This interaction takes place when a learner is placed with a peer who speaks the same home language; they then scaffold one another and discuss the activity together in their

home language. Learners who are more proficient in the LoLT can be grouped with a peer who is an emergent bilingual learner to support learning. If there is a learner in the classroom with no language peers, the teacher can provide this learner with a multilingual language dictionary or make use of a translation tool (such as Google Translate).
3. Learner-to-teacher or class Learners are requested to do a show and tell in the form of a speech, role play, or drama. The class then discusses what was presented, which can take place in both the home language and the LoLT, thus promoting an interactive classroom setting.
4. Learner-to-self The learner writes the two words down in the bilingual journal or notebook to make links between the home language and LoLT.
5. Learner or teacher-to-community The class or teacher can interview elders about clan, cultural or community stories/contexts. A questionnaire can be drawn up by the learners with the help of the teacher. The learners can then record these interviews. In class, the teacher and learners can listen to these stories. The learners can then write their own renditions or versions or translations (from the speaker's home language to English) of these stories. All these stories can be collected in a classroom storybook that focuses on the stories or voices of the community. These books can be used for listening, speaking, reading, writing, and role play activities in the classroom.

Notes. Source for this table is put here Ebe (2016, p. 72).

In a study by Garcia (2020), the teachers created a translanguaging space with Latin bilinguals during a read-aloud activity. The learners read a book in English, and the following day, a Spanish version of the same book was read. During discussions of the book, the teachers encouraged the learners to act out, draw, and add music to the deliberations on scenes in the book. This multimodal translanguaging space allowed the teachers to focus on how the learners engaged with the text individually and encouraged the learners to use gestures, emotions, and various modes to display their understanding during the reading activity.

Ebe and Chapman-Santiago (2016) used translanguaging as a literacy device in a Grade 8 English Language and Arts class in New York as part of the Cuny-Nysieb project.⁵ This teacher's classroom was predominantly made up of immigrant learners. The teacher chose to create a translanguaging space for her learners by choosing a culturally relevant text. She chose a novel written by a Vietnamese author who wrote a book bilingually, with some parts written in Vietnamese and others in English. Although none of the immigrant learners were Vietnamese, they were, however, immigrants like the author, and many also had family members who had recently moved to the United States. The teacher also created a translanguaging space by providing translations of the activity in the learners' home language. The learners were then placed according to the home languages they spoke and they had to discuss why the author might have chosen to incorporate Vietnamese and English words in her novel. The learners agreed that the author was better able to express her feelings and culture in Vietnamese.

The creation of translanguaging spaces means that learners are introduced to culturally relevant texts, are allowed to work in groups, and can discuss the activity in the language they feel most comfortable with. This creates an environment in which learners are able to engage with the content they are being taught rather than merely being passive recipients of knowledge.

The planned intervention from my study drew on elements from the Cuny-Nysieb project because translanguaging as a practice is learner-oriented and focuses on what the learner does with language. These studies affirm that a translanguaging space is transformative for learners. The researcher also wanted to create a space in which all the learners were able to engage in the lessons. However, as discussed earlier, the pedagogy of translanguaging is still underdeveloped and studies have not yet confirmed whether it improves the reading and literacy ability of learners.

2.8 Challenges in the Implementation of Translanguaging

Translanguaging as a theory and practice has not been without opposition, and challenges have occurred when teachers and policymakers are in favour of only using one language at a time in

⁵ The CUNY-New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals was a research project that aimed to inform teachers about the practices of translanguaging. For more information on the Cuny-Nysieb projects and their translanguaging guides visit: [Translanguaging Guides | CUNY-NYSIEB](#)

the classroom (Cummins, 2019). Additionally, schools often do not support translanguaging, due to language policies that hold to one LoLT (Wei, 2024). Bilingual learners have also been trained to believe that languages should be kept separate in the classroom (Leung & Valdes, 2019). However, in natural settings such as the home and on school playgrounds, learners translanguage in order to convey meaning (Nymbili & Mwanza, 2021). Owing to classrooms being linguistically diverse, teachers are often confronted with a variety of challenges; for instance, many learners speak a language that the teacher is not familiar with (Nymbili & Mwanza, 2021). This can raise questions and create dilemmas around language policy in the classroom. These questions include – will learners feel safe and accepted in the classroom if their home language is used, are teachers required to use the learners’ home language, and how can learners’ home language be used as a resource for learning (Ticheloven, 2021)? Translanguaging as a classroom pedagogy may address these questions and dilemmas, as indicated in the previous section.

There are challenges in the implementation, policy, and practice of translanguaging. Notwithstanding the fact that borders are becoming more porous with an increase in migration and multilingualism growing in Western countries, many English language classrooms today still do not acknowledge learners’ home languages as founts for learning (Conteh, 2018). This is due to the fact that curricula, language policies, and assessment practices are not willing to implement non-standard methods (Rivera & Mazak, 2017). Some researchers have also questioned the need for introducing translanguaging when code switching and code mixing already present a framework with which to understand multilingual language use (Conteh, 2018). However, translanguaging is more than switching between codes or languages. It embraces how a multilingual language user merges various aspects of their ‘knowledge, personal histories, surroundings, values, views, their intellectual and physical capacity into one synchronised and expressive performance’ (Wei, 2010, p. 2). Therefore, unlike code-switching, translanguaging is learner-centred, as it emphasises meaning-making in which learners use their repertoires, cultural practices, and ways of knowing (Mbiri-Hungwe, 2023).

In any learning area, learners are often graded and labelled according to their proficiency in the LoLT. Therefore, before learners can fully master the subject-specific content knowledge in any learning area, they should have mastered the LoLT (Charambo, 2022). Translanguaging generally benefits teachers and multilingual learners both in and outside the classroom, however, its underdeveloped pedagogy has hindered its implementation (Canagarajah, 2011;

Conteh, 2018; Oliver et al., 2021; Probyn, 2016). More research has to be conducted into translanguaging's implementation in multilingual contexts as a suitable teaching practice (Conteh, 2018; Nyimbili & Sani Mwanza, 2021; Seals et al., 2020; Ticheloven et al., 2021). Some of the research emphasises the challenges in implementing translanguaging. Nyimbili and Mwanza (2021) conducted a study in which the researchers observed translanguaging practices by Grade 1 teachers. The findings indicated that the teachers and learners in this Zambian classroom faced many challenges in the implementation of translanguaging. The teachers agreed that there was a disparity between the LoLT (standard Cinyanja) and which language the learners were most familiar with (other local dialects spoken in the Lundazi District of Zambia). The teachers observed that there were phonological and phonemic differences between Cinyanja and other local dialects with which the learners were more familiar, and ultimately, this posed challenges. The teachers could speak Cinyanja, but they were not familiar with the learners' home language. They felt that in order for translanguaging to be beneficial they had to be familiar with two languages. When the teachers allowed the learners to translanguage and express themselves in their home language, this proved to be time-consuming and wasted lesson time, as many of the teachers were not familiar with the learners' home language.

In another study by Ticheloven et al. (2021), the teachers agreed that not allowing the learners to use the languages they were most familiar with would lead to learners who were less engaged in a lesson. Ticheloven's (2021) study was comprised of immigrant learners from a school in the Netherlands; the learners and teachers viewed translanguaging as requiring too much effort. The teachers thought that allowing the learners to translanguage wasted lesson time and it hindered the acquisition of the language of schooling, which was necessary for educational achievement. Owing to the school being comprised of several immigrant learners from various backgrounds, the participating learners who were not fluent in the home languages of their peers felt confused when the alternation between languages took place. These learners were, therefore, not in favour of using translanguaging and preferred the LoLT, which everyone could understand.

According to Oliver et al. (2021), pressure is placed on teachers in South Africa to cover the content in a curriculum, and the implementation of translanguaging practices should be done with care. This requires teachers to be flexible in their teaching methods and ways of assessing what learners know. These may prove to be overwhelming for teachers, especially if they have

not received training on how to implement translanguaging practices. As discussed previously, even within the South African context, implementing translanguaging practices can be challenging when curriculum practices are steeped in monoglossic language beliefs.

2.9 Teacher and Learner Perceptions of Translanguaging

Teacher or learner perceptions are the judgements or visual representations they have. For teachers, it could be perceptions they have about their learners (Yuvayapan, 2019). These are often influenced by a teacher's personal history and experiences, which include traditions, culture, family, education, and work (Gorter & Arocena, 2020). Teachers and learners hold common beliefs about cultural and social matters. For teachers, their beliefs regarding pedagogical practices will influence the practices they choose to embrace in their classrooms (Prilutskaya, 2021). A teacher in a linguistically diverse classroom should encourage collaborative learning where teachers and learners co-construct knowledge (Kao, 2023). Teachers need to acknowledge their personal and professional 'ideological points of view, approaches, and values' and consider how these views might affect teaching methods (Prilutskaya, 2021). Once a teacher becomes conscious of a belief, they hold that might be negatively charged, such as the belief that certain languages are superior, the teacher should consider the ways in which these negative views might be changed (Gorter & Arocena, 2020).

The beliefs or perceptions that teachers and learners have towards language are important indicators of whether they will promote multilingual practices. As previously said, some teachers might perceive the use of multiple languages as confusing to learners, and hinder the acquisition of English as the LoLT (Kao, 2023). Learners, along with teachers, might believe that fluency in a language such as English could 'open more doors' in the future, especially when taking tertiary education and the workforce into consideration (Rivera & Mazak, 2017). Learners might also view languages as being separate and do not value translanguaging as it may hinder their fluency in a language such as English (Goodman & Tastanbek, 2020). Baker (2001) and Kao (2013) have also pointed out that the stage at which a child learns an additional language, their background knowledge, and the purpose for learning it will influence the way they view languages and the separation of languages.

However, when teachers embrace translanguaging, they afford learners the opportunity to bring in their full linguistic repertoire, which may also influence learners' perspectives on languages and language use (Flynn et al., 2019). Translanguaging as a practice is inclusive. Learners from

diverse backgrounds and language abilities are able to participate in classroom activities and discussions (Woodley, 2016), ensuring that no learner is left behind. Diversity in the classroom is seen as an asset to build on rather than a burden for the teacher (Woodley, 2016).

Multilingual learners translanguage all the time, depending on the situation at hand and the individual they are communicating with, moving from more casual speech to formal speech (Flynn et al., 2019). Teachers implement translanguaging by incorporating tasks that connect home and classroom literacies (Wei, 2022). When multilingual learners are burdened with beliefs that their home language has little worth in the classroom, learners often experience shame in their home language (Wei, 2024). Learners suffer ‘emotional disempowerment’ when told to not speak in their home language (Prilutskaya, 2021). Rather, their ability to read, speak, and write in multiple languages should be seen as a resource (Kleyn, 2016).

According to Goodman and Tastanbek (2020), teachers often conceal their use of translanguaging practices in the classroom from their coworkers. This is mainly due to the fact that many schools steeped in monoglossic ideas implement one-language policies. However, to ensure that learners understand the task, teachers must alternate between languages (Wei, 2022). More and more teachers in countries in the Global North are beginning to see the academic benefits of being able to read, speak, and write in multiple languages, leading to bilingualism, biculturalism, and biliteracy (Prilutskaya, 2021). However, Woodley (2016) has stated that even teachers in the United States face criticism for using translanguaging in their classrooms. Teachers create translanguaging spaces when the learners and their background knowledge are seen as a resource, and teachers, along with their learners, co-construct meaning (Wei, 2017). A transformative stance on translanguaging holds that no language should be seen as superior to the other and that indigenous languages have value in schools (Wei, 2024). Translanguaging is, therefore, transformative as it returns the value of indigenous languages to the communities and bi/multilingual learners (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016; Prilutskaya, 2021; Wei, 2024).

Holdway and Hitchcock (2018) conducted a workshop in which they introduced teachers to the concept of translanguaging, and helped them to become aware of the language ideologies they might be holding onto. The teachers held a common belief that to translanguage, they needed to know the home language of their learners. They were also of the belief that letting the learners use their home language might result in classroom disruptions and getting

sidetracked from the lesson, or learners not fully grasping the LoLT. The teachers became aware that unequal classroom practices stemmed from their own beliefs and attitudes which may have influenced the learners' ability to learn. By the end of the course, the teachers developed an understanding of the importance of the learners' home language for learning. This points to a need for teachers to first be introduced to the concept of translanguaging and its benefits. By introducing translingual practices, learners might also change their beliefs on home language usage in the classroom.

In Yuvayapan's (2019) study in Turkey, the teachers felt pressured to stick to one language, English. Monolingual language policies set in place by the school prevented the teachers from translanguaging. The teachers would even ignore the learners when they asked questions in Turkish and instructed the learners to stick to English. The teachers felt that having to use Turkish to assist low-performing learners was a burden. However, the teachers could not deny that the use of Turkish alongside English was beneficial to the learners. However, the teachers hid the fact that they translanguaged from their colleagues, due to the pressure they felt to only teach in one language. Al-Bataineh and Gallagher (2018) found similar results with pre-service teacher's language teachers in their UAE study. Those teachers also recognised the benefits of translanguaging for bilingualism and biliteracy development. However, there was opposition as their colleagues discouraged them from implementing such an approach. In another study by Schissel et al. (2018), the language teachers in Mexico had similar views to the teachers in Holdway and Hitchcock's (2018) study. It was believed that if the teachers allowed the use of Spanish in the English language classroom, this would result in the learners not being able to fully grasp English, the language used to test the learners, and they believed that the learners might fail in their responses by mixing-up the two languages. It is a common perception among language teachers that using the home language may hinder the learners' ability to achieve fluency in the LoLT.

In Woodley's (2016) study at a linguistically diverse school in New York City, reading activity questions were translated into four different languages on the whiteboard to enable discussions among the learners. The learners were placed into groups according to the home languages they spoke. They then had discussions with their classmates in which they drew on their background knowledge. This classroom discussion provided spaces for translanguaging where the learners and teacher saw the value in sharing ideas with one another. Duarte (2019) found similar results when his learners were placed in groups according to the languages they spoke at home. This

led to a deeper understanding of the subject content as the learners were scaffolded when they bounced ideas off one another for the task that was given. The learners also expressed the benefits of learning from their classmates. Torpsten's (2018) study was conducted in Sweden, with the participants mostly made up of immigrant learners. The learners were told to use the LoLT alongside their home language. Grouped according to the languages they spoke, they produced a translanguaging written product in both English and Swedish, displaying the two languages side by side. The result of this was a richer understanding of the subject matter as information was transferred from Swedish to the home language. Nagy's (2018) study at a Hungarian school yielded different results. After a reading comprehension exercise was read in English, the teacher questioned the learners in Hungarian and allowed them to answer in Hungarian. Those learners who were less proficient in English enjoyed this as they were able to ask questions and receive answers they could understand. However, those who were more proficient in English were not in favour of the use of Hungarian and found it to be a waste of time. Most of the learners came from backgrounds where monolingual teaching methods were implemented and were of the same opinion that only English should be used in the classroom.

Translanguaging comes naturally to multilingual learners as they learn through scaffolded interactions with their peers (Goodman & Tastanbek, 2020). When translanguaging is implemented in teacher education programmes, teachers enter their classrooms with knowledge of practices on how to guide their multilingual learners (Machado & Gonzales, 2020). By developing a close relationship with learners whose home language, they are not familiar with, teachers are able to carefully think through which tasks they could implement. This way, teachers are also able to focus on what a learner is able to do when it comes to language, instead of on what they cannot do. Wei (2017) suggests that a teacher should be willing to take on the role of a facilitator to ensure that the learners who are not yet proficient in the LoLT do not feel self-conscious about learning a new language. When learners feel comfortable in classrooms, they are more willing to participate in discussions (Blackledge & Creese, 2010).

What the case studies above seem to have in common is that teachers are willing to implement translanguaging pedagogies. However, many face challenges in their attempts to implement translanguaging practices (Liu & Fang, 2020). Challenges that teachers often face are language policies set in place by schools, no direction or knowledge on how translanguaging should be designed and planned in the classroom, and their personal beliefs regarding language

instruction (Prilutskaya, 2021). As previously stated, there is also a concern for the over-reliance on the home language (Liu & Fang, 2020). In addition, as stated in the studies above, teachers face disapproval from their colleagues when they translanguange.

2.10 Literacy Through Drawings

Alphabetical literacy is the notion that letters and groups of letters correspond to individual sounds in words. It is the foundation for reading and writing and is seen as the main goal of early childhood education. Alphabetic literacy is the privileged mode of communication in school practices. However, a growing number of researchers are calling for a perspective that embraces multiple literacies (Jewitt & Kress, 2010), where learners are able to express their understanding not only in the verbal or written mode (Jewitt & Kress, 2010, Kim & Kim, 2016) but are able to bring their background knowledge and literacies to the classrooms which they have acquired from home. The way in which this knowledge is presented should take into consideration the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of learners and teachers (Kendrick & McKay, 2004). If possible, the way in which a language is taught should focus on the learners' strengths and preferred modes of representation (Kim & Kim, 2016). As teachers seek to reflect the diversity in their classrooms in what they teach and in the topics they explore, they must also embrace the diverse ways in which learners acquire knowledge and represent that knowledge (Phatudi, 2016).

One method to encourage a good mastery of a second language is to allow learners to express what they know by drawing pictures (Phatudi, 2016). Young children enjoy drawing and do it willingly (Mackenzie, 2014), using drawing and writing as a means of communication and being understood by others. As the first step in learning communication skills, children should be encouraged to draw and write at the same time; this way, they become more confident in their writing than if they are taught these skills separately (Mackenzie, 2014). In this way, a broad perception of literacies can be applied to language teaching, end the deficit views of emergent bilinguals, and enhance their cultural, linguistic, and diverse modes of representation (Kim & Kim, 2016). Few scholars have investigated the way that children's drawings are able to represent their prior knowledge and understanding of a particular topic, such as reading and acquisition of an additional language (Bartoszeck & Tunnicliffe, 2017; Bland, 2012; Kendrick & McKay, 2002; Kim & Kim, 2016; Peterson & Friedrich, 2023).

Drawing is seen as one of children's many representational tools (Peterson & Friedrich, 2023). This activity acknowledges children as skilled meaning-makers and supports the many ways in which children become literate in their social-cultural worlds. Children make use of metaphorical symbols available to them and give these symbols a variety of new meanings (Kendrick & McKay, 2002). What is consistently shown in research is that learners' drawings are able to display what they knew (prior learning) or learnt (new knowledge) about a particular topic, which challenges the dominant view that verbal and written modes are the primary modes of representation (Peterson & Friedrich, 2023). Drawings also advance knowledge of the role that visual memory (the ability to recall what the eye has seen) plays in human understanding of the world.

Learners' drawings have unrealised potential to share with others as to how they bring in their personal experiences with learning to read and write (Bartoszeck & Tunnicliffe, 2017). Standardised forms of assessments usually involve reading textbooks and answering questions, filling in worksheets, report writing, or oral responses. Unlike these standardised methods, children's drawings provide insight for teachers and parents alike into the world of children, such as what sense they have made of the complex world of learning in their lives both inside and outside school (Kendrick & McKay, 2004). Drawings show us how children develop concepts in their minds in a natural way, a view of literacy that is not recognised by standardised methods of assessment (Bland, 2012). This study's definition of literacy goes beyond school-based literacies, bringing in home literacies and considering various forms of representation, including visual images (drawings). Children's drawings show the multifaceted ways in which they understand information that is being relayed to them and how they choose to process that information (Bland, 2012). Moreover, the way children view themselves or others in relation to learning is often shown in their drawings (Bartoszeck & Tunnicliffe, 2017).

In a study by Kendrick and McKay (2004), learners in Grades 1 and 2 in Canada were asked to draw a picture in relation to reading or writing done at home or school. The study showed that the learners used their drawings to express their understanding of reading and writing, which they otherwise would not have been able to comprehend if only the verbal or written mode had been used. Participating parents and teachers were surprised by the learners' ability to express their ideas clearly through their drawings, something they had not seen being done

before in the classroom or at home. The drawings expressed meaning clearer than their usual verbal and written expressions.

In another study by Kim and Kim (2016), a Korean immigrant family in New York took part in a literacy project in which a storybook on dinosaurs was read in English and then translated into Korean. After the book had been read, the children were asked to draw their portrayal of the dinosaur era on paper. They were able to make their own authorial decisions regarding their drawings. The researchers noticed that when these drawings were made, sound effects, gestures, and motions were used. While some learners were drawing their dinosaurs, they made roaring sounds that they believed dinosaurs made. Importantly, the participating children used drawings as a mode for making meaning and for understanding the storybook they read. This was also evident in the current study where, although learners were below the required Grade 3 level for reading and writing, they were still able to convey their understanding of the comprehension passage through their drawings (presented in Chapter 5).

In a recent study by Peterson and Friedrich (2023), researchers and teachers in Canada designed, implemented, and refined methods for evaluating and supporting young children aged four to six years in their development of vocabulary and writing skills. The young children were asked to draw and write something they enjoyed about their family or friends. They would then present their drawings and writings back to the researcher and teachers. The children first planned their family interactions by writing them down. Then, in their drawings, they ascribed notable features to the people, objects, and animals they characterised in their pictures. Before starting their drawings, they first explained what the drawing would be about to the researchers, and while drawing, they gave details on the characteristics of certain people, animals, objects, and places that were part of their stories. One can conclude from this that children express themselves through multiple modes, not just through the verbal or written mode. These studies confirm that learners express meaning through various modes, which include drawings and gestures, and in multiple languages.

2.11 Remedial Education and Theories of Reading Acquisition

2.11.1 Remedial Education

Due to overcrowding in schools in South Africa, teachers find it difficult to develop one-on-one relationships with their learners and to give individualised attention, which is required, particularly for learners who lag behind (Schwartz, 2012). When teaching and learning occurs

in a small group of individuals, understanding of the subject content is facilitated, and the relationship between the teacher and learners improves (Yolak et al., 2019). Learners also feel more confident to ask questions and receive answers to their questions in more intimate spaces (Schwartz, 2012). These spaces create an environment for increased understanding of information, revision of work, and consolidation of what was learnt (Hooijer et al., 2021). During these spaces, learners might gain a better understanding of the knowledge they lack, which leads to better learning and an improvement in their results. However, it should be noted that learner performance also depends on lesson quality and not only on the classroom size and on how much time is spent on learning. Furthermore, time spent on extra lessons after school might not necessarily improve learner performance. The extra lessons might not get to the root of what the learner is struggling with, as learning also needs to take place from a holistic approach where the home and parental involvement also play a role (Hooijer et al., 2021).

Owing to inequalities in educational opportunities in South Africa in relation to its history under apartheid rule, there is a need for alternative methods that accommodate learners with diverse learning needs. Foundation Phase learners from low-income backgrounds in South Africa continue to perform poorly and as previously mentioned, have not acquired basic literacy and numeracy skills to prosper in Grade 4. Interventions aimed at improving learning for low-performing learners should become part of educational policies that are aligned with the curriculum, teacher training, teaching materials, and the LoLT (Schwartz, 2012). Strategies to accommodate low-performing learners include grade repetition, private tutoring, and automatic promotion of learners to the next grade (Hooijer et al., 2021).

Remedial programmes play an important role in improving education outcomes of low-performing learners of different ages in diverse and disadvantaged environments (Schwartz, 2012). Implementing extra academic support in poorly resourced school systems can be very challenging in terms of human and financial resources. Therefore, there are few of these remedial programmes in low-income countries such as South Africa, and their benefits have not been fully researched (Amod, 2017). In South Africa, most remedial schools are private institutions with only parents from higher-income households being able to afford the fees. In one study, Amod (2017) looked into the effectiveness of a remedial intervention programme in developing the planning skills of Grade 4 and Grade 5 learners at a private remedial school in Johannesburg. This study showed that a remedial-based intervention assisted the learner participants in the experimental group. They were taught to be less impulsive by first thinking

of an answer instead of blurting it out, and they developed critical-thinking skills when executing a task or activity given by their teacher. If time is not spent on teaching reading in a systematic way inside and outside the classroom, learners will not attain comprehension skills (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016).

Acquiring the ability to read serves as the foundation for successful learning, yet many learners in Third World countries have still not developed good reading skills to achieve comprehension skills (US AID, 2020). Many South African learners struggle to read for meaning, with international assessment results showing that learners in Grades 4, 5, and 6 have not yet learnt to read with comprehension (Breton-Carbonneau et al., 2012). An effective reader reads with comprehension by engaging with the content of the text.

For a learner to develop comprehension skills, they must first acquire vocabulary and decoding skills (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016). Vocabulary is something that comes naturally to children as they engage in conversations with others, hear words from adults, and imitate those words and sounds (Breton-Carbonneau et al., 2012). Through talking and listening to others, children hear the sounds of certain words and develop phonological awareness. Phonological awareness involves knowing the sounds of words, that words are made up of sounds, different sounds make up different words, and that we blend sounds to form words (READ, 2019). Phonological awareness is important for young children as they learn to associate written words with sounds. Decoding thus consists of letter recognition and phonemic awareness (READ, 2019).

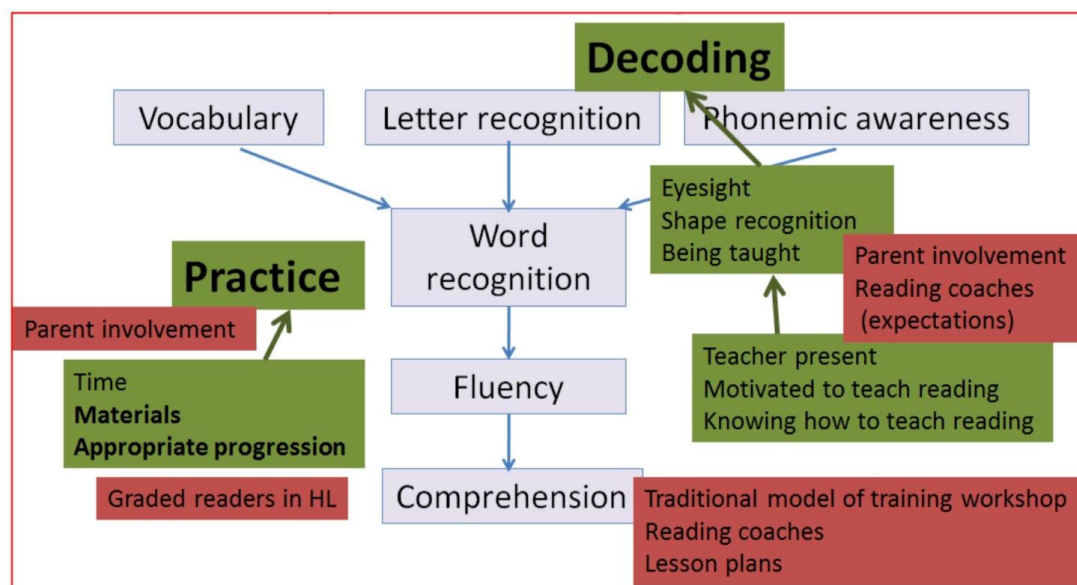
Children learn how to speak naturally, but the same cannot be said for reading – reading must be taught systematically, as decoding does not come naturally to young children (EGRA report, 2017). Reading is the product of vocabulary and decoding. Even if a child has good vocabulary skills but are not taught to decode words, they will not be able to read (EGRA report, 2017). Letter recognition and phonemic awareness are mastered through systematic teaching and consistent practice (Castles et al., 2018). Phonics establishes comprehension skills by allowing the learner to make connections between an unfamiliar printed word and a familiar sound in oral vocabulary. Phonics supports the learner's ability to read words automatically, and they do not have to spend time on the pronunciation or decoding of the word but can rather focus on its meaning (Castles et al., 2018).

This leads to the next stage of reading acquisition: word recognition. When a child progresses from simple sounds to more complex sounds, word recognition comes naturally which then

leads to reading fluency (EGRA report, 2017). Only once the child has reached the ability to recognise words automatically and sound these words out with fluency will they achieve the ultimate goal of reading, which is comprehension (EGRA report, 2017). The strong empirical relationship between oral reading fluency and comprehension demonstrates this point. Children require teachers who are qualified and capable of delivering reading instruction in a systematic way, without which the basics of decoding will not be acquired (Cilliers & Bloch, 2017). Additionally, for fluency in decoding to occur, children require suitable graded materials and the discipline to practise reading at home (Cilliers & Bloch, 2017). Figure 2.1 indicates how reading acquisition occurs in children through a step-by-step process. Many learners in South Africa have gaps in their acquisition of reading and comprehension skills. For many, the essential foundations have not yet been laid.

Figure 2. 1

Theoretical Diagram of How Reading Acquisition Occurs



Note. Source: (EGRA report, 2017)

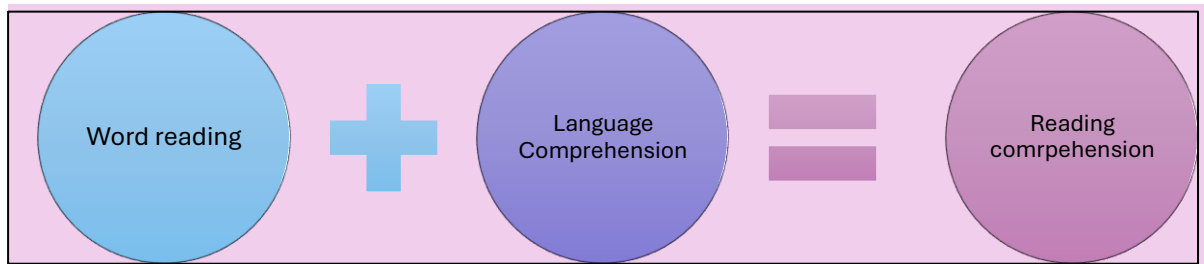
2.11.2 The Simple View of Reading

The science of reading framework states that even though children learn how to talk naturally, the same cannot be said about reading (Goodwin & Jimenez, 2021). Learners require specific instruction to build the neural pathways (series of connected neurons that send signals from one part of the brain to the other) of the brain and teach them the skills they need to read (Hallowell, 2023).

Two theories for teaching reading systematically are The Simple View of Reading and The Reading Rope. According to the figure 2.2 below, the simple view of reading can be seen as a mathematical formula: a learner's word reading plus language comprehension equals reading comprehension, with each part consisting of different skills (Hallowell, 2023). Figure 2.2 represents the simple view of a reading framework.

Figure 2. 2

Representation of the Simple View of Reading Framework



Word reading is the ability of a learner to identify a word on a page and then sound it out (Catts, 2018). It consists of four main skills: phonological awareness, decoding, orthographic mapping, and sight words (McGraw Hill, 2024).

- Phonological awareness is the skill to recognise and manipulate sounds in spoken language. What sounds do you hear in the word 'cat'? (/c/ /a/ /t/)
- Sight words are common words that learners recognise instantly without sounding them out.
- Decoding is translating written words in the sounds they make. What do the letters c-a-t spell? Decoding requires knowledge of letters and sounds (that is, phonics).
- Orthographic mapping is connecting the spelling of words to their pronunciations and meaning. The learner can read and understand the word 'cat'.

Language comprehension describes learners' ability to understand and communicate with language (Catts, 2018). This includes skills that learners build as the teacher asks questions before, during, and after read-aloud story sessions. Language comprehension is what, how, and why learners read. Language comprehension is made up of vocabulary, background knowledge, language structure and literacy knowledge, and verbal reasoning (Hallowell, 2023):

- **Vocabulary:** learners' ability to understand what words mean; for instance, learners being able to answer the question, 'What is a dog?'
- **Background knowledge:** learners' understanding of the concepts they are about to read based on their home literacy and prior learning; for instance, learners being able to answer the question, 'What do you know about dogs?'
- **Language structure:** learners' knowledge of the rules for building words and sentences. It also includes learners' ability to recognise differences between similar meanings. For instance, if the prefix 'il-' means 'not', what does 'illegal' mean? In the Foundation Phase, language structure includes knowledge about nouns, verbs, and how to describe them (that is, adjectives and adverbs).
- **Literacy knowledge:** learners' understanding of the differences between letters and words. They know how to read across the page from the left to the right and can identify the different types of texts, including differences between informational and literary texts. For example, in the Foundation Phase, learners should be able to recognise that a specific text is a recipe, poem, story, letter, and so on.
- **Verbal reasoning:** learners' ability to think deeply about and draw conclusions beyond what is actually said in the text. This is important during story time.

Reading comprehension is the ability to process written texts, understand its meaning, and integrate this meaning with what the learner already knows (Catts, 2018). This skill allows learners to read for enjoyment. Reading comprehension consists of summarising, sequencing, inferencing, comparing/contrasting, and drawing conclusions (Hallowell, 2023):

- **Summarising** is the learners' ability to identify the most important events in a story. Therefore, summarising requires the ability to understand and remember the sequence of events.
- **Sequencing** is the learners' ability to retell key parts of the story in the same sequence that they occur; for instance, what happens at the beginning, middle, and end of a story?
- **Inferencing** is the learners' ability to draw inferences from reading a text (read between the lines) and make calculated guesses or predictions based on the available

information. This also refers to a learner's ability to infer the message, meaning or moral of the story. In other words, what do we learn from this story or text?

- Comparing and contrasting are the learners' ability to find similarities and differences in a text. An example would be to read different versions of the Cinderella story (the Western fairy tale Cinderella, and Natiki and Chinye, two African Cinderella stories). The similarities between all the versions include a young girl as the main character of the story who is guided by an older and wiser woman and who wins a prized possession in the end. Comparing and contrasting may also include comparing the protagonist (good character) with the antagonist (bad character).
- Drawing conclusions is the learners' ability to pick up on textual clues to draw conclusions that are hinted at in the text but are not clearly stated (to read between the lines).

The simple view of reading formula makes it clear that for a child to have solid reading comprehension skills, both word reading and language comprehension skills have to be robust (McGraw Hill, 2024), and for intervention programmes aimed at learners who are struggling in their ability to read to be effective, a learner's particular weakness, be it word reading or language comprehension, has to be addressed. Word reading and language comprehension skills can be addressed separately for both assessment and teaching, although both are required to achieve reading comprehension (McGraw Hill, 2024).

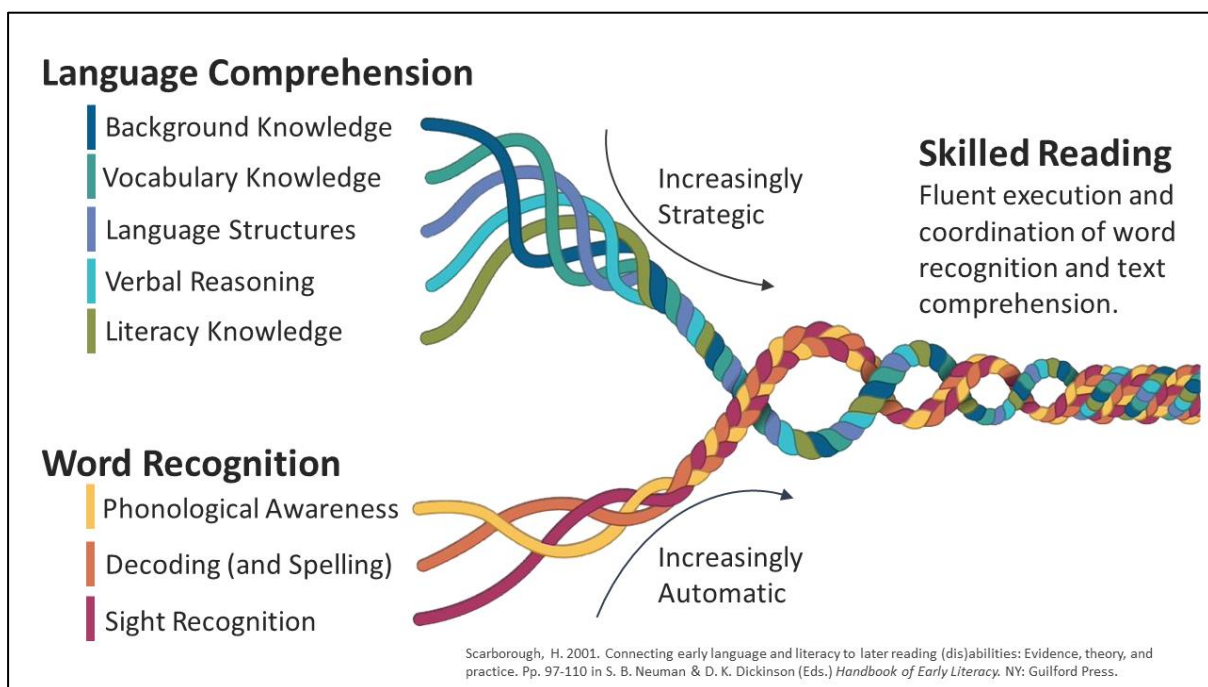
2.11.3 The Reading Rope

The reading rope, according to Scarborough (2001), is a model in which the many strands or components that make up reading are woven into a skilled reading process. This helps teachers understand what it takes to create skilled readers. As learners develop their abilities through explicit teaching and practise, these skills become more instinctive and integrated (Scarborough, 2001). Through practise, the threads of skills twist tighter and tighter, making it difficult to identify among them because they all become interconnected (McGraw Hill, 2024). As the threads become tighter and the naturalness of the skills increases, learners' fluency and comprehension improve, and they become progressively more proficient at reading (Hallowell, 2023). The goal for teachers is to assist learners in progressing from the left side of the reading rope to the right side (see Figure 2.3).

The reading rope model comprises two main sections: word recognition and language comprehension. Each of these two components make up various smaller strands. When these various strands are knitted together, they become the rope that represents the complete process of skilled reading. All the components are interwoven and interdependent. If one strand is weak, it affects the entire rope (and the reader) as a whole. Word recognition and language comprehension become more integrated (automatic or instinctive and strategic) the more skilled the learner becomes at reading.

Figure 2. 3

Figure Representing The Reading Rope Theory by Scarborough (2001)

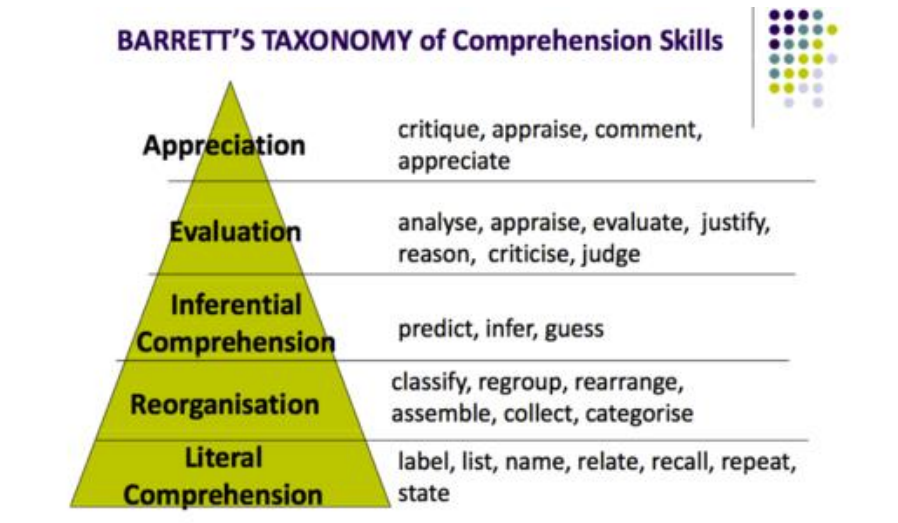


2.11.4 Barrett's Taxonomy

Barrett's taxonomy of comprehension skills was used in this study as a guide to determine the required level for Grade 3 for reading and writing (see Figure 2.4). Through the intervention activities, the researcher was able to determine whether learners were at the required level for comprehension skills and what was lacking. The results are presented in Chapter 5.

Figure 2. 4

Representation of Barrett's Taxonomy of Comprehension Skills



Source: (Amalya et al., 2020)

The taxonomy is divided into five levels: literal comprehension, reorganisation, inferential comprehension, evaluation, and appreciation (Amalya et al., 2020).

- Literal comprehension is information that is obviously stated in the text. This involves naming, stating, identifying, listing points, describing and so on.
- Reorganisation requires the organisation of information explicitly stated in the text such as summarising the main points or stating similarities and differences.
- Inferential skills are the learner's engagement with information explicitly stated in the text, such as explaining the main ideas, making comparisons, and drawing predictions.
- Evaluation is the questions that deal with judgements concerning value and worth. This requires that learners make judgements based on facts and opinions, logic, and reasoning.
- Appreciation refers to whether a learner appreciated what was read. Did they identify with any of the characters or incidents that took place? Did they appreciate the writer's use of language and imagery?

Considering these various remedial and reading strategies becomes even more crucial in multilingual contexts, as discussed below.

2.12 African Multilingualism

Areas considered multilingual are those where multi-ethnic groups of people are relocated, usually considered areas of settlement where people from different linguistic backgrounds have settled at one time or the other (Sagna & Hantgan, 2021). Africa is known as a multilingual continent where languages are diverse and numerous (Heugh & Stroud, 2020). The African continent is home to some of the most multilingual countries in the world. The Monomotapa civilisation of the 16th century in Africa, which is present-day Angola, Zambia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, was a linguistically diverse society whose inhabitants depended on agriculture and trade to make a living (Amfo & Anderson, 2019) and spoke different languages in order to trade with one another. The many languages they spoke shared grammatical structures. People in this society viewed their languages and communities as being interconnected and embraced notions of ubuntu (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2023). Many in Africa naturally become multilingual through social interactions from a young age to adulthood (Amfo & Anderson, 2019; Heugh & Stroud, 2019). Multilingualism also spread through borders which became more porous and where individuals encountered speakers of other languages on trade routes (Bokamba, 2015; Lüpke, 2015). Multilingualism also increases when many leave their homesteads in search of job opportunities in larger cities (Bokamba, 2015).

Countries in Africa that were previously colonised by Britain, Belgium, and Germany were in favour of African languages being used as the LoLT in the early years of schooling. Many countries in Africa have had a practice of favouring indigenous languages in teaching and learning (Djite, 2008; Heugh & Stroud, 2019). However, languages such as English, French, and Portuguese and in some parts German, are still being used as the LoLT at schools (Heugh, 2017; Kiramba, 2015). Scholars, legislators, and other stakeholders have been preoccupied with the issue of how the European languages continue to play a significant role in the societies of their former colonial African countries, especially in the areas of work and schooling (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2023). Multilingualism is seen as a burden which causes learners to become confused. Imposing colonial languages on African societies was regarded as the resolution for the multiple indigenous languages found in Africa but it is believed to cause confusion (Ndungo & Mwangi, 2014).

Societies in Africa do not differentiate between the languages they speak, nor do they place them in sub-categories of first or additional language. Instead, people grow up learning many languages at the same time in a natural manner, without following a particular order (Mbiri-Hungwe, 2021). Shikgeki (2013) found this to be true in his study on language use in the West Ugandan town of Hoima. Many people in this town spoke at least three or four languages. The respondents in his study spoke Nyoro, the local dialect spoken in Hoima. However, they also stated that they spoke Ganda and Swahili, two of the other major languages spoken in Uganda. This phenomenon is not unique to Uganda but is present in many countries in East Africa and West Africa, as well as South Africa.

African indigenous education has always taken a communal approach to learning, and some researchers believe that Western schooling has the ability to destroy this communal way of learning (Brock-Utne, 2016). There is a notion that Western knowledge is superior and other knowledge systems are unscientific (Ngubane & Makua, 2022). However, an area in which Western knowledge is lacking is its denial of the communal aspect of learning (Ned, 2019; Shava & Manyike, 2018). Owing to the continued influence of colonisation, indigenous languages and ways of knowing have always been excluded from the political and public sphere (Mbiri-Hungwe, 2021). Indigenous knowledge systems have also been excluded from schooling, and learners are not afforded enough opportunities to bring their personal histories and cultural backgrounds into the classroom (Ngubane & Makua, 2022). With indigenous ways of knowing not being valued in classrooms, learners often lose pride in their cultural heritage (Heugh & Stroud, 2020).

A culturally responsive pedagogy will always take the linguistic and cultural background of the learner into consideration (Heugh & Stroud, 2019; Sagna & Hantgan, 2021). African multilingualism promotes diversity, with people being able to celebrate their cultural differences and exist in harmony with one another (Bokamba, 2015). When multilingualism is not encouraged, some members of society who are more fluent in indigenous languages may experience a sense of isolation for not being able to take part in social interactions or have access to job or promotional opportunities (Heugh et al., 2020). Educational role players and policymakers should implement strategies aimed at preserving and protecting Africa's indigenous languages so that these languages do not die out (Heugh et al., 2020; Ngubane & Makua, 2022).

2.13 Diversity of South African Classrooms

South Africa is known for the presence of different ethnicities, religious convictions, and cultural backgrounds. Being so diverse, the country was nicknamed the ‘rainbow nation’. Not only is South Africa diverse in terms of its people, but also in its languages (Ngubane & Makua, 2022). The diversity of languages in South Africa grew when people migrated from other regions of Africa to Southern Africa. Multilingualism in South Africa is necessary for economic and community development (US AID, 2020). Many people in South Africa speak up to three languages and do not draw any distinction between the first or additional language (Fawole & Pillay, 2019). This makes the development and implementation of language policies complex, especially in education, where non-indigenous languages such as English and Afrikaans still play an important role (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016). This also affects how the learning of additional languages is understood and interpreted, especially in an environment where multiple languages are used (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Balfour, 2019).

South Africa’s official languages include nine indigenous African dialects. These fall into the Niger-Congo language group but are also divided into smaller groups of languages (Lor, 2012). The Nguni-Tsonga language group includes isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, siSwati, and Xitsonga (Alexander, 2001). The Sotho-Makua-Venda language group includes Sesotho, Sepedi, Setswana, and Tshivenda (Alexander, 2001). South Africa’s imported languages, English and Afrikaans, fall into the Indo-European language family (Lor, 2012). Both languages rest on the West Germanic branch of the Germanic language family. The nine indigenous language groups possess similarities in grammatical rules and phrases; hence, speakers of different languages are able to communicate with one another easily (Alexander, 2001). The previous apartheid government separated these language groups into different homesteads; however, now, in post-apartheid South Africa, these language groups have come into close exchange with one another (Lor, 2012). A way forward for the future would be to bring the different language groups together instead of continuing with the restrictions created in the past (Sefotho & Makalela 2017).

In South Africa, there are learners, for example, who take Sepedi as Home Language at school, but at home, they speak Setswana or isiZulu with their parents or caregivers (Guzula et al., 2016). Learners and teachers communicate throughout the day using several different languages (Maseko & Mkhize, 2019), with the main resource of learning English for learners in the classroom being the teacher. Many teachers in South African classrooms are able to

communicate in English. However, they are not proficient in it as they, too, have a home language that is not English and, in some cases, a home language that is different from the learners (Cilliers & Bloch, 2017). Many teachers do not have professional proficiency in English but are expected to teach in English or to teach English as a subject, which is often damaging to learners as they copy what the teachers write straight from the board (Guzula et al., 2016; Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2020). When learners feel that their ability in English is lacking, but they need to pass the subject, they often resort to memorising phrases instead of meaningfully engaging with the content (Kiramba, 2015).

Probyn (2001) conducted a study in South Africa to investigate high school teachers' perceptions of teaching English as an additional language. The teachers voiced their frustration that the learners did not engage with the content on a deeper level, there was no collaboration, and often classroom engagement was lacking. In instances like this, the LoLT can become a barrier to learning for additional language learners (Mwinda & van der Walt, 2015). At teacher training institutions in South Africa and Africa as a continent, language teachers are not adequately trained to teach English as a subject (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2023). Teachers in these contexts are not prepared for how demanding linguistically diverse classrooms might be nor are they trained to teach using English as the LoLT (Mwinda & van der Walt, 2015). Pre-service teachers need to receive more training on how to cater for the diverse learning needs of their learners, especially in linguistically diverse classrooms (Ndungo & Mwangi, 2014). Many are aware that classrooms in South Africa have a diverse landscape made up of different cultures and languages (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Balfour, 2019). However, diversity in these classrooms also refers to intellectual ability, learning styles, learning pace, gender, race, and socioeconomic background (Phatudi, 2014).

Poor reading skills in South Africa cannot be exclusively attributed to second language instruction. It was found that learners in South Africa could speak but not read in their home language (Phatudi, 2014). This was also evident in the PIRLS results of 2016 and 2021, when it was shown that learners struggled to read in the indigenous languages. Teaching and learning should take a more holistic approach, with different aspects of a learner's background being taken into consideration. Diversity in South African classrooms has increased, especially when it comes to language, race, culture, class and gender differences, which further compound the barriers to learning (Chisholm, 2012).

2.14 Ubuntu Education

Ubuntu is often described as a philosophy and worldview that places an emphasis on how people depend on one another. This way of communal thinking is a way of life for many of the indigenous groups of people and languages in Southern Africa (Bras, 2021; Ngubane & Makua, 2022). The philosophy of ubuntu is expressed through the traditional Zulu proverb which says ‘ubuntu ngumuntu ngabantu’, which means that ‘a person is a person through other people’, or ‘I am because we are’ (Bras, 2021). The concept of ubuntu – ‘I am because you are, you are because we are’ – illustrates that education in African societies is considered a communal practice (Ngubane & Makua, 2022). Ubuntu is a way of life conceptualised in Africa to mean selfless services for others, caring for others, and protecting fellow human beings (Ngubane & Makua, 2021; Seehawer & Breidlid, 2021). Traditionally, education was an informal process, and every adult was a teacher who passed on knowledge to the younger generation (Oviawe, 2016). The lack of formal education is not an indication that teaching and learning were not taking place or that education was not an important characteristic of these communities (Ngubane & Makua, 2022). Education was more directly relevant to the culture of the child’s society (Brock-Utne, 2018).

The concept of ubuntu is important in unifying human beings in any organisation, including schools (Omodan & Tsotetsi, 2019). The school community is made up of teachers and learners, who should work hand in hand to fulfil the goals and objectives of the curriculum, but kinship, collectivism, communalism, spirituality, and social and interpersonal relationships are needed to maintain effectiveness in the school system (Omodon & Tsotetsi, 2019). A key principle relating to ubuntu education in the CAPS document speaks of the value of indigenous knowledge systems and the preservation of South Africa’s rich history and heritage. However, there has been little or no clarity as to how these indigenous knowledge systems are to be incorporated into the curriculum, which has resulted in a failure to integrate them (Machimana, 2021).

The African saying ‘It takes a village to raise a child’ emphasises that the socialisation and education of children stem from a communal perspective in African societies (Ned, 2019). Indigenous languages in Africa are known for their richness in folk tales, riddles, music, singing, games, stories, rhymes, and dance, and these make inculcating communication and social skills more meaningful and enjoyable to the child during early childhood education (Ndungo & Mwangi, 2014; Shava & Manyike, 2018). Folk tales allow children to not only

engage with the characters in the stories but also to relate to them socially and culturally (Chimuse, 2021). Other indigenous activities include proverbs and riddles, which serve as incentives to expand the critical and imaginative capabilities of children. Riddles develop and sharpen the reasoning skills of children when they search for solutions (Etieyibo, 2017). Ubuntu education encourages the usage of songs and poetry in the home language and their integration into lessons. Learners can be encouraged to use their home language to express themselves and answer questions, and this can aid in knowledge transfer (Ngubane & Makua, 2022). Teachers should not worry that the entire lesson might take place in the home language and deviate from the LoLT. Instead, they should base their choice of stories on the interests of the learners and the knowledge and personal experiences they bring to the classroom (Phatudi, 2016).

A pedagogy and curriculum centred on the philosophy of ubuntu would help to combat the long-standing ill effects of colonialism in Africa (Ngubane & Makua, 2022; Oviawe, 2016). Indigenous languages and related indigenous knowledge are essential components of the identity of indigenous peoples (Shava & Manyike, 2018). The goal of ubuntu education or indigenous education has been to develop creativity and critical thinking, which is also the aim of a translanguaging pedagogy. In ubuntu communities, creative and critical thinking are developed when children participate in activities that involve storytelling in which they reflect on right or wrong behaviour (Etieyibo, 2017). Indigenous education prepares learners for their adult responsibilities at home (Schwinge, 2017), which also aids in preparing learners for life in the community as opposed to life outside the community. Importantly, indigenous education is not centred on facts but on becoming a valuable member of society by taking all aspects of community life into consideration (Ned, 2019).

The ubuntu perspective of education takes on a multilingual and multimodal approach that opens up a space in which learners can engage not only with one another but also with the community (Makalela, 2017). The language the learner learns from birth in the community is an important tool for communication, cultural identity, and empowerment. Proficiency in the home language expedites the learning of another language (Seehawer & Breidlid, 2021) and encouraging a love for reading in the home language can positively affect a learner's ability to read in another language. A good reader in the first language becomes a good reader in the second language (Phatudi, 2016). Well-developed language skills in the mother tongue help learners to decipher differences and similarities with the LoLT. This space allows them to draw

on their previous knowledge and entire linguistic repertoire. Heugh (2017) suggests that there is a need to preserve community and local involvement in education; when schools are removed from centralised education authorities, local communities are more likely to get involved. This move entails offering stronger support for developing spaces in which indigenous languages can be preserved in education (Heugh, 2017).

Globally, English is fast replacing local languages, even in domains such as the home; there is evidence that learners should be encouraged to use the mother tongue at home, as it is generally transmitted to environments outside the home (UNESCO 1953, 2003). There is a need to preserve community and local involvement in education. With local knowledge becoming a part of the school curriculum, learners will feel a sense of pride in their indigenous languages and their cultural heritage (Schwinge, 2017).

According to Machimana (2020), learners on the African subcontinent perform poorly in reading and literacy because their indigenous values and knowledge systems are undervalued. Applying pedagogic methods in which learners regurgitate information without linking it to their prior knowledge leads to a dissociation between learners' 'lived experiences' and the knowledge learnt at school (Machimana, 2020; Seehawer & Breidlid, 2021). This has led Makalela (2017) to question the gap that exists between school content and the lived experiences of the learners' communities. Thus, the problem is not the variety of knowledge that learners bring to class but that this knowledge and underlying epistemologies are not being given recognition, value, or being put to use in classrooms (Sagna & Hantgan, 2021). Learners in Southern Africa enter school with rich cultural knowledge that can be brought into a classroom activity where individual learners are able to participate and bring in background knowledge. However, curricula worldwide have become standardised with a Western knowledge worldview (Seehawer & Breidlid, 2021).

In a study by Seehawer and Breidlid (2021), a Science teacher in Makhanda, Eastern Cape, integrated indigenous education into a Grade 6 Science lesson. The topic was the solar system. The teacher handed out worksheets to the learners discussing the threat of the harmful rays of the sun. The teacher thought that this would be an appropriate subject to integrate with indigenous education, as there was an assumption that learners and their families were applying indigenous methods of sun protection. The learners had to ask their families and communities about different measures for protection against the sun. The teacher wanted the learners to ask

their grandparents what sun protection they might have used. A learner answered ‘umthoba’. The teacher then explained that umthoba was a traditional herb from a tree or a stone that was mixed with water to become a paste that could be applied to the skin. This explanation from the teacher was accompanied by vivid further explanations, conversations, and answers from the class. The learners also discussed the answers amongst themselves in isiXhosa, the main language spoken in the Eastern Cape in South Africa. From this case study, we can see how a discussion on indigenous practices created an engaging classroom environment in which the learners wanted to answer in their home languages as well.

2.15 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the literature on how the creation of translanguaging spaces is beneficial to learners. Translanguaging as a pedagogy and practice has many benefits for multilingual learners. The practice of using one language as input and another language as output has the potential to increase and maximise understanding for learners. The literature also indicates that translanguaging has not been without opposition. Teachers and learners are often not in favour of using translanguaging practices. However, by attending workshops on translanguaging, teachers might see the benefits of translanguaging and be encouraged to incorporate translanguaging practices in their classrooms. Once learners see the value that their home language can bring to the lesson, they gain a sense of pride in their linguistic and cultural heritage. The literature also explores theories of reading and how translanguaging as a practice is closely linked to literacy. Learning takes place between and beyond the different modes of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and these modes include gesturing and drawings. A common finding from the case studies in the literature is that through the creation of translanguaging spaces, learner engagement increases. In the following chapter, the theoretical framework for this study is addressed, which delves deeper into the theoretical underpinnings of a translanguaging space and how this space can be implemented in the classroom.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework

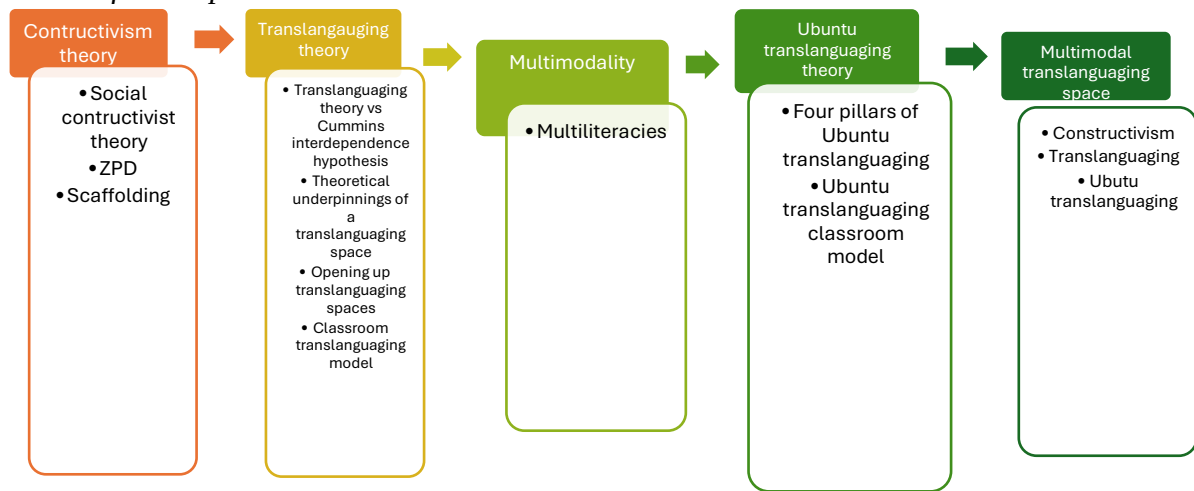
3.1 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is what researchers use to guide them as they formulate research questions on a particular topic (Maree, 2012). The framework encompasses a selection of theories chosen by the researcher for the assumptions they share which are applicable to a specific study. The framework is also used as a guideline to relay the findings of the study, whether the findings agree or disagree with the chosen theories. In this study, social constructivism, translanguaging theory, multimodality, and ubuntu translanguaging were merged in the theoretical framework as these theories shared certain assumptions and concepts. The common underlying assumptions of these theories are that learning is the result of a social process that produces a knowledge product and that learners learn through interactions such as group work and scaffolding. The latter takes place across different modes including written, oral, aural, visual, spatial and tactile modes, and through multiple languages. The theories place an emphasis on the creation of a space in which learning takes place across a variety of modes such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

These common underlying assumptions were used to design an intervention in which the learners engaged in a space that incorporated the use of multiple modes (visual, drawings, and writings) and languages (home language and LoLT). This space allowed the participating indigenous South African learners to work in cooperative groups and to incorporate their background knowledge and experiences into the intervention activities. The theories used in the study are conceptualised in the literature and have been successfully used by fellow researchers. The chosen theories framed the researcher's assumptions, helping to shape the findings of the study, as presented in Chapters 5 and 6 (Imenda, 2014). The framework of the theories and their contribution to the design of a translanguaging space are discussed in this section.

Figure 3. 1

Outline for Chapter 3



3.2 Constructivism Theory

Constructivism as a learning theory emphasises the role that learners actively play in the construction of their knowledge (Barton, 2001). Learners are not merely passive recipients of knowledge but are taught to reflect on their experiences, create mental representations, and know in which situations they are required to apply background knowledge (Fernando & Marikar, 2017). The goal of constructivism is to promote deeper learning and understanding of the subject matter. Learners do this by discovering new information and then comparing that information against old information they have already acquired (Bada & Olusegun, 2015). They then reflect on what they believe and even discard some of the new information as irrelevant (Hein, 1991). In this way, learners actively transform their worlds and do not merely conform to them (Turuk, 2008). Learning is also influenced by the context in which learners find the ideas that are being taught and how these ideas influence their attitudes and beliefs (Bada & Olusegun, 2015).

For learners to become active participants in knowledge construction, they have to ask questions, explore new topics, and assess what they already know (Fernando & Marikar, 2017). Teaching practices from the constructivist view of learning include active techniques to acquire new knowledge such as experiments, giving learners a specific task that is aimed at solving a problem in their community (Bada & Olusegun, 2015). Learners then reflect on and talk about what they are going to do and how their understanding of a certain topic is changing. The

teacher's job is to help learners understand the concepts underpinning the activity and then guide learners to expand on their understanding of the topic. This knowledge is also co-constructed and further expanded through social interactions with others (Barton, 2001; Fernando & Marikar, 2017; Suhendi, 2018). Learners learn language by listening and talking to teachers, parents, and fellow learners and by internalising the language of others into their own world or schemas.

A constructivist principle to learning involves a focus not just on subject content but on the learner as well (Hein, 1991). An emphasis is placed on the background knowledge, cultural histories, and the lived experiences of learners. Teachers can foster this by allowing learners to interact with sensory data by affording them opportunities to see, hear, touch, and smell to create their own ideas of the world (Onuf, 2012; Pouliot, 2004).

Learners acquire new knowledge as they interact with others which can shape the convictions and values they hold (Onuf, 2012; Pouliot, 2004). In a schoolroom embracing a constructivist pedagogy, teachers have to create opportunities in which active learning takes place by creating an environment in which learners learn from one another (Pouliot, 2004). Teachers design and implement tasks that spark the learners' interest, so that they participate in classroom activities and discussions (Amineh & Asl, 2015; Donald et al., Moolla, 2014; Pouliot, 2004). The teacher does not see herself as a sage on the stage but rather plays the role of a facilitator guiding a discussion (Pouliot, 2004; Suhendi, 2018). These types of discussions can take place between the teacher and learners, or learners can be divided into groups to have discussions among themselves. In order for learners to acquire language, it has to be practised through social interactions. These types of interactions can take place as teacher-to-learner or learner-to-learner through classroom discussions. This type of learning opens the classroom to incorporate new and creative methods to language teaching that breaks away from traditional standardised approaches and embraces linguistic diversity (Bada & Olusegun, 2015).

Learner-to-learner interactions can also be encouraged through discussions, reflection, and debates by grouping learners together (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Interactive activities ensure that no learner is left behind, whether they are more proficient in the LoLT or emergent speakers (Donald et al., 2014). This helps teachers and learners to see that learning is a social activity done through conversations with family, peers, and teachers (Hein, 1991). Through social interactions, teachers also incorporate storytelling, art, music, and drawing as different modes

of representation to help learners learn (Donald et al., 2014). Language is closely tied to a learner's identity and is shaped by those in close contact with the learner. The role that language plays in constructivism is that of a third party, which inserts itself between the learner and the experiences that shape them (Hirtle, 1996). Similarly, a translanguaging space emphasises language learning through social interactions. The learner's language is developed and refined through hearing, talking, and articulating in writing in multiple languages (Hein, 1991).

Teachers should also allow learners to connect their histories with what they learn through interactions with others whom they respect, value, and love, such as community members or elders within the community (Amineh & Asl, 2015). A learner's identity is shaped by family, friends, society, and the many contexts they find themselves in (Donald et al., 2014). This is in line with the values of ubuntu in which learning takes into consideration the cultural background a learner comes from and how their upbringing has shaped their learning. Teachers know that a learner's history brings value to the classroom and lesson activities, as learners then feel more accepted and valued (Garcia, 2019).

When school literacy practices do not afford spaces for belonging, learners are not able to make links between home literacies and new literacies that they acquire at school; in turn, they develop other values and practices as points of identity and connection (Kendrick & McKay, 2002). These new practices might conflict with learners' original cultural identity and heritage, resulting in cultural dissonance if they discard their origins. It is argued that until learners' complex histories are valued in school, home and school will continue to be disparate lifeworlds for many learners in multicultural classrooms (Wei & Lin, 2019). Learners embrace knowledge and traditions that are passed down from their family and community contexts, and conflict arises when middle-class classroom practices replace the life world of working-class learners (Onuf, 2012). In Western societies, the majority of working-class learners come from more linguistically diverse backgrounds (Garcia, 2019).

Individuals the learner comes into close contact with and communicates with will largely influence how they acquire language (Freire, 1985; Kleyn & Garcia, 2019). Teachers alternating between the LoLT and the learners' home language and embedding learning content in the lifeworlds of the learners open up a 'translanguaging space', thus affording learners the opportunity to use all the languages that make up their linguistic repertoire. The social space created by translanguaging allows 'individuals to use language to construct, communicate, and

express their collective and individual identities’ (Liu & Fang, 2020). According to Wei (2010, p. 3), ‘translanguaging creates a social space in which they merge different dimensions of their ‘knowledge, background, intellectual and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance’.

3.2.1 Social Constructivism Theory

Vygotsky (1978) posits that during the early stages of learning, children are constantly given activities and instructions that may present them with challenges; hence, those in a child’s socio-cultural environment play an important role in providing the support that is needed (Amineh & Asl, 2015; Donald et al., 2014). Learners construct knowledge of the world through social interactions with others. These interactions are dependent on the learner and others who are part of their immediate environment, such as family, friends, and teachers (Wei & Lin, 2019). Friends and adults are active participants in a learner’s growth, especially through and in language (Adam, 2017; Lin, 2019). Social constructivism emphasises both teachers and learners as vital role players in the learning process (Adam, 2017). It holds the view that language, ethnicity, and identity are socially constructed. This view is congruent with multilingual education (Machimana, 2021). For social constructivists, knowledge is constructed through social interactions and language use with others; thus, knowledge is a shared rather than an individual experience (Adam, 2017). This shared experience of knowledge construction is also specific to a particular context and space created within that context (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Meaning in these spaces is co-constructed and emphasises a shared social reality (Machimana, 2021).

The teacher’s intervention and involvement play a role; however, it is the quality of the teacher’s collaboration with the learners that is viewed as the essential proponent of the learning process (Adam, 2017). The learner plays an important role when it comes to problem-solving and meaning making of tasks provided to them, emphasising the importance of the relationships that happen between learners and their teachers (Donald et al., 2014). Vygotsky’s theory presents a view of learning that emphasises classroom discussions and the implementation of methods such as scaffolding and modelling (Adam, 2017). Kleyn and Garcia (2019) state that language development is shaped by social interactions and learning contexts (Kleyn & Garcia, 2019). The belief is that knowledge can be generated in the creation of spaces, or more specifically translanguaging spaces, whenever learners share their ‘socio-cultural, emotive histories and communicative repertoires’ (Wei & Lin, 2019).

3.2.2 Zone of Proximal Development

A premise of Vygotsky's (1978) theory of constructivism is the zone of proximal development (ZPD). This is the space between what a learner already knows or can do (the actual level of development) and what they will be able to master when provided with support from a knowledgeable peer or teacher (potential development) (Shabani et al., 2010). The role of the teacher or more knowledgeable peer is to create a space in which assistance can be provided that allows a learner to build on what they already know (Podolskiy, 2012). A multilingual learner's ZPD is promoted through a translanguaging space in which social interactions among learners provide support for one another (Garcia & Wei, 2014).

The highest level at which emergent bilingual learners can read in their home language could be a useful indicator of the proximal level of development, which is what learners can achieve with assistance (Shabani et al., 2010). Meanwhile, the level at which learners can read in English is the actual development level, that is, what learners can do without assistance (Wei & Lin, 2019). The goal of teachers, then, is to construct a space with strategic scaffolding so that learners can progress from their actual level of development to their proximal level (Shabani et al., 2010). When learners collaborate, a 'bilingual ZPD' is created in which support is provided by a teacher or learner who may be more proficient in the LoLT (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016). A learner's ZPD is then developed through translanguaging, which offers context-specific support through collaboration (Garcia & Wei, 2014).

In order to achieve the desired outcomes for first additional language learners, the teacher has to determine what the learner already knows and what a learner needs assistance with when learning a new language (Turuk, 2008). It is, therefore, important for more knowledgeable others, such as parents and teachers, to build on the learners' translingual vocabulary by introducing new words (Wei & Lin, 2019). Assistance can also be provided through the translation of words during classroom or homework activities.

Vygotsky has also pointed out that learners are often assessed in class for tasks for which they have received no external support (Lee, 2012). These assessments often come in the form of standardised assessments such as tests or examinations, conditions in which learners have to perform the task on their own without receiving any support (Lee, 2012). This mode of assessment targets what the learner can achieve academically without any support. Vygotsky's (1978) notion was that such assessments do not give a true indication of what learners know

and have limited value in informing teaching pedagogy. These types of assessments show what a learner has mastered – their zone of actual development (ZAD) – but not how to facilitate learning to develop further skills or thinking (Taber, 2018).

Vygotsky painted a picture of how you can have two learners who achieve similar results in an assessment (their ZAD is on a similar level when it comes to knowledge and skills); however, they might be at different levels when it comes to acquiring new knowledge (very different ZPDs). Instead, Vygotsky (1978) suggests that learners should be assessed on what they would achieve through the support of an adult (teacher) or a more knowledgeable peer (Adam, 2017). Knowing about the ZPD assists the teacher in their teaching planning. This view is also in line with translanguaging, in that the practice helps learners to gain a fuller understanding of the content by interacting with teachers and peers (Seals, 2021). There are learners who are able to write test answers correctly or write an essay without understanding the subject matter (Taber, 2018). This can be done by copying answers from what is written on the board or from a book. This rote learning places the emphasis on standardised assessments. Translanguaging is more concerned with how language is practised as an interactional skill, than with how it is assessed formally.

3.2.3 Scaffolding

Vygotsky (1978) stresses the importance of social interaction, especially in the language development of a learner. This interaction often takes place with those who are more knowledgeable, including parents, teachers, and fellow pupils (Barton, 2001). Vygotsky (1978) stresses the importance that learning occurs not only through formal methods of teaching, such as tests and examinations but also during social interactions (Adam, 2017). A language-rich environment is important in developing a learner's language skills. This is especially true for EFAL learners, who rely on their home language to make connections between new ideas and words in the LoLT (Liu & Fang, 2020). Scaffolding can be done in which the teacher asks questions at the beginning, during, and end of a classroom reading exercise by asking learners to recall the main events of the story (Taber, 2018). Teachers also scaffold their vocabulary development by allowing them to answer questions in their home language.

Probing learners with questions allows them to think about the answer (in the language they are most comfortable with) and provides more of a challenge than when the teacher is the only source of information (Taber, 2018). Vygotsky (1978) encourages teachers not to focus too

much on teaching learners' subject content, but rather on how they can apply knowledge in their daily lives. This helps learners to develop multiple skills and to deal with complex learning tasks (Turuk, 2008). An example of this would be to start a school gardening project. Through this practical exercise, learners learn concepts related to nature and food consumption. When tasks are created and aim at promoting communication, interaction, and collaboration amongst learners, they are enabled to draw from a collective pool of knowledge (Turuk, 2008). Learning is thus facilitated through social interactions.

Scaffolding as an intervention initiated by the teacher allows learners to become critical thinkers in the process of learning (Podolskiy, 2012). The teacher plays the role of facilitator, encouraging learners to share their ideas and make suggestions (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010). The teacher also determines the range and type of support that is needed in order for learners to progress in their learning (Taber, 2018). The teacher provides the learners with support to learn new knowledge and develop an understanding of concepts; this helps especially in relation to learning an additional language (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010).

In the classroom, teachers can also model what might be the best solutions to problems or the best ways to acquire new skills, such as learning a new language (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010). Playing the role of facilitator means that the teacher will always ask questions such as why, how, and who or make suggestions rather than always giving an answer (Adam, 2017). When a teacher scaffolds learning, they help learners connect new knowledge with their background knowledge. Teachers challenge learners by providing them with tasks that require more critical thinking and problem-solving (Donald et al., 2014). This type of teaching has focus and structure as learners are able to link new knowledge with what they already know, thereby enabling them to make connections between their home language and the LoLT (Wei & Lin, 2019). Translanguaging as a practice can be used as a means of scaffolding through multilingual concept clarification when there is a misunderstanding or confusion by a learner (Lin & Leung, 2023). Therefore, combining scaffolding and translanguaging as classroom practice creates a space where multilingual learners are supported.

3.3 Translanguaging Theory

At its core, translanguaging as a theory is an interpretation of bilingualism and multilingualism (Erdin & Sali, 2020). Translanguaging presents a distinct theoretical insight into bi/multilingualism (the terms ‘bilingualism’ and ‘multilingualism’ refer to the use of at least two languages by an individual or group of speakers) in that multilingual speakers draw on their entire linguistic repertoire, communicating in dynamic, creative, and flexible ways (Donley, 2022). Translanguaging argues that languages do not exist as separate codes or categories but as one unified linguistic system consisting of the resources, tools, and knowledge that bilinguals and multilinguals use for communicative events (Vogel & Garica, 2017). Redefining language is not a categorisable object or a one-dimensional social construct but rather an ongoing practice (Vogel & Garica, 2017). Language is viewed as a process-oriented social practice by multilingual individuals rather than an object that has defined rules and structures, or as something to be measured through assessment practices (Donley, 2022). Multilingualism is seen as a fluid and flexible negotiation of a multilingual’s unified linguistic repertoire in which a multiplicity of communicative resources are simultaneously active (Goodman & Tastanbek, 2020).

Vogel and Garcia (2017) posited that translanguaging as a theory has three underlying assumptions. First, individuals select and use the language features needed from a unitary linguistic repertoire. Multilingual individuals know which language features to select depending on who they are speaking to and the context they find themselves. In other words, a translanguaging theory sees the individual as having ‘one language system and one grammar from which to select the features required during interactions’ (Erdin & Sali, 2020). Hence, multilingual individuals select the language features they need depending on the situation at hand (Vogel & Garcia, 2017).

Secondly, translanguaging takes a perspective on bi/multilingualism that privileges a speaker’s own unique and dynamic language practices above the named languages of nations and states such as English, Mandarin, or Korean. Thus, it privileges bi/multilingual speakers’ dynamic linguistic and semiotic practices above the named and dominant languages of nations and states (Erdin & Sali, 2020).

Thirdly, it recognises that socially constructed named language categories exist and language ideologies have been set in place by society, but that

translanguaging as a theory, therefore, does not consider language as a set of rules, structures, or skills to be developed, but as a tool for discussion and creating meaning between individuals and as a product for social relations and identity formation. (Aung 2021, p. 67)

When the teacher starts to view language from the learner's perspective and accepts that each learner has a unique way in which they take on an additional language and choose to communicate, this can be transformative, as language is then not seen as something fixed or prescribed (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016; Wei, 2024).

Translanguaging is more concerned with how language is practised as an interactional skill by multilingual learners than as a subject one assesses formally (Donley, 2022). Translanguaging embraces the notion of creating spaces in the classroom in which the learner's home language is accepted and valued. The home language and LoLT are not seen as being in competition with each other but instead depend on each other in transferring meaning (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016). Vocabulary development is improved when teachers implement a space for the use of multiple languages in interactional and communicative ways. What is also emphasised in translanguaging is that learners make use of a space in which all their language skills are used and not in how many separate languages they are able to communicate (Donley, 2022).

Translanguaging as a theory and pedagogical practice helps separate language-specific performances and general linguistic performance. Language-specific performance refers to being able to use language appropriately for academic purposes, such as English, Sepedi, or Afrikaans, in tests and on assignments. General linguistic performances, on the other hand, include the ability of the learner to argue a point, draw inferences, communicate complex thoughts, and tell jokes (Aung, 2021, p. 68). One finds two groups of learners: the first are learners who may be fluent in the LoLT (English) but they are not able to enter into discourse on a subject-specific topic; and the second group of learners who might not be fluent in the LoLT, but they are able to express complex views or ideas on a topic (Otheguy et al., 2015). By incorporating the principles of a translanguaging theory in the classroom, teachers would then separate these two types of performance and assess learners in a fair and equitable manner (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016). Teachers implementing translanguaging strategies would then incorporate classroom activities and assessment practices that would take the above into account (Machado & Gonzales, 2020).

Teachers who incorporate translanguaging in their assessment practices level the playing field for those who have English as a home language or an additional language. Equal educational opportunities are provided to both groups of learners and an accurate assessment can be done of what the bi/multilingual learner knows and can do with language (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016). Bilingual learners translanguage when they transcend named languages in the classroom; for instance, they use both English and Sepedi to get their meaning across (Hamman-Ortiz, 2020). When a bi/multilingual learner speaks or writes by incorporating two languages in the same sentence, this does not necessarily mean they are using bad grammar when it comes to their ability in English. Rather, the learner is ‘leveraging their full linguistic repertoire’ for meaning making (Cummins, 2019).

Translanguaging as a theory also offers suggestions for English language teaching. The ‘multilingual turn’ ought to be embraced, with teachers adapting their classroom methods when teaching English (Erdin & Sali, 2020). Both teachers and learners ought to see learners’ home backgrounds, both linguistic and cultural, as a resource they bring to the classroom. Together teachers and learners create translanguaging spaces by co-constructing knowledge (Cummins, 2019). For Turner and Lin (2020, p. 7), ‘the ‘trans’ prefix in translanguaging theory means engaging with different languages, which is an important tool for expanding the learner’s linguistic repertoire and the mindfulness that comes with this expansion’.

3.3.1 Translanguaging Theory vs Cummins Interdependence Hypothesis

Translanguaging as a theory argues against beliefs that perceive certain languages as having more value and status than others (Cummins, 2019). Translanguaging holds that bilinguals can communicate in one language at a time, but when communicating with other bi/multilinguals, they often communicate in two languages at the same time since their internal language system is not separated into ‘two solitudes’ (Hamman-Ortiz, 2020). When people translanguage, they use language features that are their own in ways that align with social constructions of a ‘language’ (Simpson, 2017). Translanguaging as a theory is used in this study to highlight the importance of languages other than English, and how individuals, specifically teachers and learners, use language to make meaning within their context, thus encouraging linguistic diversity.

Cummins’ (1979) theory, on the other hand, describes the two languages of a bilingual learner as separate languages in a bilingual individual’s brain. He uses the metaphor of an iceberg to

describe the way bilingual learners use their two languages interchangeably (Velasco & Garcia, 2014). On the surface, it might seem as if the bilingual learner is performing in two languages. However, beneath the surface, there is a ‘common underlying proficiency’, which is developed and promoted through reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Vogel & Garcia, 2017). For Cummins (1979), the linguistic practices of bilingual individuals are transferred from one language to another. Bilingualism then influences both cognitive and linguistic development. By shifting between two language systems, bilinguals integrate various common verbal and linguistic features (Cummins, 1979). Underneath the surface, the two conceptual language icebergs are fused together so that the two languages do not function separately (Baker, 2001).

Fegher (2023) proposes that common underlying proficiency theory is based on four main assumptions:

1. It assumes that bilingualism and multilingualism are developed through a common underlying proficiency in the language. This proficiency is based on cognitive and academic skills, such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and literacy, that are transferable across languages (Baker, 2001).
2. The theory suggests that language proficiency is influenced by factors such as an individual’s cognitive and academic capabilities.
3. The theory also suggests that language proficiency is not equal across languages and that proficiency in one language can influence proficiency in another language.
4. Finally, the theory proposes that the development of bilingualism and multilingualism is influenced by various factors, such as age, exposure to language, and language instruction (Fegher, 2023).

If learners are to overcome the cognitive challenges and demands of the classroom, they require proficiency in the LoLT. Speaking, listening, reading, or writing in the first or second language develops the whole cognitive system (Fegher, 2023). The cognitive system will not function at its best when learners are made to learn in a language in which they are not yet proficient (Velasco & Garcia, 2019). In South Africa, many learners learn in a language they are not yet proficient in, which is mainly English (Sefotho, 2020). This has a negative impact on their academic development. Learners are not able to learn complex curriculum material and produce work in oral and written form which is below the required grade level. The learning experience at school for such learners becomes weak and impoverished (Cummins, 1979).

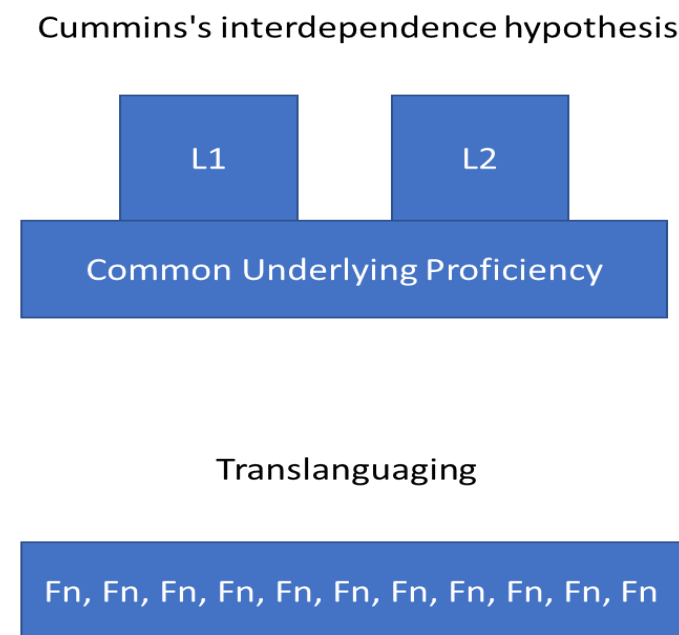
Academic performance is negatively affected when the home language and LoLT are not functioning in an integrated manner (Baker, 2001).

Cummins' model suggests that bilingualism is developed through a common underlying proficiency where knowledge and skills are transferred from one language to the other (Velasco & Garcia, 2014). While Cummins' model disrupts the notion that a bilingual individual's brain stores two languages separately, it still relies on the notion that a bilingual individual has to transfer meaning from one language system to another (Vogel & Garcia, 2017). The model also does not consider the social and cultural context in which language development occurs (Fegher, 2023). Translanguaging theory postulates that there is 'one integrated system consisting of various verbal and grammatical linguistic features' (Velasco & Garcia, 2014). Bilingual learners are not just seen as having a first or second language but one linguistic repertoire with features that have been socially assigned to constructions that are considered 'languages', including academic ones (that is, language that is used for academic purposes). Translanguaging as a theory, pedagogy, and practice also places a significant emphasis on the social and cultural contexts that learners find themselves in and how this influences their language development (Johnson et al., 2019).

A metaphor that might explain the linguistic performance of bilingual individuals is proposed by Johnson et al. (2019). To explain translanguaging's view on bi/multilingualism, one should picture two riverbanks. A river serves as the fluid border between two riverbanks. On one side is the riverbank that represents a classroom where only English is used as the LoLT, and the other side is where only Sepedi is used as the LoLT. When the two riverbanks are merged, this ensures an equitable education system where no learner is left behind. Through translanguaging, the two riverbanks are not separated but are brought together. Translanguaging goes beyond code-switching, as bi/multilingual learners are able to construct meaning with the linguistic features they choose from one integrated linguistic system. Figure 3.2 represents how Cummins' model of interdependence and the translanguaging model differ.

Figure 3. 2

Difference Between Translanguaging Theory and Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis



Note. Source: Aung, 2021

3.3.2 Theoretical Underpinnings of a Translanguaging Space

Space matters because it marks physical boundaries between individuals and represents an important aspect when it comes to communication (Ho & Tai, 2021; Lin & Leung, 2022). Linguists are interested in the relationship that exists between language and space, and the space created in which language is seen as a social product (Lin & Leung, 2022). Building on the conception of this space is a translanguaging space, which is ‘a space created by and for translanguaging practices’ (Tai & Wong, 2023, p. 1103). Translanguaging as a practice goes beyond language structures and beyond the boundaries between speaking and writing and other cognitive and semiotic systems (Hua et al., 2017). This created space can be life-changing in that new language practices, as well as new beliefs and perspectives, are developed (Lin & Leung, 2023). A translanguaging space emphasises the ways in which multilinguals communicate while considering the complex and interconnective ways in which multimodal and multisensory resources are used for everyday communication (Bradley & Moore, 2021; Kaufhold, 2018). It is a space in which various multimodal and multisensory semiotic resources and repertoires interact to produce new meanings (Ho & Tai, 2021; Lin & Leung, 2023; Tai & Wong, 2023). Crucially, it is a space where multilingual speakers are able to draw on the

different dimensions that make up who they are, such as their personal histories, background knowledge, values, and beliefs, through a harmonised and meaningful performance (Wei, 2010).

A translanguaging space also incorporates the notion of multimodality, focusing on the input and output of languages and the different modalities of sight, sound, verbal/oral, text, images, and gesturing (Tai & Wong, 2023). Language is not seen as a set of structural forms that is defined by name tags such as English, Afrikaans, or Sepedi. Instead, it is seen as a collection of ‘multilingual, multimodal, multisensory, and multi-semiotic resources’ that individuals make use of to make meaning (Ho & Tai, 2021). Space is not merely something that is given but it is constructed by translanguaging practices. The translanguaging space is socially constructed, and the collaboration is a social practice (Dutton & Rushton, 2021). A translanguaging space incorporates social interactions, the ZPD, scaffolding, and multimodality. Translanguaging involves the ‘deployment and orchestration of multilingual, multimodal, multisensory, and multi-semiotic sense and meaning-making resources’ (Hua et al., 2017, p. 413). This applies to this study as the researcher’s translanguaging interventions created a space that merged different modes, languages, and methods to increase Grade 3 learners’ understanding and learning.

There are various ‘spaces’ that together make up educational systems where teaching and learning take place. Dutton and Rushton (2021) conceptualise three spaces:

The first is the space of everyday routine and practice by learners and teachers in the school. These include class organisation, seating plans, subject content covered in the curriculum, assessment tasks as well as the relationships between teachers and their learners, and teachers and teachers.

The second space is the representation of the ‘ideal’. These spaces emerge from historical educational artefacts, educational policies and curriculum documents, teaching accreditation protocols, and long-held societal views about the nature of education and professional standards. These inform first-space practices with the intention of aligning the everyday first-space practices with the ideal practices conceived by the dominant voices in education.

The third space is a space for new imaginings and possibilities. Translanguaging as a practice is seen as a third space because it challenges prevailing school practices. In some schools,

translanguaging is viewed as a third-space practice with the translanguaging space being a space characterised by openness and creativity. The translanguaging space is a transformative space, meaning the process of cultural translation between different traditions takes place and different identities, values, and practices are combined to create new identities, values, and practices. Another aspect of this third space, as proposed by Engelbrecht and Genis (2019), is a space for ‘new’ learning to occur. In this space, parents, teachers, and learners share their artefacts, learn from one another, and co-construct knowledge. This third space connects home and school literacies.

Dutton and Rushton (2021) led a study at two primary schools in Australia, with many learners coming from immigrant backgrounds. The learners had to write their own poems in response to a poem called ‘Search for My Tongue’. One of the immigrants, a Gujarati Indian learner, wrote a poem about her struggles to retain hold her home language since moving to Australia and having to transition to English. The poem also employed translanguaging in the form of Gujarati script and phonetic transcription. Schools in Australia have a mandate for the study of additional, often European languages (French or German), during Grades 7 and 8. Another learner, a Vietnamese immigrant, spoke of the challenges of transitioning to English as the LoLT. This learner created a ‘third space’ in her poem in which she indicated that she did not have a desire to learn an additional European language and wanted to challenge this notion. She questioned why she had to learn another language and wanted to hold on to her home language instead.

A study conducted by Lin and Leung (2022) was done with Chinese university students in the United Kingdom in English second language classrooms. A translanguaging space was created in which the English language teacher (who also spoke Mandarin) pointed out similarities and differences between concept constructions across Mandarin (the students first language) and English (the students second language). One of the lessons was on how to distinguish the uses between the English words ‘off’ and ‘away’. Through her explanations, the teacher utilised a real-life object, a flask, as well as multilingual resources including Mandarin. Multimodality was also incorporated in the form of nods and gestures. With the use of the flask, the teacher was able to demonstrate the meaning of the word ‘off’ by taking the lid off the flask. By taking the lid off once again and holding it further away from the flask, she was able to demonstrate the meaning of the word ‘away’. The teacher then moved between Mandarin and English, asking the students if they understood and translating the meaning of words from English to

Mandarin. This space incorporated scaffolding and multimodality by the teacher to demonstrate to her students the meaning of and transfer of words from Mandarin to English.

Li and Luo (2017) created a translanguaging space for high school English additional language learners. The school is a state school in the United States comprising many immigrant learners, all from Spanish-speaking countries. The teachers and learners read a book together that was available in English and Spanish. After the story was read, the major themes and events were discussed, and inferences were made by the learners. By choosing a culturally relevant text, a translanguaging space was created in this study (Li & Luo, 2017). The learners were able to relate to the story as the text was made available in both English and Spanish. The learners were also allowed to answer in whatever language they felt most comfortable. Some read the Spanish version of the book and chose to respond in English, while others read the English version of the book and chose to respond in Spanish. The space that was created was, in the end, beneficial to the learners. The learners did not process information by reciting words out loud or writing down words from the board in their books. In a translanguaging space where the learners' home language and LoLT were used simultaneously, the subject matter was processed with meaning being transferred from one language to the other. The translanguaging space created an environment in which the learners had to understand what they were reading in order to take part in the lesson. This created a more engaging classroom environment and increased participation in discussions.

Bradley and Moore (2021) developed a programme of arts-based activities with young people aged seven to eight years who were part of a community learning centre in the city of Leeds, England. The area in which the learning centre was based was linguistically diverse. The young people were split into groups and given the task of interviewing members of the community about the languages they spoke. They collected data through photography, videos, and interviews. They were then given the task of creating collages on the data they had collected; this was done by printing out the photographs that were taken, drawing, painting, and writing. The participants also chose to write concepts on their collages in their home languages. A translanguaging space was created that included art-based methods, multimodality, and research in that the participants had to collect data to create their collages.

The above studies indicate the transformative nature of a translanguaging space, a space that incorporates multiple languages and modes (including arts-based methods, gestures, and

speech). The learners in this space were active participants rather than onlookers. The study sought to investigate and contextualise how this space would look in the South African context, and how teachers in South Africa could create these spaces in their classrooms.

3.3.3 Opening up Translanguaging Spaces

3.3.3.1 Translanguaging Stance

There are different instructional elements that open up a translanguaging space. Teachers must first develop a philosophical stance that supports translanguaging and view bilingualism as an advantage (Zano, 2022). In the current study, the researcher recognised the importance of how the learners needed both English and Afrikaans for meaning making. Learners' language practices and cultural understandings encompass that of their homes and individual communities, and those they acquire at school (Garcia et al., 2017). Families and individual communities of learners are valuable sources of knowledge construction (Tian & Shepard-Carey, 2020). Teachers should create spaces in classrooms where traditional hierarchies of languages are challenged, where knowledge construction takes place as a collaboration between teachers and learners, and where they work towards a more just society (Garcia et al., 2017). Teachers should be willing to be more flexible in their teaching methods in response to the linguistic needs of learners (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016). Teachers should also take cognisance of how politics can influence language, such as the categorisation of languages as state or regional. However, translanguaging disengages from the oppressions of the past and views language as something constructed socially (Kleyn & Garcia, 2019). Notably, the above criteria create opportunities for teachers to reflect on their own language practices (Donley, 2022) and establish criteria to evaluate the benefits of the stance of teachers' translanguaging (Donley, 2022; Zano 2022).

3.3.3.2 Translanguaging Design

Furthermore, it is vital for teachers to plan and design translanguaging spaces in their classrooms by emphasising collaborative work among learners (Tian & Shepard-Carey, 2020). In the current study, four translanguaging intervention sessions were purposefully planned and designed with activities to increase learner engagement. This practice can also be referred to as pedagogical translanguaging (Zano, 2022). Teachers implement pedagogical translanguaging as part of their lesson design by designing lessons that incorporate oral and written activities (Zano, 2022). This can also be implemented in other content area subjects,

such as Science, History, and Geography (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020). Developing multilingualism and implementing multiliteracy is the goal of pedagogical translanguaging (Tian & Shepard-Carey, 2020). Multiliteracy is a method used to encourage multilingualism and incorporates a variety of ‘methods and modes of instruction that go beyond just writing and speaking, and which include using actions, objects, pictures, symbols, music, and words in the classroom’ (Anstey & Bull, 2018, p. 213).

A translanguaging design incorporates activities in which learners participate by having group work discussions with their peers through collaborative work in which learners learn from one another (Tian & Shepard-Carey, 2020; Zano, 2022). This is done intentionally when learners read a book in the LoLT and then discuss the book in their home languages (Machado & Gonzales, 2020). Designing and planning for translanguaging changes the structure of the entire lesson in that it allows learners to leverage their entire linguistic repertoire, developing creativity and critical-thinking skills (Johnson, Garcia & Seltzer, 2019). Lesson planning including the methods incorporated or altered to create a translanguaging space that needs to be designed, practised, and documented (Donley, 2022). The bilingual ZPD is a space that can be created and designed by teachers or learners who are more proficient in the LoLT and can offer support through collaborative work to a learner whose bilingualism is emergent (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016).

Teachers support multilingualism by collecting materials that include multilingual books or poems, multimodal videos, movies, and other internet resources for use in the classroom space (Ebe, 2016; Tian & Shepard-Carey, 2020). Materials that can also be included in lesson planning include cardboard paper, acrylic paint pens, wax crayons, colouring pencils, and coloured markers. The materials used in the intervention sessions for this study supported the lessons and made the activities more enjoyable for the participating learners. Teachers who implement a translanguaging and multimodality design incorporate activities in which learners are able to hear (through the classroom interaction), see (through the brainstorming done on the blackboard), touch (through the posters, drawings, and writings they produce), and maybe even smell (Khote, 2021; Zano, 2022). These resources help to support teachers and learners during the lesson and can be incorporated across different modes.

Designing translanguaging instructions and interactions also means making links between home and school literacies. This is done through parental and community involvement through

the sharing of personal histories and stories (Tian & Shepard-Carey, 2020; Wong 2024). Translanguaging design centres on drawing links between home literacies and classroom literacies because a learner's family and community involvement improves learner performance (Donald et al., 2014). This links to the African notion of ubuntu where learning takes place from a communal perspective and the importance of knowledge being passed down from community elders and family members (Ned, 2019).

3.3.3.3 Translanguaging Shift

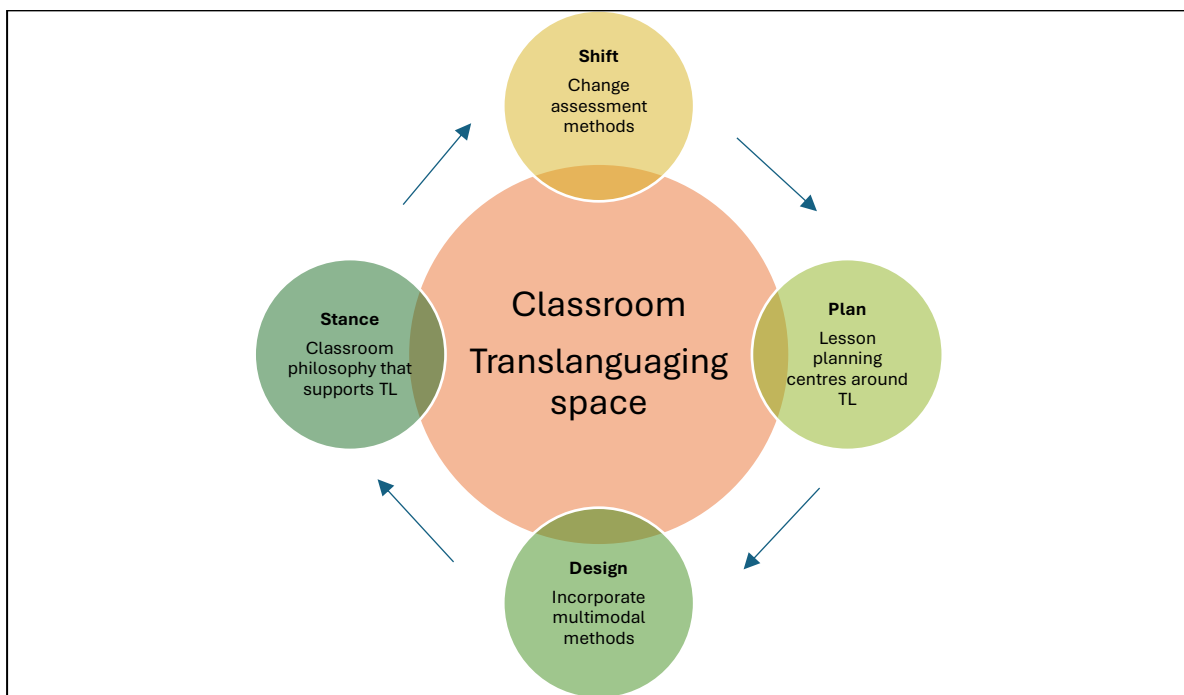
The final element is that of a translanguaging shift. Here, the teacher makes a 'shift' towards translanguaging practices through a process of reflection and adaptation, they reflect on changes that were made and what methods were adapted to suit the language dynamics of the entire classroom (Zano, 2022). In the current study, the researcher wished to demonstrate to the classroom teachers how they could adapt classroom methods and also critically reflect on the process of translanguaging practices. This is an active and ongoing practice for teachers, where they go back to lesson plans and negotiate practices that should be continued and are useful for learners (Donley, 2022). Teachers can reflect on how they critically and creatively shift their translanguaging pedagogy practices while enacting the translanguaging design in the classroom (Machado & Gonzales, 2020; Wong, 2024). Teachers must be flexible in terms of language use and flexible in their understanding of how learners internalise new content (Garcia, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017). The teacher's flexibility and inclination to change the course of lessons and assessments, as well as the languages used, support learners' multi-voices (Machado & Gonzales, 2020; Wong, 2024). Teachers in the translanguaging classroom vary in the ways they use assessment tools; they choose and adapt tools for specific learning opportunities according to the characteristics of the learners (Garcia, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017). In the creation of translanguaging spaces, teachers can adapt the assessment of their learners through different modes such as drawing, speaking, writing, gesturing, or the use of technology (Wong, 2024). When teachers engage in translanguaging shifts, they respond to the needs and preferences of the learners by adapting classroom languaging activities and policies (Liu & Fang, 2020; Zano, 2022). For example, a teacher might shift between languages to further explain a concept or find learning materials more relevant to a learner's socio-cultural-linguistic context (Liu & Fang, 2020; Zano, 2022).

3.3.3.4 Classroom Translanguaging Space Model

Figure 3.3 illustrates how a translanguaging shift, stance, plan, and design are interrelated and how the elements move in a circular flow to create a translanguaging space. Teachers wanting to create a translanguaging space in their classrooms have to consider all the different elements that make up such a space. As previously said, a translanguaging space is transformative for learners. Not only does it incorporate different languages, but teaching also takes place from a multimodal perspective. Learning takes place through art, gestures, writing, dance, and even play. A translanguaging space allows teachers to focus on how language is assessed formally and on how individual learners make use of multiple languages for meaning making in their everyday lives.

Figure 3. 3

A Classroom Translanguaging Space



This transformative nature of a translanguaging space also aligns with the theories chosen for the current study. According to Hua et al. (2017, p. 412), a translanguaging space involves the deployment and arrangement of ‘multilingual, multimodal, multisensory, and multi-semiotic sense and meaning-making resources’. These characteristics support constructivism, translanguaging theory, multimodality, and the ubuntu translanguaging framework. All these theories create a space that facilitates a classroom environment in which learners meaningfully

engage with the content and express themselves freely. This space was created in the current study by the researcher taking a stance and viewing the learners' home language as a resource for knowledge construction. Next, a translanguaging intervention was designed and planned by the researcher in order for classroom teachers to alter their assessment and classroom practices to cater to the needs of the learners.

3.4 Ubuntu Translanguaging Theory

Based on the theory of translanguaging, ubuntu translanguaging theory was designed so that it could be relatable to the South African and African contexts (Makalela, 2015b; Sefotho, 2022). It holds that one language is incomplete without the other and that no boundaries exist between or among languages, as it values interdependency over an independent status (Mbirimi-Hungwe & McCabe, 2020). Bantu languages (isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati, Setswana, Sepedi, Sesotho Tshivenda, Xitsonga), are connected due to the sharing of phrases and grammatical rules (Sefotho & Makalela, 2017). Ubuntu translanguaging is an approach that recognises the use of more than one language for teaching and learning and is an alternative approach to language teaching in multilingual classrooms (Makalela, 2019).

Translanguaging is closely linked to ubuntu as multilingualism, which is a characteristic of both, is part of being South African (Makalela, 2015c; Mbirimi-Hungwe & McCabe, 2020). Ubuntu translanguaging takes our eyes off language divisions and instead helps us to look to the everyday fluid meaning-making practices of multilingual individuals (Sefotho, 2022). More importantly, it reflects on a dialectic disruption of linguistic boundaries and the shifting of old boundaries (Brock-Utne, 2018). According to Sefotho (2022, p. 4), ubuntu translanguaging is described as 'a process where there is an overlap between languages and as a model that shows a confluent, fluid, and porous existence of languages for meaning making'.

The ubuntu translanguaging framework was conceptualised by South African sociolinguist Leketi Makalela (2015a), who maintains that the values of ubuntu and translanguaging can be successfully implemented in South Africa's multilingual contexts. Makalela's (2015c) contribution was to contextualise translanguaging to fit the African context. The underlying principles of ubuntu value multilingualism and diversity (Brock-Utne, 2018). Ubuntu can be closely tied to ujama, the concept founded by Tanzanian politician Julius Nyerere (1968). The principles of ujama and ubuntu are similar, as both emphasise communalism in life and in education through 'sharing, friendship, and a feeling of familyhood' (Brock-Utne, 2016).

Ubuntu emphasises the essentialness of unity in diversity as the philosophies of empathy, involvement, and partnership in a community's endeavour to resolve common challenges are highlighted. Ubuntu is the basis of African philosophy (Brock-Utne, 2016; Oviawe, 2016).

Sefotho (2022) conducted a study at two primary schools in the township of Soweto. The aim of this study was to observe the movement between languages by teachers through classroom observations, especially in a multilingual context such as Soweto. In Sefotho's study, classroom teachers used English 95% of the time and Sesotho for the other 5%. This switch was done purposely by teachers during the lesson when they saw from learners' facial expressions that the learners were lost. Sesotho was used to clarify terms and concepts. The engagement of the learners showed that they understood the learning content better when the two languages were used concurrently. The teachers also agreed that the use of more than one language improved the learners' comprehension.

Mbirimi-Hungwe and McCabe (2020) conducted a study at a South African university with first-year medical students, many of whom came from linguistically diverse backgrounds. Through collaborative group work, the students had to read three journal articles on viruses. The students then had to write an essay explaining how viruses work in the human body and explain the preventative measures that could be employed to prevent the spread of diseases caused by the viruses. When the students were engaged in discussions amongst their groups, these discussions took place in multiple languages, including Setswana, isiZulu, and Xitsonga. The students constantly moved between the different languages to grasp the medical concepts that were under discussion. What was also evident were elements of ubuntu – if one student struggled to understand a concept, all the group members chipped in to help the person to understand it. There was also a willingness for group members to listen and not interrupt each other. Ubuntu translanguaging brought the students together to work collaboratively, and the continuous flow between multiple languages ensured that all the participants understood complex medical terminology and were then able to complete their individual essays on the articles.

From the ubuntu position of multilingual development, one cannot differentiate between a speaker's first or second language (Makalela, 2019). This is true of the setting in which the current study was conducted, with the participating learners shifting between two to three languages on a daily basis at school and at home (Mbirimi-Hungwe & McCabe, 2020). The

philosophy of ubuntu that people hold manifests a declaration in the value of interdependence and the interconnectedness of human beings which involves working with and amongst the members of one's community (Sefotho, 2022). From an ubuntu perspective, the learners are taught from a young age to value their cultural background and to use it as a resource for knowledge construction (Makalela, 2015c). The learners also see value in learning from others and community members, especially the elders in the community. This type of learning was often done through storytelling and narrative.

3.4.1 Four Pillars of Ubuntu Translanguaging

The ubuntu framework is based on four assumptions or 'pillars'. The first pillar of ubuntu translanguaging focuses on the interdependence and interconnectedness of languages as multilingual individuals make use of different languages throughout the day for meaning making (Makalela, 2015a, 2018). The African value system of people's coexistence is conceptualised as 'I am because we are, we are because I am'. Languages can be seen in the same light because one language is because of another (Sefotho, 2022). According to Makalela (2019), languages form part of one's identity and cannot be separated from the individual's soul. African languages, in particular, disrupt the linguistic boundaries set in place by mono-linguistic practices; one example of this would be 'kasi-taal' (Makalela, 2013, 2015c). This is a dynamic process where three or more languages are mixed to form a new language and mode of communication, and this is frequently used in South African townships. Many learners in township settings speak up to six languages and can use all six during one conversation. In these translanguaging spaces, order is disrupted, and a formation of newness takes place (Makalela, 2016). When linguistic codes are blurred, meaning-making and information flow go beyond the linguistic boundaries set in place by a mono-linguistic view of language. This process creates a shift from seeing language as fixed structures to the creative ways in which people use language to make sense of their lifeworlds.

Incompleteness is the second pillar, which suggests that multilinguals create spaces for meaning making in which one language would not make sense without the other (Makalela, 2018). For learners in complex multilingual regions, all the languages spoken in that context are present and are used at the same time for meaning making. This allows for critical thinking and deeper thought processes to take place (Makalela, 2016). This dialectic process of discontinuation, on the one hand, and continuation, on the other hand, makes any form of

linguistic fixity impossible but creates spaces for fluidity of expression (Makalela, 2019). It is this constant desire to be inclusive that makes linguistic entities gravitate towards one another.

The third pillar of interdependence in translanguaging spaces suggests that linguistic exchanges take place on an ongoing basis through multiple languages (Makalela, 2018). Meaning making is incomplete in one language, and to complete the cycle of communication, one has to use multiple languages (Makalela, 2016). This means that multilingual speakers have to use or borrow words or phrases from another language system to make sense of their lived experiences and form a clearer understanding of the realities around them (Makalela, 2013). This relates to how things are constantly changing and evolving in the 21st century, and the resultant view is that languages are also evolving and in a state of transition. The languages of the world have responded to this new sociolinguistic reality that interdependent multilingualism is accepted globally (Makalela, 2019). Interdependence then represents a circular flow in which languages are dependent on one another for meaning making.

Lastly, the fourth pillar is that languages are symbols that define human beings. Languages in South Africa belong together where no fixed boundaries exist between languages (Sefotho, 2022). For multilingual speakers, information flow in communicative events is complex, as both vertical and horizontal mobility of information takes place simultaneously (Makalela, 2019). In African societies, it is common to hear input in one language and output in a different language; many African sociolinguistic realities allow for input in more than one language and output in more than one language during speech events (Makalela, 2018). When teachers communicate with their learners, they use a variation of languages to represent the vertical flow of information being conveyed (Makalela, 2016). The same is done when learners communicate with each other, where collaboration is done through a variety of languages, representing the horizontal flow of information.

3.4.2 Ubuntu Translanguaging Classroom Model

The ubuntu translanguaging framework can also be used as a model for lesson planning in South African classrooms (Mbirimi-Hungwe & McCabe, 2020). Ubuntu pedagogy is suggested by Makalela (2018) to open up translanguaging spaces. This space consists of classroom approaches where a teacher reads a comprehension passage in the LoLT, and learners then respond in their home language or discuss the topic with a peer who has the same home language. Sometimes referred to as multilanguaging, this is a translingual framework that is

based on the African ubuntu value system of ‘motho ke motho ka batho’ (‘I am because you are, you are because we are’) (Sefotho, 2022). Ubuntu translanguaging in the classroom places an emphasis on collaboration amongst learners, which is also a core premise of constructivism and translanguaging theory. Through collaboration with their peers, the learners are able to write sections in their home language to scaffold the LoLT. This, in turn, creates an interactive classroom environment through dialogue, as each learner contributes to the work. The latter leads to learner empowerment as each learner has an opportunity to add value to the lesson by bringing in background knowledge and personal histories. These elements were incorporated into the four translanguaging interventions designed by the researcher.

An ubuntu translanguaging pedagogy is displayed in the classroom when teachers become proactive in learning about their learners’ linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Phatudi, 2018), and learners feel that their cultural backgrounds and home languages bring value to the classroom. An environment should also be created in which topics that are studied are based on the learners’ interests, such as culturally relevant texts. Within these spaces, teachers improve learning by implementing other modes of teaching such as activating the hearing, sight, and tactile senses to help learners learn an additional language (Mbirimi-Hungwe & McCabe, 2020).

An ubuntu translanguaging pedagogy is also multimodal in nature in that an emphasis is placed on using gestures and motions to help learners remember words. By hearing new concepts and words in an additional language, teachers assist learners in making associations with their home languages through pictures or dramatisation and through the use of poems, rhymes, and songs teachers also help learners retain new vocabulary (Phatudi, 2018). A translanguaging space is created when teachers learn important phrases and utterances in the learners’ home languages (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2021). It is also important for teachers to determine how specific cultural norms might affect learning styles and preferences in relation to subject content and language preferences in the classroom. By incorporating examples from the learners’ cultural backgrounds, the teachers create an environment that leads to increased engagement, and the learners become active participants in the classroom, instead of mere rote learners (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2021).

3.5 Multimodality and Multiliteracies

Multimodality is the basic notion that meaning is not only conveyed through what we say, but through a variety of communicational and representational resources (Jewitt, 2009). It is precisely through language and these other representational and communicational resources that meaning is distributed and redistributed, interpreted, reinterpreted, made, and remade (Rowse & Walsh, 2011). Multimodality focuses on meaning made through different modes, such as verbal, aural, visual, tactile, and gestural (Jewitt, 2009). From a multimodal perspective, sound, movement, sight, and other means of communication through the five senses (touch, hearing, taste, smell, and sight) are referred to as modes (Eisenmann & Meyer, 2018). In other words, these are all organised sets of semiotic resources for constructing and deconstructing messages and making meaning out of them (de Saint-Georges, 2013). Research has been carried out into the use of languages in the classroom and also on how language acquisition and meaning making can take place across different modes (Eisenmann & Meyer, 2018; Jewitt, 2009; Magnusson & Godhe, 2019).

This has led to a growth in the body of knowledge around the semiotic resources of language (Eisenmann & Mayer, 2018). Much ground has been covered in understanding the sources, uses, extents, and limits of language in the classroom setting and the impact it has had and continues to have on learners (Magnusson & Godhe, 2019; Stein & Newfield, 2006; Newfield, 2023). However, comparatively less research has gone into the semiotic resources of language (Chan et al., 2017). Therefore, it comes as no surprise that considerably less is understood about the semiotic potentials of motioning, signalling, hearing, and myriad other forms of representation (Eisenmann & Mayer, 2018; Jewitt, 2009). These have all been largely overlooked in the existing bodies of research, and as a result, the learners have endured the burden of it (Kulju et al., 2018). Human beings, especially young learners, rely on all five of their senses to make meaning (Kulju et al., 2018). The first mode of learning for young children is via imitation, where, through their five senses, they take in the reality around them and learn to walk and talk by modelling what they perceive those around them doing (Rowse & Walsh, 2011; Newfield 2023). One could say that they draw on all their available modal resources to make meaning in their specific context to attain a specific goal (in this case, walking and talking) (Jewitt, 2009; Newfield, 2023). This continues in many ways all through life.

Just as children need the repetition of imitation in order to learn new skills, the same applies to acquiring a new language (Eisenmann & Meyer, 2018; Iyer & Luke, 2010; Magnusson & Godhe, 2019). The resources that people need to make meaning in specific contexts display regularities through everyday patterns of use, and it is these patterns that become an essential part of remembering and, therefore, of learning and retention (Eisenmann & Meyer, 2018; Iyer & Luke, 2010; Magnusson & Godhe, 2019).

One of the most frequently overlooked modes of semiotic resources is space. In multimodality, space is known as a key mode of semiotic resources, in the same way as actions, pictures, sounds, objects, tactile movement, and facial expressions (Cloonan, 2008). Those involved in decision-making, policies, and the implementation of curricula have battled to include different modes of communication as they are steeped in a monomodal perspective of learning. Multimodality has been present for some time now as a way of implementing new and multiple communicative practices for literacy learning (Chan et al., 2017; Magnusson & Godhe, 2019; Newfield, 2023). Multiple modes (including but not limited to pictures, hearing, signalling, dance, and text) are processed during communication (Chan et al., 2017). We thus see that in our networked, global society, multiple aspects of literacy, or multiliteracies, are needed for sense-making (Cloonan, 2008; Newfield, 2023). In this respect, the ‘multiplicative’ effect of the processing of different modes of reading and writing, often at the same time, needs to be considered (Kulju et al., 2018). In other words, multimodal learning can have a transformative effect on the learning process (Magnusson & Godhe, 2019), enforcing and reinforcing a message in many different ways and at multiple layers (Jewitt, 2009). Put simply, it results in a plurality of literacy.

Assigning this plurality from literacy to ‘literacies’ in this study opened up what had traditionally been seen as a standardised model of literacy education (Iyer & Luke, 2010). The standardised model of literacy education needs to take these different ways of meaning-making into consideration (Iyer & Luke, 2009). When literacy moves from the singular to the plural, there is an acknowledgement of more than one model for literacy, and those different literacies depend on the people and environment they find themselves in (Jewitt, 2009). This is also closely linked to how individuals acquire language and make meaning through language. To employ a metaphor: if all roads lead to Rome, there is no need to force everyone to take only one. Depending on their starting point, some roads could be shorter and others longer. Differences between the learners need to be considered, and it is this concept that is slowly

finding its way into the standardised model of literacy education, much to the benefit of the learners (Magnusson & Godhe, 2019). A translanguaging view of literacy itself views literacy as plural and acknowledges the different ways in which a learner constructs knowledge.

A fundamental part of ‘new’ literacies in literacy education considers that literacies are manifold, and they require various different modes of representation (Rowse & Walsh, 2011). These are nothing more than regularised sets of resources for meaning making. They can range from an image, sound, or text to a movement, computer graphics, or some other spatial dimension (Cloonan, 2008). All these resources are brought together or in isolation to achieve an effect on both the explication of texts as well as the reception of said texts by learners. Such effects are read and composed in different ways compared with linguistic text features (Rowse & Walsh, 2011). The semiotic resources thus become the objects, activities, artefacts, and practices used during meaning-making that complete the task in a competent and appropriate way (Jewitt, 2009). In this way, multimodality becomes the subject field that takes how an individual makes use of multiple modes for meaning making into consideration (Magnusson & Godhe, 2019).

The aim of multiliteracies is to recognise that literacy goes beyond the standard and preferred modes of the verbal and written mode to connect with the culturally and linguistically diverse landscapes and the multimodal texts that are mobilised and circulated across these landscapes (Engelbrecht & Genis, 2019; Newfield, 2023; Rowse & Walsh, 2011). A social and culturally responsive curriculum is the pedagogic aim of multiliteracies, multimodality, and translanguaging (Kulju et al., 2018; Magnusson & Godhe, 2019; Newfield, 2023). In other words, the goal of multiliteracies is to bring in the extensive range of literacy practices by learners, be it through the use of multiple languages or modes of learning (Kulju et al., 2018.) It questions the traditional view of teaching where the teacher informs all teaching practices. Instead, classroom walls become more permeable, and lessons are informed by the learners’ interests and experiences (Chan et al., 2017). In South Africa, in particular, researchers and educators are now asking for the re-analysis of language as one mode among other forms of representation and communication (Newfield, 2023). In South Africa, indigenous knowledge has always been passed down from the ancestors through oral storytelling (Engelbrecht & Genis, 2019), with the Khoisan being the first multiliterate people of Southern Africa. What might be beneficial for multilingual classrooms in South Africa is a perspective that allows learners to make meaning and draw understanding from multiple modes (Stein & Newfield,

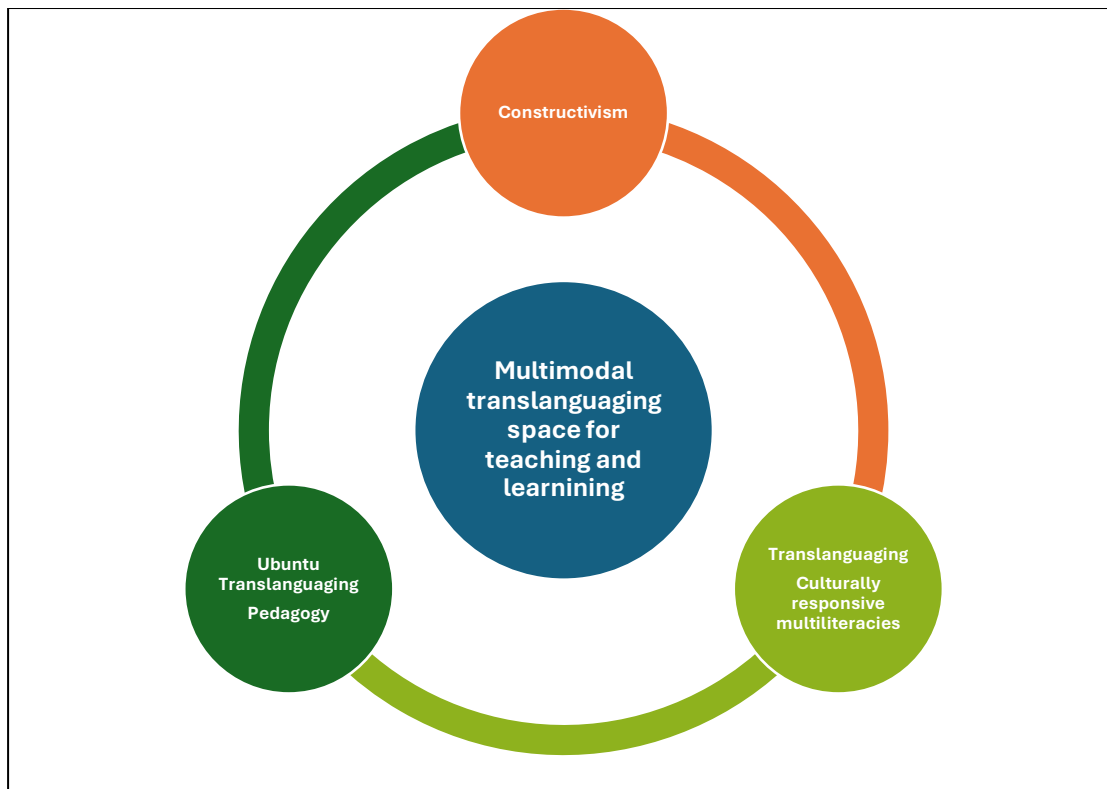
2006). In this study, the learners drew on multiple modes by representing the meaning of the comprehension passage through their drawings and writings. They also made use of gestures to convey their understanding when answering questions in class discussions during the intervention sessions. In the current study, meaning making took on other modes rather than the standardised method of assessment.

3.6 Multimodal Translanguaging Space

The different theories created a space in which listening, speaking, reading, and writing were integrated into one classroom activity during the translanguaging intervention sessions. The circular flow of the different integrated acts took on different modes which catered to the learners in the study who had a diverse range of learning styles and also spoke different languages. All the theories were present in one space where there was a constant interchange and exchange between the principles of each theory in the classroom, as illustrated in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3. 4

The Multimodal Translanguaging Space for the Study



During intervention sessions, this exchange took place by incorporating different modes for meaning making by allowing the learners to draw their understanding of their comprehension of the passages. The learners incorporated translanguaging verbally when answering questions and also textually through their writing.

Constructivism emphasises learning as a social product through methods of incorporating scaffolding and the ZPD. Translanguaging promotes the use of a learner's full linguistic resources through the use of multiple languages in the classroom and collaboration among learners. According to translanguaging, this collaboration among learners and the use of their full linguistic repertoire has been called the bilingual ZPD. Ubuntu translanguaging emphasises complex multilingual encounters in the classroom and views one language as incomplete without the other while also emphasising learning as a social product. Translanguaging, along with multimodality, brings in the potential of gesturing, touch, drawings, writing, discussions, movement, and other forms of representation to the study. The learners in the study drew on their available modal resources to make meaning in their drawings and writing during the intervention lessons. The practice of all four theories in the classroom by the researcher created a space in which learning took place in a circular flow with movement between different modes (visual, auditory, written, oral, spatial, and gestural) and languages.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter discussed in greater detail the theoretical underpinning of space, and in particular, a translanguaging space. The chapter also gave a closer look into what a classroom translanguaging space looks like and what that space would look like in the South African context. The theories of constructivism, translanguaging, multimodality, and ubuntu translanguaging work well together to create a space that is transformative for learners. Learners engage with one another on a social level through the use of multiple languages and modes. Through the incorporation of these methods in a classroom where listening, speaking, reading, and writing are present in the act of learning, learners develop creativity and critical-thinking skills. The following chapter presents the methodological process undertaken in this study to create a translanguaging space.

Chapter 4

Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters laid the foundation of the research design and methodology for the study of the phenomenon of translinguaging and how translinguaging as pedagogy and practice is linked to literacy and theories of reading acquisition. Chapter 3 presented the reader with the theoretical framework. Chapter 1 presented the reader with an introduction to the study and contextualised the current state of education in South Africa. Chapter 2 presented the reader with the literature review for the study, which detailed an in-depth discussion of the study, which consists of translinguaging, constructivism, multimodality, and ubuntu translinguaging that create the framework in which a learning ‘space’ is created. This space is seen as transformative for learners, allowing them to use their full linguistic repertoires. This space was also created in the four intervention sessions for the study. This chapter, Chapter 4, gives an outline of the methods that guided the researcher in planning and designing the intervention sessions.

The current chapter outlines the research design, strategy, and methodology for the study. The chapter starts by discussing pragmatism and why it was the best-suited research paradigm for the study. The study employed a mixed-methods approach consisting of qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative methods consisted of intervention sessions, observations, and field notes. The quantitative methods consisted of a pre- and post-test design and questionnaires. Practitioner research describes how the researcher played the dual role of researcher and teacher for the study. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants and the research site. In this chapter, along with the methods, the qualitative and quantitative data methods of analysis are discussed. Lastly, the quality and ethical assurance standards the researcher held are described for the reader. The presentation of the results of the study follows in Chapters 5 and 6 of the thesis. The results from the qualitative and quantitative data were integrated and are discussed in Chapter 7.

4.2 Research Paradigm

4.2.1 Pragmatism

This study was conducted through the lens of a pragmatic epistemological paradigm. During the late 19th century, pragmatism was founded by American philosophers William James and John Dewey. James and Dewey held to the view that the validity of solutions should be based on their ability to solve real-life problems rather than their adherence to half-truths or generalisations (Hafsa, 2019). The term pragmatism originated from the Greek noun *pragma* meaning ‘works or deeds’ (Hafsa, 2019). This meaning defines the principle belief of pragmatism and its emphasis on purposeful human activity (Morgan, 2014). The human activity considered in the study was the purposeful translanguaging activities designed by the researcher to incorporate all the different modes in a learning space and how the learners responded to these activities. Pragmatic researchers are flexible in the research methods they use and are willing to collaborate with other researchers (Allmark & Machaczek, 2018). Therefore, pragmatism views research as a holistic endeavour that requires prolonged engagement with participants and a triangulation of research methods (Leech et al., 2009).

Pragmatism is not limited to any specific epistemology or ontology (Leech et al., 2009). Hence, pragmatic researchers choose a mixed-methods design and employ both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to achieve the research goals. A pragmatic paradigm does not claim that one approach to research is the best; rather, this depends on the researcher’s aims and objectives of the study, the questions formulated for the study, and what is required to answer these questions (Allmark & Machaczek, 2018). This offers flexibility to researchers in terms of selecting methods and procedures of research that best suit their aims and purposes (Hafsa, 2019). This flexibility suits mixed-methods researchers as they depend on a mixture of approaches for data collection and analysis rather than on either qualitative or quantitative methods (Leech et al., 2009; Maree, 2016). Therefore, this study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods to answer the research questions, namely pre-test and post-test inquiry, art-based methods, observations, and questionnaires. This enabled the researcher to gain a better representation of the world or phenomenon (creating a translanguaging and multimodal space through an intervention) of the study (Allmark & Machaczek, 2018).

For the pragmatic researcher, inquiry begins with a practical problem and ends with a resolution of that problem (Morgan, 2014). Morgan (2014) suggests five steps that a pragmatic researcher takes in the investigation:

1. Identifying a potential problem within a certain situation or context.
2. Considering how the problem could be defined to oneself and others.
3. Considering the necessary steps which could be taken to address the potential problem.
4. Assessing the necessary steps that need to be taken in line with the likely consequences and risks involved.
5. Taking the necessary actions that might address the problem in the situation.

Problems associated with this study were identified through the researcher's previous study (Aung, 2021), and the current study seeks to find a solution to the reading challenges at the participating schools at which the researcher works. Pragmatism in education involves a problem-centred pedagogy (Yvonne Feilzer, 2010). The teacher or researcher begins by helping learners with a content area they are struggling with, then guides them through a cycle of inquiry. If all goes according to plan, a solution is discovered for a challenging situation to the satisfaction of all (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2017). This cycle of inquiry is a process which includes the following: the first step is to discover what the actual problem is that needs resolving and to formulate research questions that need answering. The next step is to formulate the data-gathering methods and potential hypotheses which need to be tested (Morgan, 2014). According to DeCuir-Gunby and Schutz (2017, p. 24), pragmatism opens up the classroom to

live thinking, which generates unpredictability and can be challenging for the teacher or researcher to manage, but if the genuine indeterminacy of the problematic situation can be successfully navigated, the reward will be learners who have learnt not just how to know but how to think.

The aim of my study was for the learners to improve their reading.

Pragmatists believe that research always takes place in socio-cultural, historical, political, and contextual settings (Morgan, 2014). Therefore, some pragmatic studies may include a postmodern essence that echoes social justice (Hafsa, 2019). My study wanted to determine

how reading challenges were interrelated to the LoLT at schools and how reading instruction could be improved. A pragmatic paradigm does not claim that one approach provides a deeper or truer representation of the world (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). Pragmatism, however, believes there are multiple truths and that those truths are affected by interactions within particular contexts (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2017). For the researcher, pragmatism facilitates employing diverse methods and diverse worldviews, along with various types of data collection and analysis techniques (Hafsa, 2019). This study sought to find how multiple truths, methods, and modes could be used during reading comprehension interactions in a translanguaging space to enhance the meaning of the text for learners.

Despite the benefits of pragmatism listed above, it has not come without criticism. One of the main criticisms is that it can lead to relativism. Truth becomes relative, and moral values only rely on the individual's personal views of what society deems to be acceptable (). When moral values remain subjective, there is no clear guideline as to how to address complex ethical issues or create long-term goals (Yvonne Feilzer, 2010). Pragmatism also emphasises practical outcomes that lack foundational principles; the result may be problem-solving initiatives with no guidance on how to start and/or end the initiative (Yvonne Feilzer, 2010). A final disadvantage of pragmatism is that the value of actions and principles is based on their ability to produce desired outcomes, with an emphasis on outcomes rather than the process (Morgan, 2014). Despite these critiques, a pragmatist view was still the best-suited paradigmatic approach for this study, as it employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods to answer the research questions. This enabled the researcher to gain a deeper representation of the particular phenomenon of the study, that is, creating a translanguaging and multimodal space through an intervention.

4.3 Research Design

A research design can be described as the road a researcher takes to conduct and complete their research (Sileyew, 2019). It demonstrates the steps the researcher takes to identify a problem, formulate a research question, and decide on which methods will be used to obtain and interpret results during the study period (Sileyew, 2019). Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2013) also refer to it as the basic outline of a study, where an investigation is carried out in a particular community under study. This also entails choices which have to be made surrounding the research questions and findings that will be collected to answer these questions (Hesser-Biber, 2010).

The research design also aids the researcher in choosing which particular methods or theories might be relevant to the study (Maree, 2012) and how to ‘select participants, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer the research question’ (Maree, 2012, p. 36).

Figure 4. 1

The Research Design for the Study

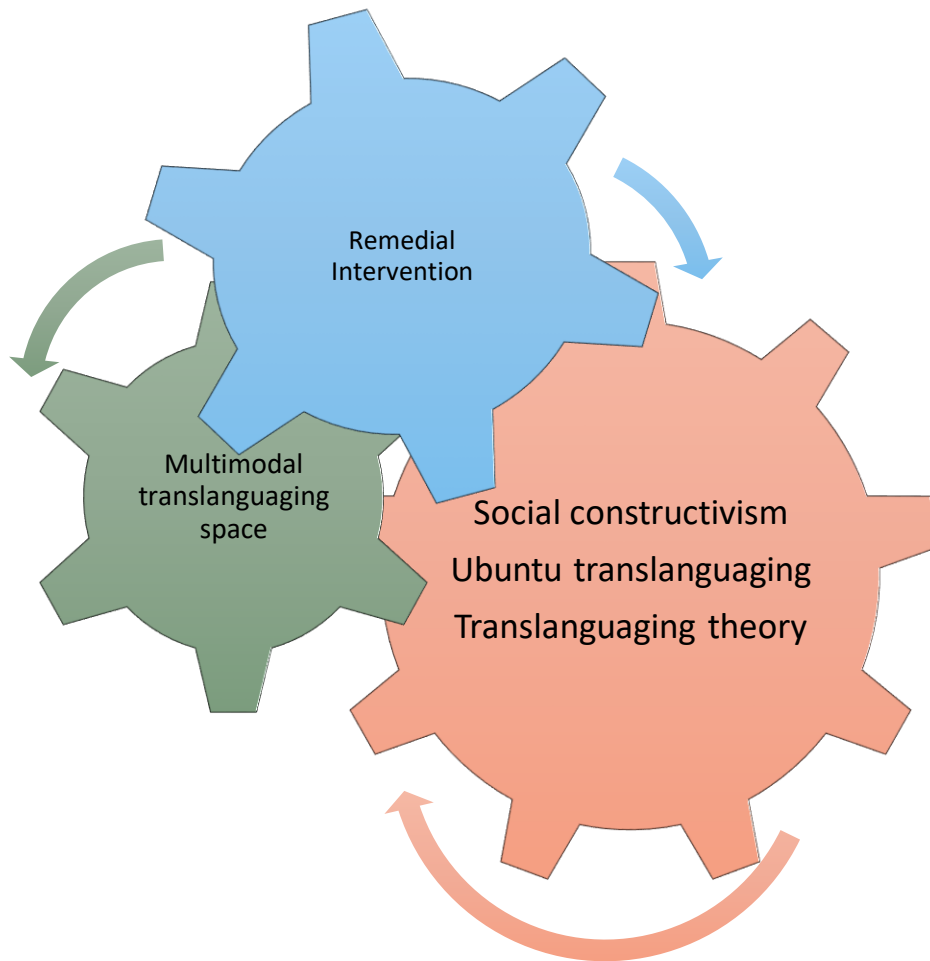


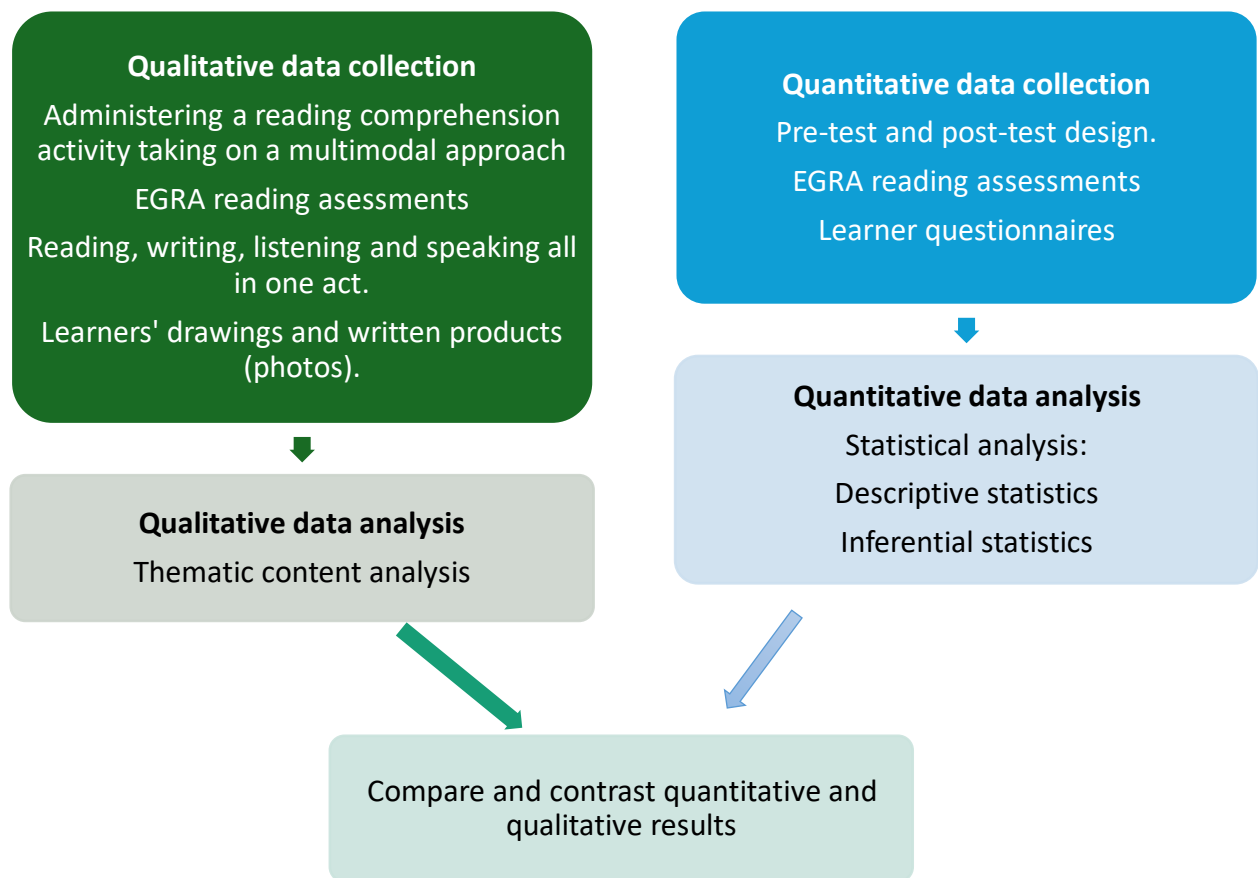
Figure 4.1 indicates how the different concepts of this design interacted to create the working mechanism for this study. Translanguaging was used as an interventionist pedagogy to create a social-constructivist and multimodal reading and learning space, that is, a translanguaging space. Within this translanguaging space, the researcher played the dual role of researcher and teacher to design an ubuntu pedagogy that took on multiple modes.

4.4 Study Design

This study followed a convergent mixed-methods design. The figure below demonstrates the qualitative and quantitative methods the study undertook.

Figure 4.2

Qualitative and quantitative data collection methods for the study.



4.4.1 Convergent Mixed-Methods Design

A convergent mixed-methods design is used by researchers to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena being researched, which, in this study, is a multimodal translanguaging space. Convergent mixed-methods design is the process of the collection, integration, and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time (Babie, 2010). Qualitative data is derived from open-ended sources, usually free form responses whereas quantitative data comes from close-ended data sources like standardised tests or surveys (Migiro & Mangangi,

2011). The gathering, analysis, and incorporation of quantitative and qualitative data can take place in a single or multiple case study (Migiro & Mangangi, 2011).

In a mixed-method study, the researcher combines both quantitative and qualitative data to arrive at a deeper understanding of the research questions of the study (Almeida, 2018). Both the qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously, and the data is then merged and interpreted alongside one another (Babie, 2010). In this study, both data sets were collected simultaneously at two participating Quintile 1 primary schools. The quantitative approach included a pre-test and post-test comprehension assessment where statistical techniques were applied to analyse the learners' results. The qualitative approach includes the translanguaging intervention (drawings and writings by Grade 3 learners), which was analysed using thematic content analysis. Afterwards, the two data sets were compared and contrasted, and inconsistencies or contrasting findings were clarified and further explored by administering a post-test questionnaire to the learners.

The main premise of mixed-method design is that an integration of both the qualitative and quantitative methods provides a clearer understanding of the phenomena than one method on its own (Hesse-Biber, 2010). This method was regarded as most suitable for the study as the research sought to collect both data sets simultaneously and then merge the rich results to draw conclusions (Maree, 2016). An integrated comparison was conducted with the two data sets. The researcher first discussed the qualitative findings and then compared these with the quantitative findings. These findings are discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 of the study, and the results are integrated in Chapter 7.

Hafsa (2019) provides six objectives as to why a researcher would choose a mixed-methods design:

1. Completeness – the researcher wanted to achieve a more detailed and holistic view of the topic under investigation, which in this case was creating a translanguaging space through an intervention. Hence, it was appropriate to incorporate qualitative and quantitative findings.
2. Development – by using a mixed-methods design, the research can also develop over time. In the case of the current study, the research questions, sampling, and

data analysis changed over the course of the study from the initial phases of the proposal.

3. Expansion – the researcher expanded on some of the findings, such as administering a questionnaire to the learners after the post-test to see if the responses would corroborate the findings.
4. Corroboration – to validate the quality of assumptions derived from one type of study by checking it against mixed designs. To support the findings, multiple methods of quantitative and qualitative data were chosen for the study.
5. Compensation – to weigh out the limitations of one method having dominance over the other. In the current study, the results from the post-test indicated no gains in the learners' scores; however, the qualitative results countered this by indicating increased learner engagement.
6. Diversity – to create diversity in the current study, various methods were employed during intervention sessions, such as drawing and writing.

The researcher followed the six criteria listed above in her choice of a mixed-methods design for this study.

4.4.1.1 Advantages of a Mixed-Methods Design

An advantage of the convergent design is that it is efficient (Almeida, 2018). In this design, both data sets were collected simultaneously during a single stage of the research. During the intervention process, both the quantitative data (the reading comprehension tests administered to the learners) and the qualitative data (the drawings and writings produced by learners) could be collected simultaneously. Another advantage of this design was that each type of data that was collected was analysed separately by using the relevant techniques (Almeida, 2018). Thus, the different types of data sets supported each other to enrich the findings. The challenges of a convergent design include limited time to analyse the different sets of data, the need for a working knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative data, and the necessary skills required in the analysis and management of the extensive amount of data (Creswell, 2017). The researcher experienced challenges in sifting through all drawings and writings produced by learners, as well as familiarising herself with SPSS software. By receiving assistance from those who were experts in SPSS software, the researcher was able to use the software with ease.

4.4.1.2 Disadvantages of a Mixed-Methods Design

Adopting a mixed-methods design can be intimidating to novice researchers because of limited funding, time, and expertise (Migiro & Mangangi, 2011). The researcher was new to mixed-methods studies; there were often constraints when it came to time and incorporating the methods simultaneously during the data collection. However, over time, and by consulting with experts, the researcher was able to come to an understanding of mixed-methods research.

Effective attempts in combining and drawing comparisons between quantitative and qualitative data can be challenging as the results from both data sets may not agree. Thus, additional data may need to be collected (Creswell, 2017). Additional data were collected after the intervention in the form of post-intervention questionnaires that learners completed. This was used to analyse if the results from both data sets corresponded. There was some correlation in that most of the learners answered that they did not speak English at home. This was also shown in the results of the pre- and post-tests. After each intervention session, the data was also stored systematically in folders according to the different sessions and schools. This made it easier to locate the drawings and writings produced by learners and alleviated some of the challenges of analysing all the drawings and writings.

4.4.2 Practitioner Research

In this study, the researcher played the dual role of teacher and researcher. She identified the reading challenges at the two participating schools from her teaching practice and by conducting the research (Aung, 2021). Practitioner research is seen as one of the most viable and powerful alternatives to enhance a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. It is an empowering and developmental tool for teachers (Xu & Zammit, 2020). Teachers need to be involved in a reflective process in which they evaluate and ask critical questions about what they do in class and why they are doing it daily (Abukari & Abubaka, 2018). When seeking answers to a particular issue or problem, one first needs to define what the problem is, and thereafter, plans to solve the problem can be set in place. After the plan has been implemented, one can describe, analyse, and reflect on what happened (Xu & Zammit, 2020)

The challenge that was identified in this study was that the learners at the two participating schools struggled to read with meaning; the study provided insight for the classroom teachers to observe how pedagogical practices could be altered to accommodate their multilingual learners. These practices lead to the generating of new knowledge and answering questions

about the best ways to facilitate and improve learning (Abukari & Abubakar, 2018). This is why an intervention was planned to investigate whether learning (and reading in particular), could improve. Playing the role of researcher and teacher, I identified a problem at both of the participating schools, that is, many Grade 3 learners were struggling to read and write in English. A translanguaging intervention was conducted, which involved reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities in each of four sessions.

4.5 Data Generation and Collection Methods

Table 4.1 lists the stages of the intervention for the study, which also informed the methodology. The study started with a quasi-experimental design that involved a pre- and post-test. It concluded with post-intervention questionnaires to ascertain the learners' perceptions of the success of the intervention.

Table 4. 1

The Data Collection Methods of the Study

Pre-test	Reading comprehension (EGRA assessments) Examination format
Intervention	Multimodal instruments LTSMs (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) Based on EGRA reading passages
Post-test	Reading comprehension (EGRA assessments) Examination format
Post-intervention	Questionnaires administered to learners

4.5.1 Qualitative Data

The qualitative methods for this study consisted of intervention sessions, observations of the intervention sessions, drawings and writings learners produced during the sessions, field notes and photographs of the learners' drawings, writings and participation during intervention sessions.

4.5.1.1 Interventions

Educational interventions allow teachers and researchers to address gaps in learning that might be hindering a learner's progress (Phye et al., 2005). Once a certain need has been identified in the school or classroom, appropriate interventions can be used to overcome barriers to learning that children may face (Meiklejohn et al., 2021). In educational settings, interventions can be used to describe a session in which teaching and learning deviate from the current lesson (Meiklejohn et al., 2021). Interventions can take place one-on-one in the form of scaffolding or in group settings. The aims of the intervention programme are created by the teacher and researcher in a collaborative effort to address a key area of need, such as improving reading comprehension skills, which the intervention of this study aimed to address (Hawthorne, 2023).

Some interventions require formal monitoring, when, after a learning need has been identified and the intervention has been administered, the learner is monitored in order to track their progress, while other needs are more flexible and are modified according to the changing needs of the learner (Hawthorne, 2023). Before an intervention programme can begin, a baseline assessment should be administered to learners to determine their levels of understanding. In my study, the EGRA baseline assessment was administered to the learners in the form of a pre-test before the intervention sessions began. To be effective, interventions have to make an impact, so organising them requires strategic thinking and planning (Phye et al., 2005). This study took a classroom-based interventionist approach. The interventions took place to provide the learners with the necessary support. Working alongside the teacher, the learners in the study were selected to participate in an intervention to enhance their comprehension skills.

A translinguaging and multimodal intervention took place during school hours. Sixty-four learners participated, with 32 learners coming from each of the two participating schools. For the intervention, reading comprehensions were administered during four different sessions for each participating class. The sessions took place during school hours in class. The experimental or 'treatment' sessions followed a translinguaging and multimodal approach. This included oral responses, drawings, gestures, and writing activities that formed the components of the EGRA comprehension passages. The reading comprehensions chosen were EGRA assessments which had been designed and standardised by USAID, which has contributed to the establishment of reading fluency benchmarks. The EGRA will lead to more reliable and detailed findings, including valid pre- and post-tests. The reliability and validity of the EGRA assessments have been established from 30 years of research (Meiklejohn et al., 2021). The

South African EGRA instrument consists of four components: letter sounds, high-frequency words, a culturally relevant comprehension passage, and questions related to the comprehension passage. The current study only tested learners on the comprehension passages and questions. As the participating learners were in Grade 3, the researcher assumed that they had already developed skills in letter sound and word recognition. The passages were culturally relevant to the learners and in the South African context. It is important for translanguaging and multimodal interventions to select reading passages specific to the learners' context (Barton, 2001) as this results in learners being able to draw on their background knowledge, and it creates a more engaging environment in the classroom.

4.5.1.2 Observations

Observations encompass seeing what participants do and hearing what they say to get a more 'real-life experience' of the people or phenomenon in a study (Rule & John, 2011; Simons, 2009; Yin, 2014). By observing the participating learners in the classroom during the intervention sessions, the researcher was able to observe their responses and reactions without having to talk to them or ask any questions (Merriam & Grenier, 2019; Simons, 2009). Eight observations were conducted, four at each school, on how learners responded to the interventionist approach and the reading comprehension given in an examination format. This was done by observing the learners' use of gestural and translanguaging modes. The translanguaging modes that the researcher identified were whether learners responded to or asked questions in their home language or required the practitioner or classroom teacher to explain the meaning of certain words.

The legitimacy of using observations is that by observing people, the researcher directly obtains data instead of having to read up on the subject. The researcher does not have to rely on what others say the observable behaviour is, as the behaviour is observed first-hand, which may include which methods lead to increased learner engagement (Creswell, 2007). In addition, observations help the researcher to establish rapport with the participating community. This is usually achieved by establishing a friendly relationship where there is agreement and openness in communication. In this study, the researcher was able to gain a clearer understanding of which learning areas the participating learners excelled in and which areas they struggled with during the observations.

An advantage of observation is that it is a data collection method that does not require much effort on the part of the researcher. This method allowed the researcher to observe the Grade 3 learners' responses in a classroom environment. The researcher perceived, examined, and experienced the participating learners' reality by observing their reactions during the drawing and writing activities (Creswell, 2007).

A disadvantage of observation is that it can cause a biased view on the part of researchers, especially if they are the only ones viewing the participants. Thus, there may be subjective 'errors' present in observations (Leavy, 2014; Simons, 2009). Also, when participants know that they are being watched, they might change their behaviour. (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). Hence, the researcher was aware that her presence might have alerted the reactions of the learners as they were familiar with her (Maree, 2016).

4.5.1.3 Drawings and Written Products

Table 4.2 represents EGRA reading comprehension passages and the intervention activities that took place in each session.

Table 4. 2

Intervention session for the study

EGRA Reading Passage	Intervention Activity
Passage 1: Sam and Jill	Pre-test (EGRA reading passage).
Passage 2: Mpho goes to the farm	Activity 1 (first intervention session): Creating a Translanguaging reading space through drawing. In each session, learners were asked to draw their understanding of the reading comprehension passage.
Passage 3: Lebo's birthday	Activity 2 (second intervention session): Translanguaging and the extension of vocabulary. A brainstorming session took place in which learners brainstormed words to describe a Birthday and what one does on their birthday.
Passage 4: Jabu and his dog	Activity 3 (third intervention session): Translanguaging and comprehension skills.

	Learners drew and wrote on their understanding of the comprehension passage. Rhyming words were explored based on the comprehension passage.
Passage 5: Nomsa and the plastic snake	Activity 4 (fourth intervention session): Translanguaging and four-box organisers. In pairs learners created four-box organisers that included the vocabulary/written words, visual representations of the words, definitions of the words and sentences using the words.
Passage 6: Nunu the giant	Post-test (EGRA reading passage).

After the passages (that is, reading comprehensions) had been read by the researcher and learners during the four sessions of the intervention at each participating school, the 64 learners were asked to draw and/or write what their understanding of the reading comprehension was. The drawings and writing were then analysed to determine whether the learners were able to comprehend the reading text. One of the sessions included a brainstorming cluster (presented in Chapter 5), after which each learner had to write their own story and complete a four-box organiser based on sentence construction. Each of these activities in all four sessions also included the learners' drawings and visual illustrations along with their writing. This type of method is known as art-based research. Art-based research can be defined as a method in which

the systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the arts as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies. (McNiff, 2007, p. 393)

This type of research inquiry analyses not only the verbal or written text but also the drawings of the participants to gain an understanding of a phenomenon. Drawing can present researchers with rich data; however, analysis of drawings can be a vague and subjective process. This was countered by the researcher's supervisor scrutinising each drawing that was presented in the results section to ensure less subjectivity on the part of the researcher (Bland, 2012). Sixty-four learners participated in the study, so the researcher was able to present drawings from multiple

learners, which enriched the findings (presented in Chapter 5). Visual research can provide an understanding of that which cannot be revealed when spoken, written, or statistically measured. The study also includes statistical measures that support the visual data. This is presented in Chapter 6 of the study.

To triangulate the initial analysis, during the intervention sessions, the researcher asked some of the learners what their drawings meant. This was done to create the authenticity of the visual analysis. One can establish triangulation through drawings from a secondary source, such as participant discussion or a written text (Bland, 2012; Leavy, 2020). Each intervention session not only required the participants to make a drawing of their understanding but also that a reading, written, and oral exercise accompanied the drawings. This ensured that each session took on a multimodal approach to learning. The learners were asked questions during a classroom discussion after each comprehension was read, followed by a brainstorming session for words that the learners could use to write their own stories.

During the writing process, the learners were given the task of writing sentences and stories based on a topic from the EGRA comprehension assessment. From many of the written products, which are presented in Chapter 5, it is evident that the learners at both schools had a low proficiency in their ability to write in English at the required level for Grade 3. During the intervention, the learners were allowed to write in both their home language and the LoLT. Both languages were present in one writing product, which helped in the transfer of knowledge from the home language to the LoLT (Garcia et al., 2012). Many multilingual learners are more comfortable writing in their home language rather than in English, which, in the case of this study, was Afrikaans.

4.5.1.4 Field Notes

The field notes in this study were the notes that the researcher made as she was observing the learners during the intervention sessions (Creswell, 2014a; Deggs & Hernandez, 2018). The field notes were written during the intervention and observation sessions and when the pre-test and post-test were administered to the learners. This was to make notes and observations of the learners' responses, how engaged the learners were during the classroom discussions, and when the learners asked if they could write in Afrikaans (which was the home language for many children in this study). A disadvantage was that the writing up of the field notes often took a long time; this meant that the researcher could not write a note on every interaction that took

place and/or take down notes of direct quotes she might have heard from learners during the intervention sessions. However, this was countered through the drawings and writings learners produced during the intervention sessions.

4.5.1.5 Photographs

Photographs are used in research to provide the reader with photographic evidence of what the participant did or made, which, in the case of this study, were the learners' drawings and writings (Glaw et al., 2017; Sichula, 2018). This also allows the reader to experience themes from the participants' perspective. The photographs that were taken with the researcher's phone are presented in Chapter 5 (the qualitative findings) to present the drawings and written products produced by the learners. The photographs were taken during the intervention sessions and classroom observations to illustrate how the learners participated in the intervention activities. The photographs also included the reading comprehension passages that were read during each intervention session. In the case of this study, the photographs provided the reader with evidence of what the participating learners drew and wrote during the intervention sessions. If there had been no photographic evidence, the researcher would have had a difficult time explaining verbally all that took place (Glaw et al., 2017). The photographs also show the reader at which reading and writing levels the learners were. These images are presented in Chapter 5 to illustrate the discussions on the translanguaging methods that were implemented and how teachers could create a translanguaging pedagogy of their own in their classrooms.

4.5.2 Quantitative Data

In quantitative research, the traditional experimental design is the pre-test and post-test design. For this study, the design worked as follows: 64 participants each received a pre- and post-test (Mertens et al., 2017). The participating learners from each participating school received the 'treatment' (a translanguaging intervention) after the pre-test. All the participants received the same pre-test in the form of a reading comprehension, which took on an examination format and took place in one mode, the written mode. Therefore, the learners were only allowed to complete the comprehension in written mode. This comprehension was used to assess the effect of the experiment before the treatment was given. The 64 learners who participated in the intervention received the 'treatment'. Learners were given a multimodal comprehension in each of the four sessions (which included the components of orality, images, gestures, and drawings) and they were allowed to answer the questions in a multimodal way, such as through oral responses, drawings, gesturing, and multiple languages.

The comprehension assessments were taken from the EGRA comprehension passages. The DBE creates many workshops for Foundation Phase teachers to be trained using the EGRA assessment to assess reading in the early grades. This ensures the validity of the assessments, as these had already been quality-assured and approved by the DBE. All the participating learners received the same multimodal reading comprehension to ensure that trustworthiness was established by the use of similar multimodal features of the exercises. The multimodal features would indicate how learners learnt differently.

After the treatment had been given, all learners received the same post-test, which was done in an examination format using the EGRA reading passage (also approved by the DBE) administered in examination format (Marsden & Togerson, 2012; Muijs, 2004). The conditions remained the same for the learners at both the schools, as it had been during the pre-test. The results were then compared to see if there was an improvement in learner performance between the pre- and post-test. This type of experimental design seeks to find out whether the participants' behaviour changed after they had been exposed to an intervention or planned learning experience. This design was best suited to this study as the researcher wanted to establish the cause-effect connection between the intervention and learner performance.

4.5.2.1 Questionnaires

In this study, after the intervention, each learner received a questionnaire in a 'yes' or 'no' format about whether they spoke English at home, the number of books there were at home, whether they enjoyed reading, if they read to find out about new things, and if they thought they were good at reading. The questionnaire items were kept to 'yes' and 'no' questions, as these were young Grade 3 learners whose proficiency in English was not at a high level. This was to ascertain whether the results from the pre- and post-test were either confirmed or contradicted by the learners' responses. In the questionnaire items, many of the learners stated that they enjoyed reading and had books at home. However, from both the qualitative and quantitative data (presented in the following chapters), it is evident that their ability to read and write in English was not proficient. The advantages of using questionnaires in this study were that they are versatile and economical and can be administered to a variety of individuals in different settings, including children (Patten 2016; Maree, 2016). The questionnaires also allowed for data to be collected within a short time frame, as the questionnaires were administered to learners and then collected soon after the post-test. The questionnaire's closed-ended 'yes' or 'no' answers allowed for ease in the capturing and analysis of the data. A

disadvantage was that the questionnaires only allowed the learners to answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’, which did not give room for further clarification.

4.6 Research Site, Participants, and Sampling Method

A sample is used to represent what is typical of the research site, participants, or phenomenon (Maree, 2016).

4.6.1 Sampling Method

Participants are selected based on their relevant interest in and experience of the case and their suitability in advancing the case (Acharya et al., 2013; Rule & John, 2011). Therefore, sampling should be closely related to the research question, the methodology, and the purpose of the study (Acharya et al., 2013; Maree, 2012). A non-probability sampling technique known as purposive sampling was used for this study. Purposive sampling involves selecting participants who might provide insight into your research question or contribute to your analysis (Creswell, 2007). This means that the researcher selected individuals and sites for study because they could purposefully form an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study (Creswell, 2007, p. 125).

The researcher had a specific purpose in mind, which was to determine whether a treatment condition in the form of a translanguaging intervention given to Grade 3 learners would make a difference in performance. The Grade 3 learners were specifically chosen for this study as the researcher in the past had provided remedial support for them at both schools. This group was also chosen because they would transition to Grade 4. It was hoped that an intervention might better prepare them for Grade 4. The researcher approached two Grade 3 teachers she had previously worked with and received permission from the two Grade 3 teachers to conduct the intervention during class. A drawback of purposive sampling is that researcher bias is often involved, and the sample chosen might not be a true representation of the population; thus, it would not be generalisable. However, this study did not aim to draw generalisations but rather to construct new knowledge.

4.6.2 Participants

Schools A and B are non-fee-paying government schools located in the Tshwane South district of Gauteng. Each school is dual medium, catering to both English- and Afrikaans-speaking

learners. Within each grade of both schools, there are three English Home Language classes and one Afrikaans Home Language class. School A had a library and computer laboratory. School B had no computer laboratory but had a library. Neither school had a school hall, so for assemblies, the learners assembled in the courtyard. The Grade 3 teachers from both schools taught the two groups of learners; the learners from Eersterust were in the English FAL classes, and those from Mamelodi and Nellmapius were in the English Home Language classes. The classes at both schools had a 60:40 ratio of Coloured to African learners. For both groups of learners, English was not their home language; this was confirmed by the learner questionnaires, where the majority of the learners answered that they did not speak English at home.

School A was established in June 1970 and can accommodate 800 learners; when the study was conducted, there were over 1 300 learners at the school. School B is located 1,3 km from School A. School B was established in December 1989 and was also built to accommodate 800 learners. When the study was conducted, it too had over 1 300 learners, with some Grade 1 classes consisting of over 60 learners. Eersterust is a Coloured township. Afrikaans is the dominant language, and it is spoken by 70% of its population (Statistic South Africa, 2022). At both schools in Eersterust, 60% of the learners were Coloured and 40% were Black African. Many parents from the neighbouring townships of Mamelodi and Nellmapius send their children to schools in Eersterust as they believe they will learn English better at these schools. The 64 participants for the study were Grade 3 learners from two FAL classes.

4.6.3 Research Site

Eersterust is a Coloured township situated west of Mamelodi. During the apartheid era, the National Party moved those people whom they racially classified as Coloured to this area (Eersterust our community, 2020). The Group Areas Act removed people from their homes, which led to disastrous consequences, as families were torn apart, and it increased poverty. The longstanding effects of poverty have resulted in unemployment, especially youth unemployment. Low-skilled labour is prevalent within this community, with low literacy rates (Statistics South Africa, 2022). Many within this community receive inadequate pay, and, subsequently, domestic crimes, alcohol abuse and malnutrition are prevalent, which have had far-reaching consequences for this community (Springveldt, 2008).

In 1905, a farm owner separated this land (Derdepoort) into 93 housing units to be used by the Coloured people. In the 1950s as the Group Areas Act was implemented the farm Derdepoort was promulgated as the area where the Coloured race would be relocated (Tutu, 2016). In 1962, the area was officially named Eersterust (Tutu, 2016). This community's cultural heritage has matured into something unique and distinct with its practices and identities based on friendliness and kindness. The main home language in this township is Afrikaans, which is spoken by 78% of the population; English is spoken by 10% of the residents (Statistics South Africa, 2022).

Many parents from the neighbouring townships of Mamelodi and Nellmapius send their children to primary schools in Eersterust as they believe their children will receive a better education being taught through the medium of English; this makes for a linguistically diverse community and schools. The teachers and learners who live in these townships are able to communicate in more than two languages, which is why this study was conducted in this context and why multilingual participants participated.

4.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to the process of making sense of the data that was collected by the researcher (Creswell, 2014a). For the qualitative data of the study, thematic content analysis was used. Thematic analysis refers to the process of identifying themes in the data which capture meaning that is relevant to the research question, and which makes links between these themes (Bengtsson, 2016; Bryman, 2012). The research question for the qualitative data was to determine how a translanguaging space as an intervention would improve learners' ability to engage with the content that was taught. The themes that emerged from the study provided the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of her data, which contributed to the literature relating to the research focus (Bryman, 2012). The themes for this study were established from the intervention sessions and from analysing the drawings and written products of the learners in each session. The researcher developed the following four themes by planning and designing the intervention session according to what the objective for each session was: creating a translanguaging reading space through drawing, translanguaging and the extension of vocabulary, translanguaging and comprehension skills, and lastly, translanguaging and four-box organisers. Each theme encompasses the drawings and written products produced by the learners.

The data analysis for the quantitative data was done using statistical analysis, which involved descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics is used to describe methods used to organise and summarise data in a meaningful way (Maree, 2016). This method was used to summarise the results obtained from the questionnaire items that the learners had to complete post-test. The descriptive statistics obtained represent the findings from the questionnaire items that the learners completed during the post-test. The demographic items consisted of ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions to make it easy for learners to fill out. The results from the questionnaires were captured onto an Excel spreadsheet, which was set up to generate percentages from the learner responses automatically.

Inferential statistics, on the other hand, are when the sampled data is used to make predictions or draw conclusions (Maree, 2016); this was done by using the descriptive SPSS program that assisted the researcher in running a non-parametric t-test of the data. SPSS was also used to obtain measures of the central tendencies (mean) and dispersion (standard deviations) (Muijs, 2004). In statistics, central tendencies are the measures that represent the centre or middle of a set of data values (Maree, 2016). The central tendency is found by using three measures; mean, mode, and median. The mean is the average value, the median represents the middle value of the data set, and the mode refers to the frequently occurring value (Creswell, 2009). The mean, median, and mode of the learner scores were presented using SPSS, along with the minimum and maximum scores that the learners had obtained. The mean, standard deviation, and learning gain or loss were calculated for the two tests written by the two groups in the study using a non-parametric t-test; the scores were then compared for statistical significance.

To establish whether translanguaging techniques enhanced the learners’ ability to apply background knowledge when drawing inferences from their reading, the results of the pre-test and post-test were compared. The researcher ran a related sample non-parametric test on SPSS. A non-parametric paired t-test sample was used to match the two mean scores from the pre- and post-test. Non-parametric tests do not make any assumptions; thus, it was most suited for this study. A paired samples t-test was used as the variables were independent and had two levels. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was the non-parametric test of this study and compared the outcomes in the paired samples.

A paired sample non-parametric t-test was run through SPSS to match the two mean scores. Non-parametric t-tests do not make assumptions about the frequency distribution of variables

that are to be evaluated. The non-parametric experiment is used when there is skewed data, and it comprises techniques that do not depend on data about any particular distribution. The word non-parametric does not mean that these models do not have any parameters (Pappas & DePuy, 2004). Rather, the characteristics and number of parameters are flexible and not predefined. Therefore, these models are called distribution-free models. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test tested the null hypothesis, that is, where the two distributions are identical against the alternative hypothesis, and the two distributions differ only with respect to the median (Pappas & DePuy, 2004). The study design was not considered a true experimental design as there were no control groups for either School A or School B. Parametric tests rely on random sample selections and data that is normally distributed. Data from the SPSS outputs showed a skewed distribution. Thus, a non-parametric t-test in the form of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was most suitable for this study.

After analysis of the pre- and post-test scores, the researcher also used a formula to calculate the score of the effect size. The effect size tells you how strong the relationship is between groups or what the difference is between two groups.

Cohen's (1988) guidelines on how to interpret effect sizes, which were used in this study, include:

$r = .10$ - $.29$ (small effect/weak relationship)

$r = .30$ - $.49$ (medium effect/relationship)

$r = .50$ - $.69$ (large effect/relationship)

$r = .70$ and greater (very large effect/relationship)

4.8 Quality Assurance

In quantitative studies, the frequently used quality criteria include reliability and validity. In qualitative studies the quality criterion applied is that of trustworthiness. Trustworthiness includes four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. To guarantee that the findings of the study were valid, the researcher applied the above criteria, which are discussed in more detail below.

Reliability is the dependability of data collection methods and techniques. If they were applied to a different location, group of participants or scholars, the results would remain the same (Maree, 2016). In this study, the researcher used the EGRA assessments as measuring

instruments. These instruments have been standardised and also approved by the DBE. The instruments are also used regularly to assess learners in the early grades.

The validity of an instrument refers to the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure (Maree, 2016). Validity in this study was obtained through triangulation, which is the use of multiple methods of data collection. Multiple data collection methods came in the form of the pre-test and post-test, the intervention taking on a multimodal approach, and a post-intervention learner questionnaire. Triangulation can also refer to different theories being used in the study to interpret results, which was evident in this study, and the triangulation of methods, in which qualitative and quantitative methods were used.

Credibility refers to a belief that the data collected is true and that the reader will believe that the findings are true (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). Credibility can be ensured by adopting well established research methods, a research design that fits well with the research questions, and through the selection of theories that are aligned with the research questions. Techniques that were used to establish credibility in this study were through continued engagement with the participants, and the class teachers were present during every intervention session. Regular observation was also done by the researcher, during which the learners had to complete the activity during each intervention. There was also frequent debriefing after each intervention session with the researcher and her supervisor. The researcher's supervisor also double-checked that the analysis of the data and the findings were relevant to the study as an 'independent, distanced and critical eye' (Creswell & Miller, 2000). In addition, the quantitative results of the study were double-checked by an expert in quantitative data in order to have another expert opinion and critical eye. The researcher also constantly went back to her field notes and kept to the original plan of how the intervention was to be carried out (Connelly, 2016).

Transferability asserts that in qualitative research, the goal is to discard generalisations. Instead, the researcher wants to provide the reader with a full and purposeful account of the participants under study and their context (Connelly, 2016). With the focus being on the Grade 3 participants of the study, the data presented included the learners' drawings and written products, which brought their personal histories and background knowledge into the intervention sessions. In other words, the researcher painted a full picture of the context to the reader, to enable the reader to decide if the research might be transferrable to their research or

context (Connelly, 2016). Transferability also asks the question of how typical participants are in relation to the context being studied. The aim of the study was to design a translanguaging intervention in a remedial programme for Grade 3 learners from Quintile 1 schools, which are often the lowest-performing schools and are in need of remedial assistance. Through purposive sampling, the researcher ensured that the selected participants were representative of the topic under investigation (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014).

Dependability is used in qualitative research in preference to reliability. It suggests that if the study was repeated in a similar setting and similar techniques of data collection were applied, then the findings would be the same (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). The study used two participating schools, which were within a 1 km radius of each other. The two participating schools showed similar results. The researcher regularly updated her supervisor on the changes that occurred throughout the research process, including how new data sources and data-gathering techniques were incorporated. She also gave regular updates on the analysis process, decisions regarding the analysis process, and how she arrived at certain understandings of the phenomenon (Connelly, 2016).

Conformability is described as the extent to which the findings of a study come from the research participants and not from the researcher's bias (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). The presentation of the results included several examples of the drawings and written products of the learners to ensure that the findings came from the participants, as it would not have been possible for such findings to come from the researcher. The researcher also ensured that member checking was done to ensure the validity of the results (Connelly, 2016). Member checking was constantly done between the researcher and her supervisor, and a quantitative data expert checked the validity of the quantitative results. Another strategy that the researcher implemented to reduce bias was triangulation of the data collection methods in which a multiplicity of data collection sources were used to gain a clearer understanding of the topic under discussion. A mixed-methods design allowed for the study to have diversity, as the researcher did not only want to rely on one technique or method to collect the data (Hesse-Biber, 2010).

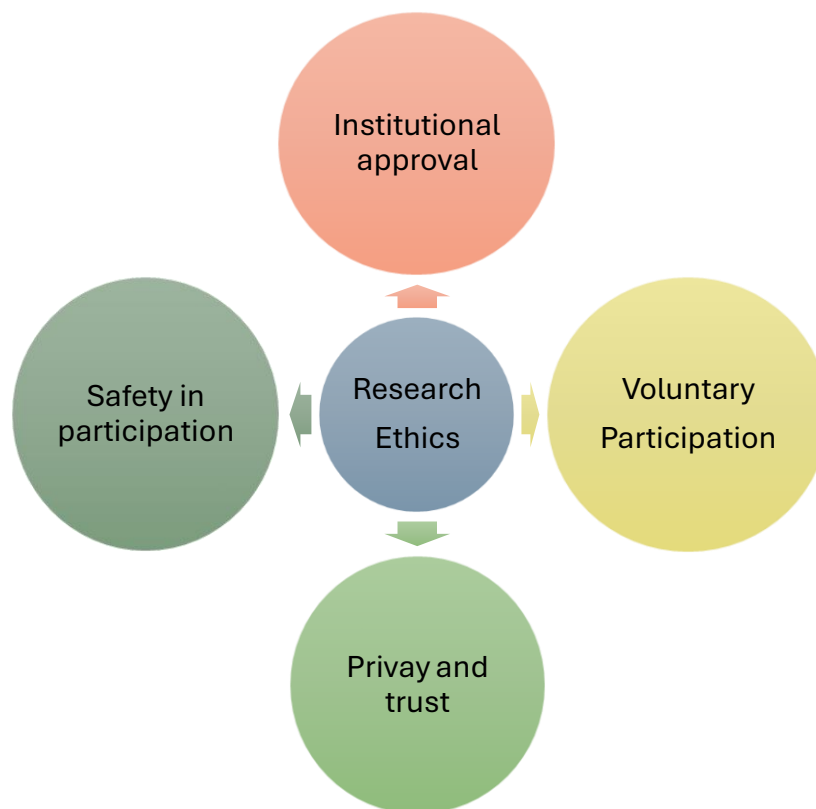
4.9 Ethical Assurance

There are several ethical guidelines that researchers need to adhere to when conducting research with human participants in order to protect the interests of the participants

(Machimana, 2021). Ethics can be seen as the values or principles that certain societies hold to, reflecting what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour. The research ethics that a community of academics hold will determine the practices they use when conducting research (Creswell, 2014b; Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Ethics in research always protect the research participants and keep their identities anonymous (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Therefore, before a researcher begins to conduct any type of research, it is essential for them to acquaint themselves with the ethical guiding principles of the University at which they are conducting their study and to receive funding for their research.

Figure 4. 2

The Ethical Assurance Measures for the Study



4.9.1 Institutional Approval

Documentation such as consent letters were first compiled and then sent to the Ethics Committee at the University of Pretoria to receive ethical approval. Once the Ethics Committee gave the approval letter for the study, the researcher contacted the Gauteng Department of Education and forwarded the relevant documentation to the department to receive authorisation to commence the research. Once the researcher had received approval, she was able to conduct the study at the two Quintile 1 primary schools in the Tshwane South district of Gauteng. The

school principals, followed by the Heads of Grade 3 at the two schools, were then contacted to provide approval to conduct the study. Finally, the documentation, such as the consent letters for the principals and teachers and assent letters from the learners that were approved by the Ethics Committee, were given to the school principals, teachers, and learners to fill out. The consent letters included the researcher's and supervisor's contact numbers and email addresses for any questions or queries prior to, during, or after the research.

4.9.2 Voluntary Participation

Informed consent includes providing the potential research participant with all information relating to the study, such as the aims and objectives, data collection methods, any possible risks, as well as potential benefits of the study (Touitou et al., 2004). This is done before participants give any consent. The letters of consent were given to the principal and parents. The learners were provided with letters of assent for their approval of participation in the intervention sessions and observations during intervention sessions. The participants were notified that participation in the study was completely voluntary and they were free to decline to participate in the study without there being any negative consequences.

4.9.3 Privacy and Trust

The topic under study was not one where any personal details were required of the participants; hence, there was no need for complete anonymity of the participants. Confidentiality was achieved by providing each participating learner with a pseudonym so that no information could be linked back to them, as were both participating schools (Nolen & Putten, 2007). The participants were also not deceived in any way, and trust was established between the researcher and research participants (McDonald et al., 2008).

4.9.4 Safety in Participation

The benefit of the study, such as establishing whether a translanguaging intervention made any difference in learner performance, outweighed any potential dangers involved. There was no likely cause of harm while observations were being done or during the art-based intervention activities. There was no conflict between the interests of the researcher and those of the participants (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The benefit of the study was in gaining new knowledge into whether a translanguaging intervention taking a multimodality approach would aid learners in reading comprehension. Participation in this study was voluntary, and there was no compensation in the form of reward or repayment for time spent.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the methodological steps taken by the researcher to conduct the study; the study took on a mixed-methods design, with quantitative data coming from pre- and post-tests and questionnaires and qualitative data from writings and drawings by Grade 3 learners. The participants were described along with the research site and sampling method that was used. The chapter also discussed how data analysis was done and how quality assurance and ethical steps were undertaken while completing the study. The following chapter presents the qualitative data for the study.

Chapter 5

Presentation of Results – Qualitative Data

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from a translinguaging intervention that took place at two Quintile 1 primary schools in Eersterust. Two classes with 64 learners in total participated in the study. At School A, 32 learners from an English Home Language class participated. At School B, 32 learners from a Home Language class participated in the study. The aim of the intervention was to incorporate all types of learning: listening, speaking, reading, and writing in a translinguaging reading intervention.

This section includes screenshots of the EGRA passages that were used and the drawings and writings of participating learners. The qualitative part of the study seeks to answer the following research question: How does implementing a translinguaging space as an intervention improve learners' ability to engage with the content taught?

Figure 5. 1

Grade 3 learners participating in the translinguaging intervention



Table 5.1 represents the intervention sessions with the activities that the learners participated in.

Table 5. 1

Translanguaging intervention sessions and activities

EGRA Reading Passage	Intervention Activity
Passage 1: Sam and Jill	Pre-test
Passage 2: Mpho goes to the farm	Activity 1: Creating a translanguaging reading space through drawing. In this session, the learners were asked to draw their understanding of the reading comprehension passage.
Passage 3: Lebo's birthday	Activity 2: Translanguaging and the extension of vocabulary. A brainstorming session took place in which the learners brainstormed words to describe and write a birthday and what one does on their birthday.
Passage 4: Jabu and his dog	Activity 3: Translanguaging and comprehension skills. The learners drew and wrote on their understanding of the comprehension passage. Rhyming words were explored based on the comprehension passage.
Passage 5: Nomsa and the plastic snake	Activity 4: Translanguaging and four-box organisers. In pairs, the children created four-box organisers that included the vocabulary/written word, a visual representation of the word, a definition of the word, and a sentence using the word.
Passage 6: Nunu the giant	Post-test

5.2 Creating a Translanguaging Reading Space Through Drawing (Activity 1, Passage 2)

5.2.1 Activity 1, Passage 2: *Mpho*

In Activity 1, the teacher and participating learners read the passage ‘Mpho Goes to the Farm’ aloud (see Figure 5.2.1.1). It illustrates translanguaging through drawing.

Figure 5.2.1.1

Mpho Goes to the Farm

Assessment 2	
Passage reading (PR): Chart 2	
	Words per line
Mpho goes to the farm to visit his friend, Buhle.	10
The boys like to help to feed the animals. They give	11
the hens food and water.	5
They run to the dam to see the ducks.	9
Then Buhle falls into the dam with a big splash.	10
Help me! Help me! He screams. Mpho jumps in and pulls	11
Buhle from the water. They are both very wet. The boys	11
sit in the sun until they are dry.	8
Total number of words:	75

After the passage was read together, a classroom discussion took place during which the learners had to discuss what the key points of the story were. Here, the teacher assessed their comprehension skills of sequencing and summarising. The learners were allowed to answer in their home language and make use of gestures to construct meaning. Because knowledge is often transferred from the home language to the LoLT, the teacher allowed the learners to express their knowledge and ideas in their home language, in this case, Afrikaans. This, in turn, allowed the learners to make links between the two languages. Since the learners’ proficiency in writing and speaking English was low, according to pre-test results, the classroom discussion was a way that the learners could respond to what they had just read. The teacher asked the learners what a farm was, if any of them had recently visited a farm, and what they did during

their visit. The teacher also asked questions related to the comprehension passage, such as why Buhle fell into the dam. This was to assess the learners' understanding of what was read. After the passage was read, a classroom discussion took place, when the majority of learners could answer questions about the passage and understand what it was about. Most had visited a farm before and were familiar with the different types of farm animals.

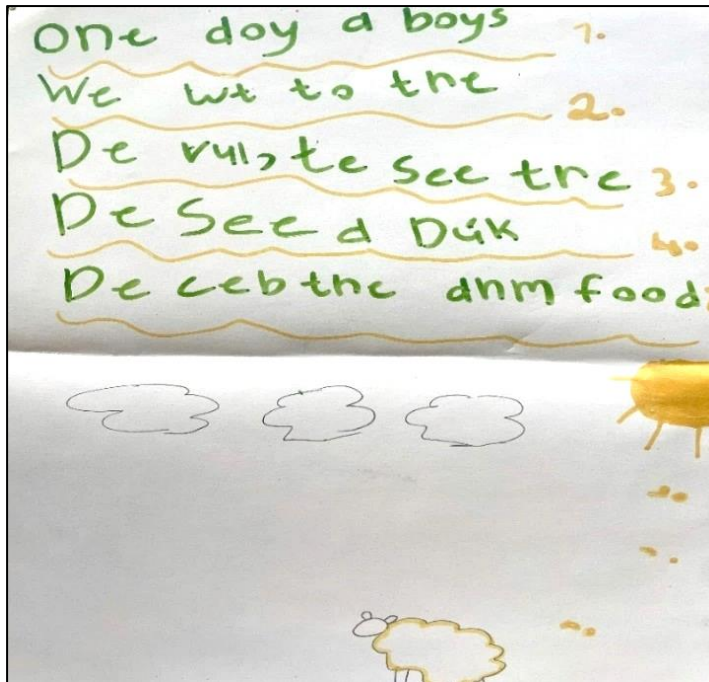
Activity 1 was a translinguaging and multimodal activity, which included the learners' drawings (pictures) of what they had understood about the reading passage – a farm visit. The learners were told they could also draw their own experiences about a visit to a farm, and they were allowed to write a short paragraph if they wanted to. This was done to assess the learners' writing abilities in English and their ability to express meaning multimodally through drawing and writing. Most of the learners chose to draw their understanding of the comprehension passage. From the drawings (presented below), we see that the learners were able to express their understanding of the reading through their drawings. Some also drew from their own life experiences and presented that in their drawings. According to Phatudi (2016), one method to encourage mastery of a second language is to allow learners to express what they know by drawing pictures. Drawing, as a means of investigating what learners know, challenges the dominant view that verbal and written modes are the primary modes of representation. Translinguaging as a multimodal practice takes into consideration how the visual plays a significant role in the construction of knowledge and content (Jewitt & Kress, 2010).

The comprehension passages chosen for the study included stories that were culturally relevant to the learners. The names of the characters Jabu, Mpho, and Lebo (from the previous texts) are names that you would typically find in South Africa, in classrooms and of friends. By choosing these passages which were relevant to the learners' context, the teacher was able to get relevant responses from them when questions were asked.

Figure 5.2.1.2 represents Nomsa's drawing. It illustrates her attempt at writing a short paragraph and at drawing her understanding of the story. Her proficiency in English was low. She could, however, express her understanding of the comprehension passage through her drawing of a sheep on a farm.

Figure 5.2.1.2

Nomsa's Drawing



This shows the importance of the visual/artistic mode as it assists learners in expressing meaning more clearly visually than linguistically. Research consistently shows that drawing as a means of investigating what children know has the potential to challenge the dominant view that verbal and written modes are the primary modes of representation (Peterson & Friedrich, 2023). Although there was no mention of a sheep in the passage, sheep count as farm animals. This expressed her understanding that the comprehension piece was about a farm and showed that she could draw from her personal lifeworld to make meaning of the passage.

Figure 5.2.1.3

Thabo's Drawing

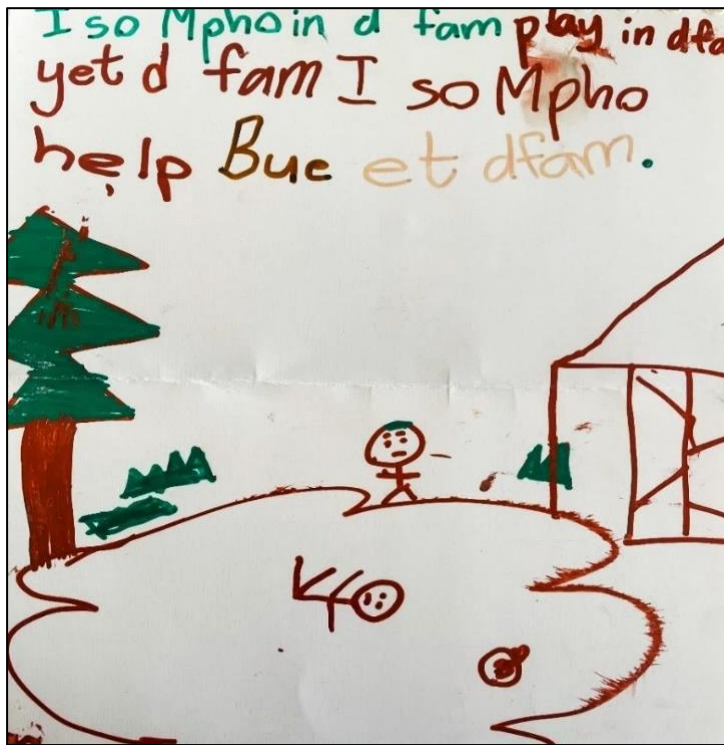
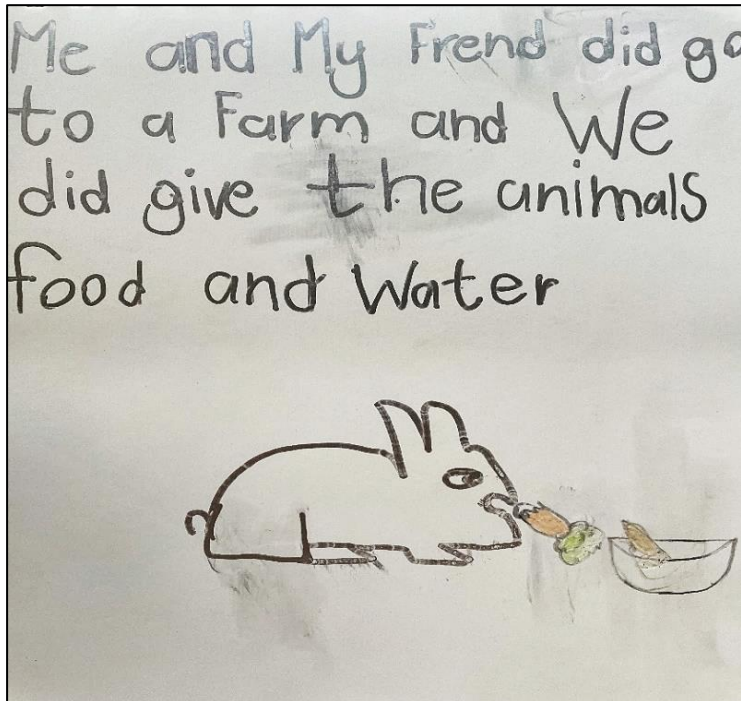


Figure 5.2.1.3 indicates that Thabo was also more successful in expressing meaning through his drawing than in writing. He was not able to express his understanding of the comprehension passage through his writing, but could verbally do so in class during the discussion, and visually through his drawing to conceptualise the story. It is evident that Thabo's writing skills in English were limited. His drawing, however, includes someone drowning in what seems to be a pond. This illustrates his understanding of the plot of the passage. Through his drawing, Thabo was also able to draw inferences. He was able to draw information explicitly stated in the text and explain the main ideas, which included that someone was drowning when they visited the farm.

Figure 5.2.1.4

John's drawing

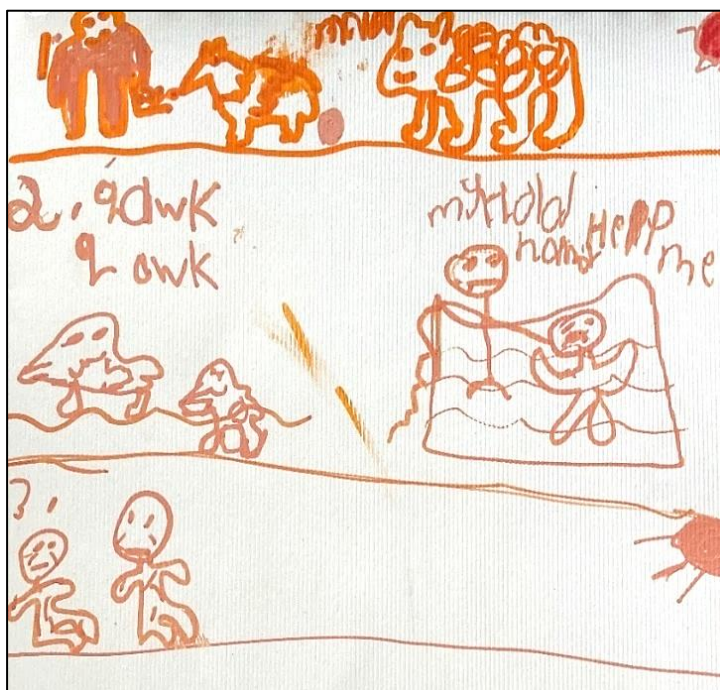


John's writing ability in English (Figure 5.2.1.4) was more advanced than that of his classmates. He was able to write a short sentence related to his drawing of the visit to the farm. In his writing, he indicated that they went to the farm to feed animals. The animal that he and his friend fed was a rabbit, which he represented in a drawing of a rabbit being fed carrots. Even though a rabbit was not mentioned in the story, the learner understood that rabbits are farm animals and drew on his own life experience of visiting a farm and feedings rabbits.

Tshepo could also not write a coherent sentence (Figure 5.2.1.5), which shows his lack of proficiency in writing English. He divided his drawing into three different sections. In the first section, he included animals and a boy feeding ducks. The middle section of his drawing illustrates ducks and the word ‘qawk’. Therefore, he understood that Mpho and Buhle went to the dam to see the ducks, as revealed in the duck pictures and sounds. His drawing also illustrates Buhle falling into the dam with the accompanying words ‘hold my hand’ and ‘help me’.

Figure 5.2.1.5

Tshepo’s Drawing



The short phrases and words that Tshepo wrote supported his drawings of the ducks and the sounds they make, and of Buhle almost drowning and needing assistance. The bottom section includes the image of the two boys drying themselves in the sun. The drawing reveals a creative understanding of the comprehension passage and the learner’s ability to recount how each event took place in the correct sequence. Here the learner was able to grasp the comprehension skill of reorganisation, and summarising of the main points and the sequence in which they took place.

Jason drew his understanding of the comprehension passage (Figure 5.2.1.6). He illustrates Buhle drowning after falling into the dam; Mpho is about to dive into the water to save Buhle. Here Jason clearly expresses his understanding of the passage through his drawing, as he also includes ducks in the water and a hen laying eggs in a barn.

Figure 5.2.1.6

Jason's Drawing



The images reveal his understanding of the reading passage as taking place on a farm and Buhle falling into the dam. Through his artistic expression, Jason was able to visualise what the reading passage was about. Jason's drawing provides insight into what he knows and understands about the reading comprehension passage.

Figure 5.2.1.7

Adam's Drawing

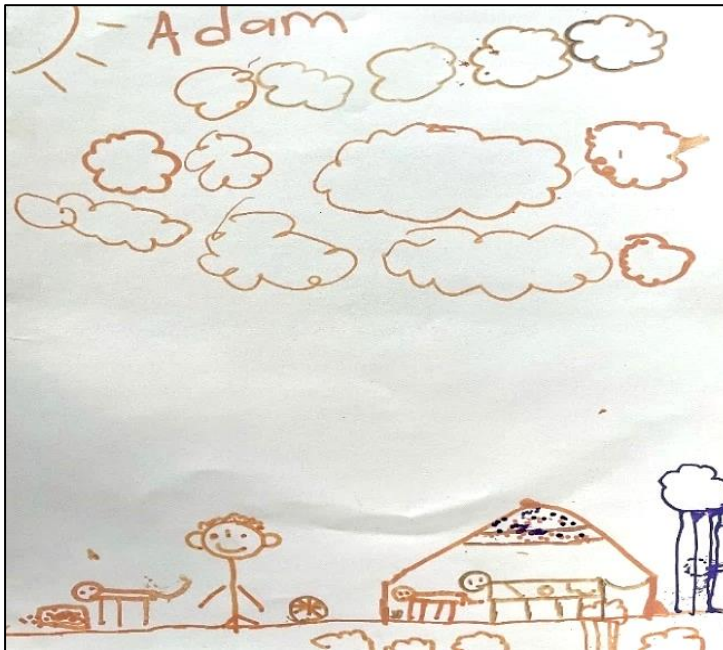


Figure 5.2.1.8

Kyle's Drawing

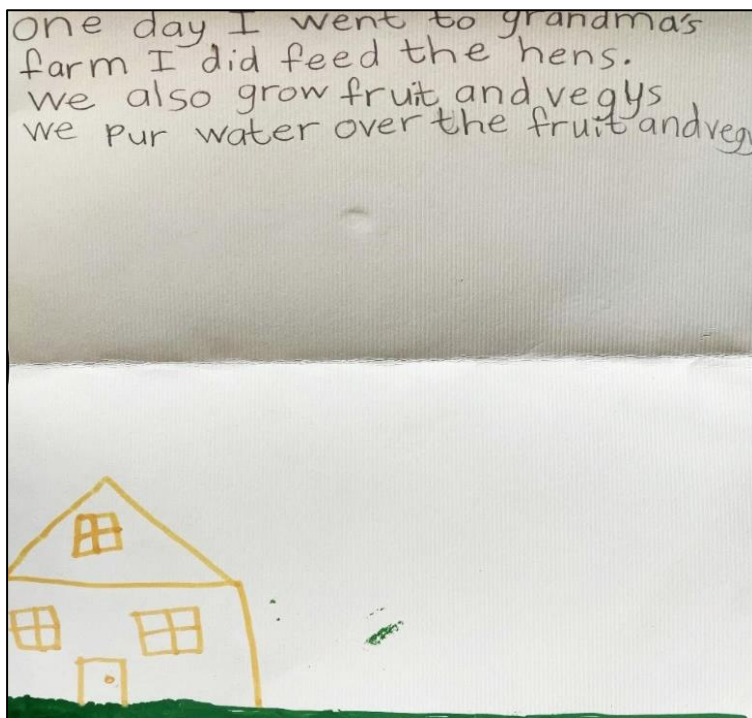


Adam and Kyle, who were sitting next to one another during this classroom activity, drew similar pictures. Both drew a barn, haystacks, animals, such as cows and sheep, and boys smiling. Both drawings also included boys playing with a ball. These two learners were able to scaffold each other's comprehension of what took place on the farm and identified farm animals. The soccer balls indicate what they enjoyed doing on a farm. Cows, sheep, and soccer balls were not mentioned in the reading passage. These additions indicate that both learners were able to draw from real-life experiences, and from what they enjoyed doing, when they visited a farm. Translanguaging as a practice encourages learning to take place from a multimodal perspective; a learner's understanding of a text is not only assessed through the written mode but also through drawings and gesturing.

Jaden (figure 5.2.1.9) decided instead to write a short story on his visit to his grandmother's farm. He described how, at the farm, they fed hens and grew fruits and vegetables that they watered. Jaden brought his own experience to his written product of visiting his grandmother on her farm.

Figure 5.2.1.9

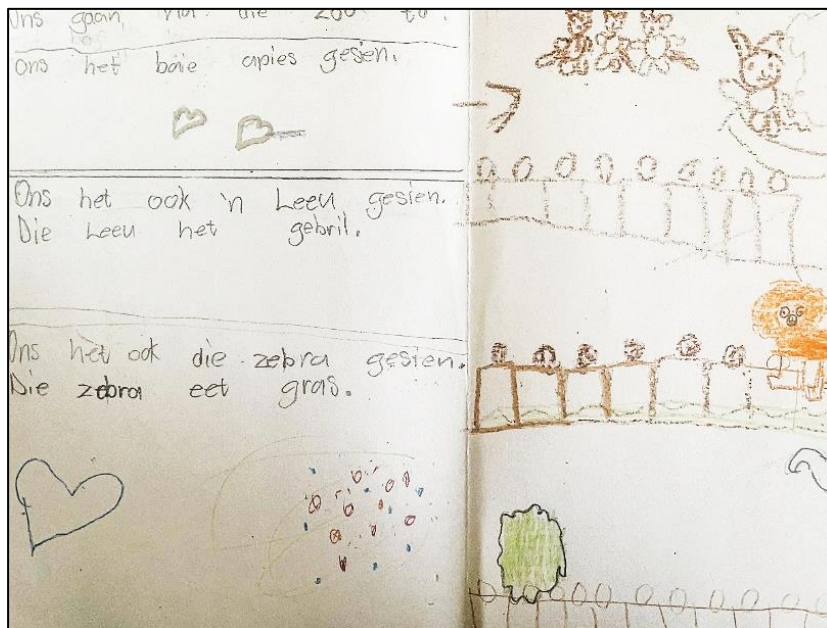
Jaden's writing



In the story, there is no mention of growing and watering vegetables. Jaden brought his own lifeworld into the activity in that fruits and vegetables are usually grown on farms. Jaden was able to make the link between home literacies and classroom literacies.

Figure 5.2.1.10

Jacob's Drawing

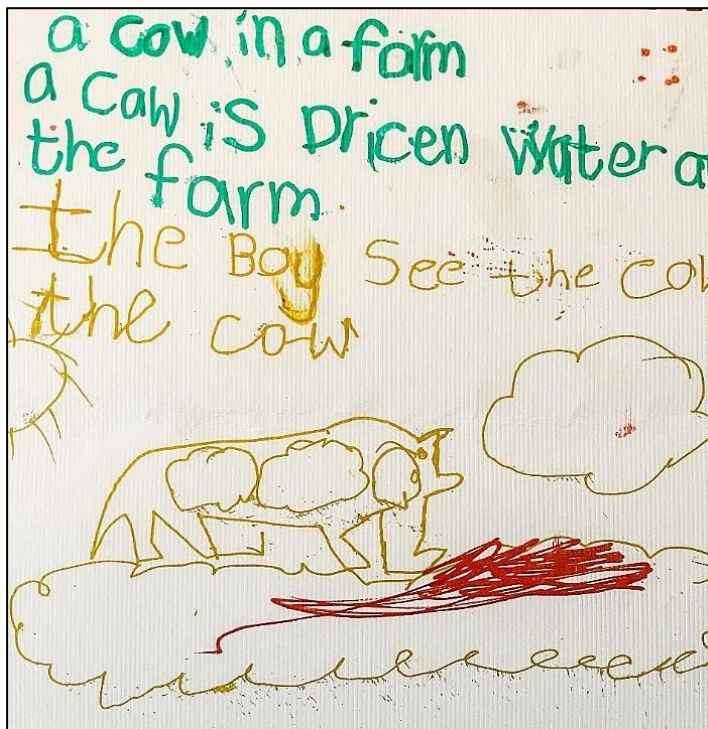


Jacob decided to write about and draw his visit to the zoo (Figure 5.2.1.10) even though the comprehension passage was about a visit to a farm. When the learners were asked if any of them had visited a farm and fed the animals, many of them put their hands up and told of their experiences of farm visits and even of visiting their grandparents on the farm. Jacob, however told of his experience at the zoo and how he saw similar animals at school. He asked if he could rather write about and draw his visit to the zoo, and if he could rather write his story in Afrikaans.

He wrote, 'Ons gaan na die zoe to, ons het baie apies gesien' (we are going to the zoo, we saw many monkeys). In the second section, he also wrote of how he saw a lion and heard the lion roar (ons het a leeu gesien, die leeu het gebril). Lastly, he saw a zebra eating grass (ons het ook die zebra gesien, die zebra eet gras). Jacob brought in his personal experience of going to the zoo and relayed it to the story of a visit to a farm. He made a link between the farm and a zoo and how animals are found in both places.

Figure 5.2.1.11

Wayne's Drawing



Wayne (figure 5.2.1.11) chose to draw and write his understanding of the comprehension passage. He drew a cow and wrote 'a cow in a farm', though there was no mention of a cow in the comprehension passage. Wayne drew on his background knowledge by drawing a cow and he knew that cows farm animals. One can also see from his writing that it is below the required level for Grade 3 with many spelling and grammatical errors. He says, 'a cow is dricen water at the farm' and draws a cow drinking water at a pond on the farm. Even though Wayne's writing does not make much sense, he was still able to participate in this exercise and drew his understanding of a farm animal in the form of a cow. This idea from Wayne stemmed from the classroom discussion about farm visits, when they were asked if any of them had recently visited a farm and what animals they had seen on their visit to the farm.

5.2.2 Observation of Intervention Session One (Activity 1, Passage 2 Mpho goes to the farm)

From my observation of the first intervention session as a researcher and practitioner, the learners from both the participating schools were more engaged than when they wrote the pre-test and took part in discussions on the comprehension passage. The learners responded to the questions in both English and Afrikaans. The learners were also excited when cardboard papers

and paint pens were presented to them to create their own drawings. This emphasises the importance of classroom activities taking a multimodal approach in which drawings, writings, and discussions are all incorporated, and not just formal methods of teaching. The materials of the cardboard and paint pens also supported the lesson, and made the activity enjoyable for the learners, thereby increasing their creativity.

5.3 Translanguaging and the Extension of Vocabulary (Activity 2, passage 3)

5.3.1 Activity 2, Passage 3: *Lebo*

In Activity 2 (table 5.1), the teachers and learners did a translanguaging writing activity based on the reading passage ‘Lebo’s Birthday’ (figure 5.3.1.1).

In writing their own stories, the learners were allowed to write in the language in which they were most comfortable, namely Afrikaans. The researcher wanted to determine and extend the learners’ knowledge of vocabulary in English through a translanguaging writing activity

Figure 5.3.1.1

Passage Reading 3: Lebo’s Birthday

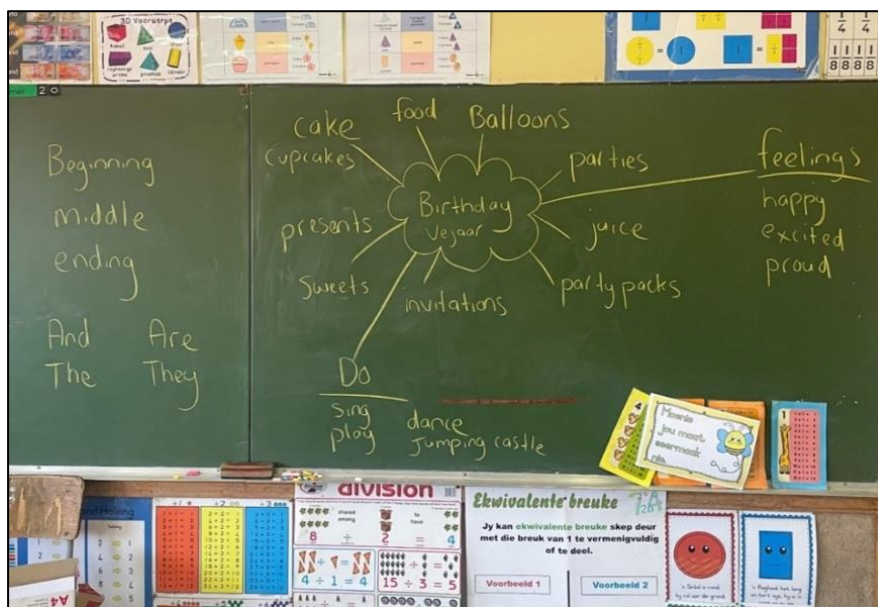
Assessment 3	
Passage reading (PR): Chart 3	
	Words per line
Lebo is very excited. It is her birthday. She is	10
eight years old. She wants a bike.	7
Dad gives her a surprise on her birthday. He hides her gift in	13
the garden. She hears Dad singing in the garden.	9
Happy birthday! my dear Lebo.	5
She looks behind the tree and sees Dad with the bike.	11
He gives her a big smile. Lebo is so happy and shouts with joy.	14
“Is this bike for me! Dad?”	6
“Yes! It is your gift Lebo. “Thank you very much, Dad”.	11
Now I will ride my new bike to school .	8
Total number of words:	95

Vocabulary is a learner's ability to understand what words mean; for instance, the learner is able to answer the question, 'What is a dog?'. Translanguaging pedagogy requires that if classroom discussions take place in one language, learners should be allowed to answer and write their answers in their home language if the LoLT is not their home language (Li & Luo, 2017). This helps the learners to transfer meaning from the home language to the LoLT. The teacher and learners brainstormed words to describe birthdays. For instance, the learners were asked how they felt and what they did on birthdays. On their own, the learners had to write short stories on the topic of birthdays; they were allowed to write in both their home language and the LoLT, that is, English.

The teacher and the learners orally shared ideas about what they were going to write and the meaning of certain words that were brainstormed were translated from English to Afrikaans. Many of the learners asked the teacher if they could write their story in Afrikaans, as it was their home language, and they were more comfortable speaking and writing it. Figure 5.3.1.2 is an example of a brainstorming cluster done with the learners during the intervention.

Figure 5.3.1.2

Classroom Brainstorming Session



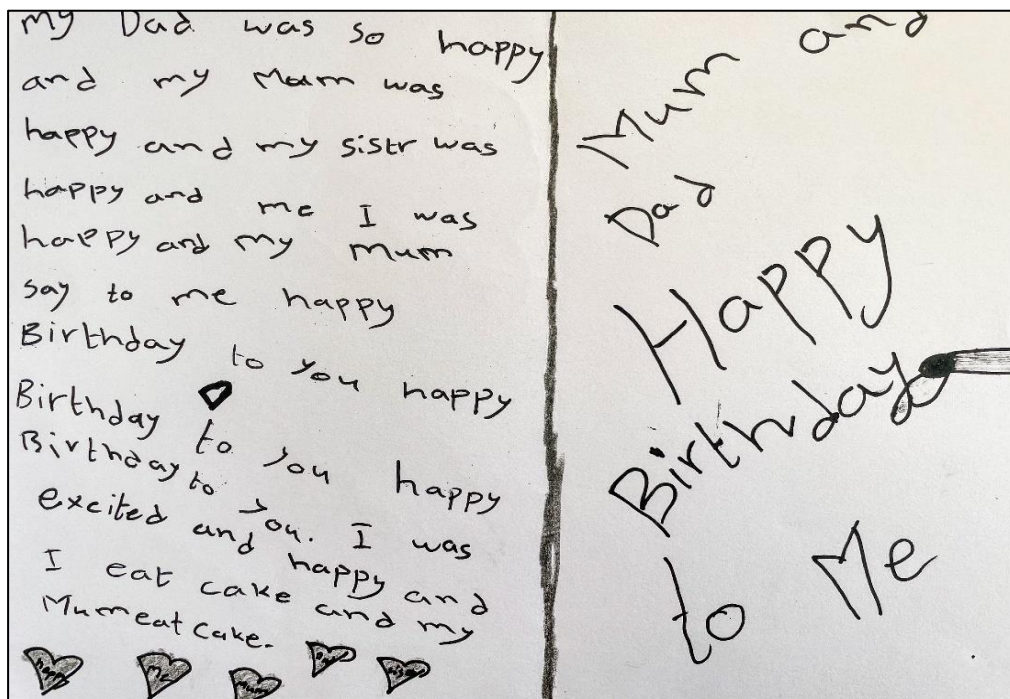
Brainstorming ideas with learners helps to develop critical thinking, as the learners are required to tap into their background knowledge of a certain topic. A brainstorming session also helps to expand the learners' vocabulary; the learners were introduced to new words, their spelling, and their meanings in their home languages. This, in turn, allowed the learners to jot down

ideas in the form of notes. This could be done visually, or through illustrations or in the form of a brainstorming cluster, such as the example below. This helped the learners to draft, organise, and revise their writing. In the learner examples below, the majority wrote a story, even though many written products were not grammatically correct. The session expanded on their vocabulary of a specific context, which is a birthday.

Tim struggled to write at the required Grade 3 level (Figure 5.3.1.3). He reiterated how happy each of his family members were on his birthday.

Figure 5.3.1.3

Tim's Drawing

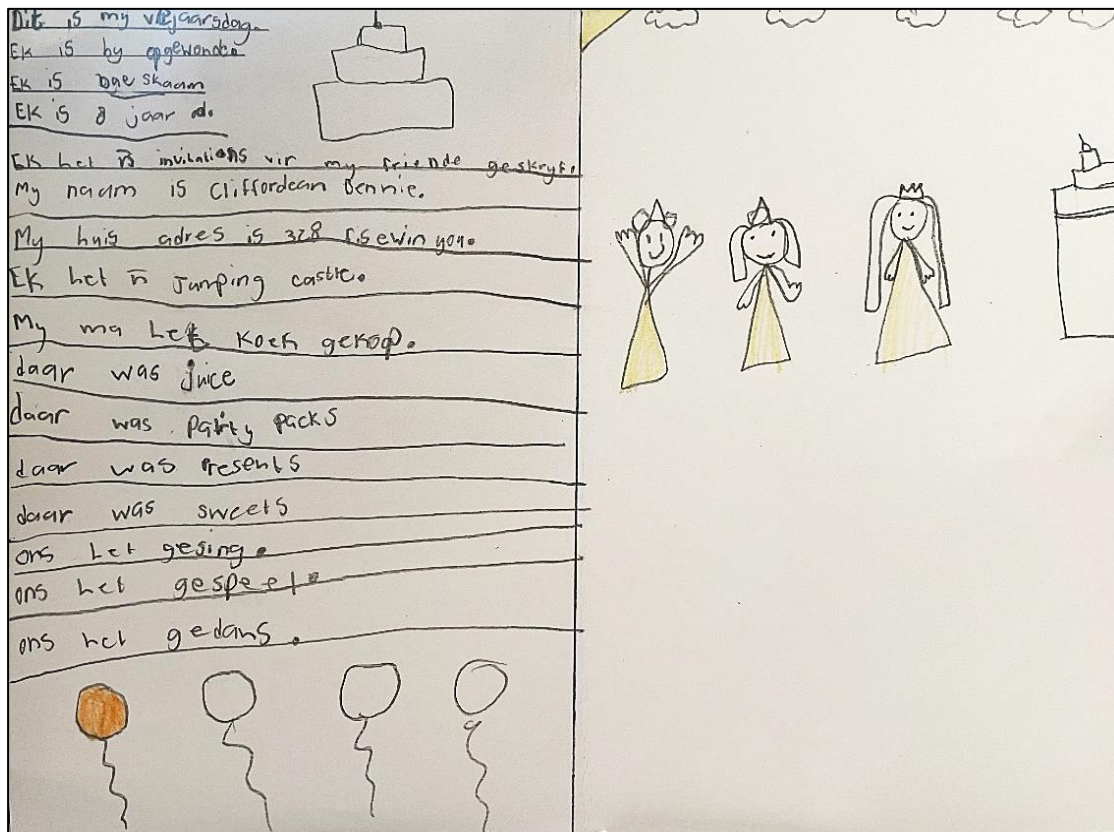


Using the words from the brainstorming session and the reading passage, such as ‘excited’ and ‘happy’, he was able to express how he felt and that they ate cake. Tim was only able to write short and simple sentences; he was guided through the brainstorming cluster on the spelling of contextual words on the board. This helped him to articulate how he felt about his birthday in simple sentences. Scaffolding that comes from a brainstorming session has the ability to improve the learners’ vocabulary. They were introduced to new words that they were not familiar with, which, in turn, improved their reading comprehension.

Cliffordean wrote most of her story in Afrikaans (Figure 5.3.1.4). Brainstorming cluster words in English, which are not present in the reading passage, such as sing and dance, is present in her story.

Figure 5.3.1.4

Cliffordean's Drawing



However, she chose to write these words in Afrikaans: 'gesing' (sing), 'gedans' (dance) and 'gespeel' (play). Other words such as 'party packs', 'presents', 'juice' and 'sweets', she kept in English. Words such as 'daar', which means 'there' in English, are words the learner is more familiar with in her home language, Afrikaans, rather than in English. The word 'excited' was written in Afrikaans, 'opgewonde'. One can see from the drawing that this activity made her happy with the drawing of the girls with smiling faces and one with a birthday crown on her head. In her story, she also mentions that she is 'shy' or 'skaam' so the activity helped this learner to express herself more freely and to be less shy.

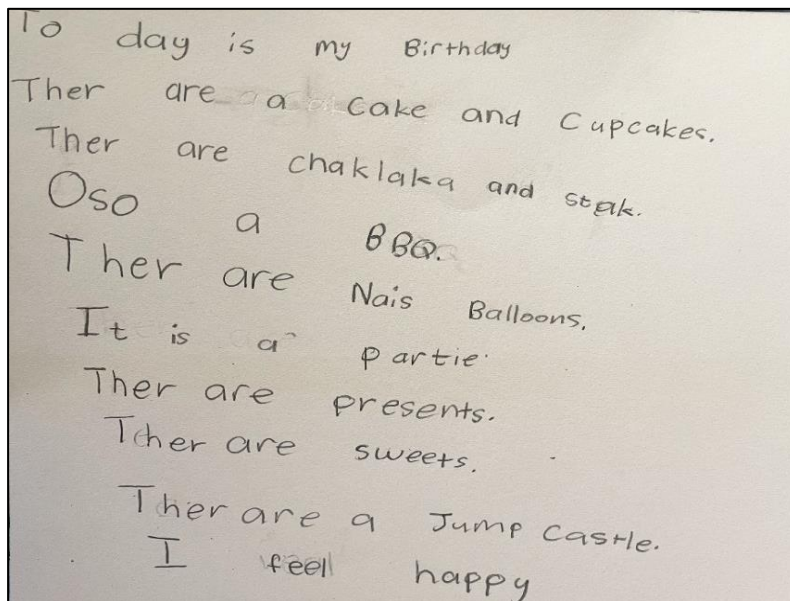
Through the learner's incorporation of both English and Afrikaans in one written product, she expressed a creative understanding of a translanguaging writing activity. The words the learner

was more familiar with were written in Afrikaans, and through the brainstorming session, she gained more of an understanding of English words (party packs, presents, juice and sweets) and their spelling. The session introduced Cliffordean to a new range of words and she was able to apply them to her own story. By allowing the use of both languages in one written product, the learners could transfer meaning from Afrikaans to English. Although not always grammatically or syntactically correct, this learner was able to practice her writing and apply background knowledge. This is important when implementing translanguaging, as the focus is more on how learners apply background knowledge and engage with the content, than with getting the task ‘right’.

For learners such as Paul (Figure 5.3.1.5), who are not proficient at the required Grade 3 level in their ability to write in English, an activity such as a brainstorm cluster can assist in helping them draft and practise their writing.

Figure 5.3.1.5

Paul’s Story



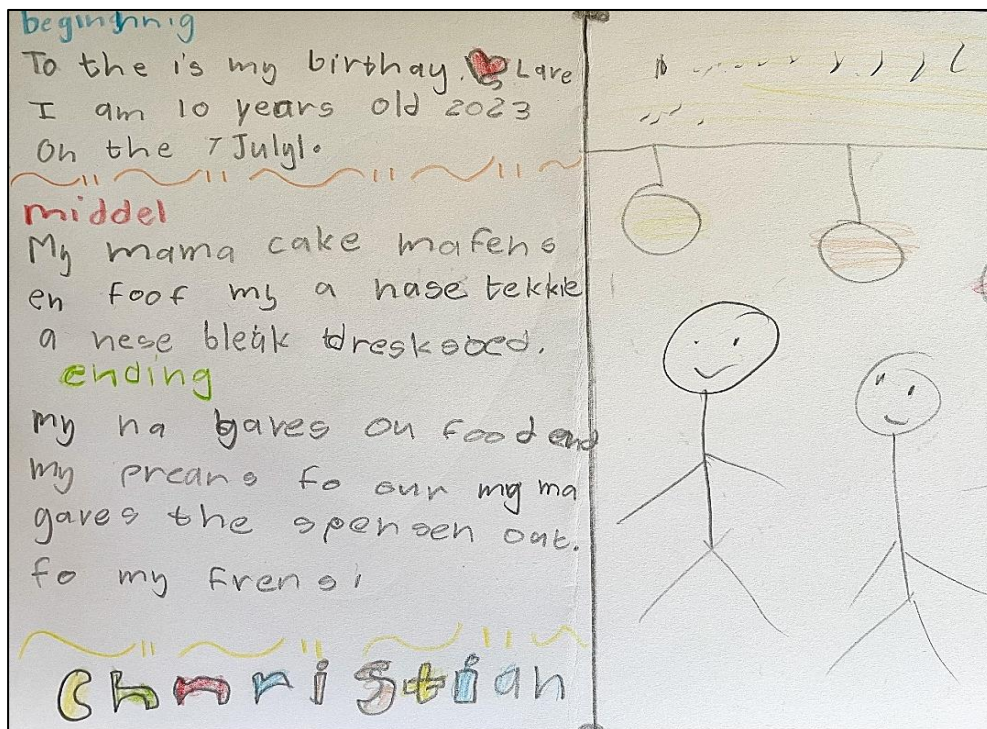
During the brainstorming session, Paul understood the meaning of certain words such as presents, sweets, cake and how one felt on their birthday. He was able to see how these words were spelt on the board. Even though his spelling of certain words such as ‘oso’ (also), ‘ther’ (there) and ‘nais’ (nice) is incorrect. From the overall written product, he understood the topic of a birthday. Paul also included the word ‘chakalaka’, which is traditional South African

cuisine. Here, he makes links between home literacies and classroom literacies, which translanguaging as a practice promotes.

There are always words or concepts that learners are more familiar with in their home language. When learners are allowed to discuss these concepts in their home language, they can be guided to make links with the English words. The brainstorming session increased Paul's (figure 5.3.1.5) vocabulary and introduced him to new words and the spelling of words he was unfamiliar with. This, in turn, improves a learner's vocabulary, which assists in increasing reading and writing skills.

Figure 5.3.1.6

Christian's Story

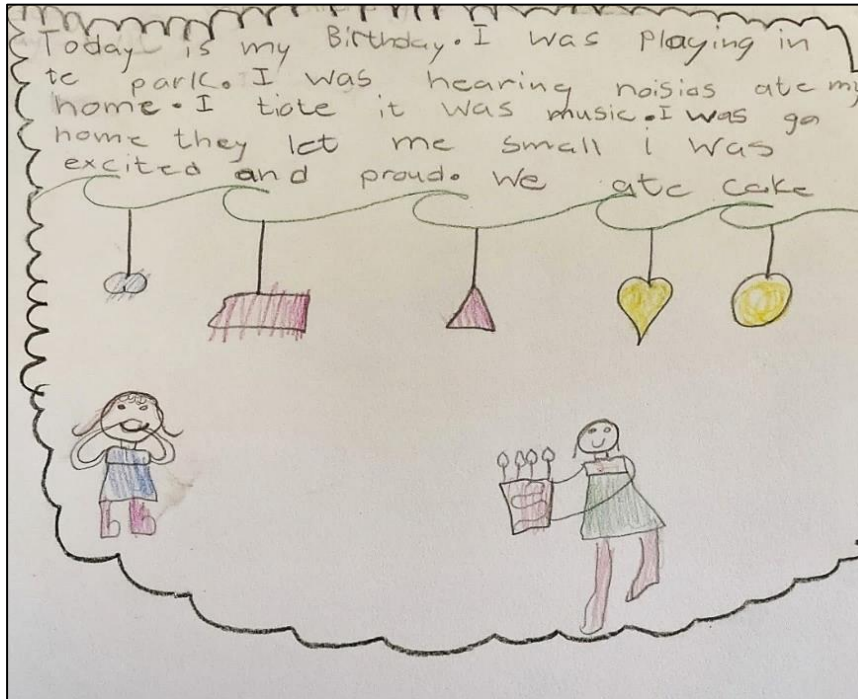


In Figure 5.3.1.6, it is evident that Christian struggled to write in English. Through the brainstorming activity, he was given support with certain words such as 'birthday', 'cake', and 'food'. From his writing, his understanding of how one spent their birthday was how his mother made cake and food and how time was spent with their 'frens' (friends). His drawing symbolises the decorations and friends he had at his birthday party, who had smiles on their faces and were happy. Through a discussion session that took place in both the learners' home language and LoLT, struggling learners such as Christian were able to take part and produce

their own written products, this extended their vocabulary, which, ultimately, might also improve on their reading skills.

Figure 5.3.1.7

Sally's Story

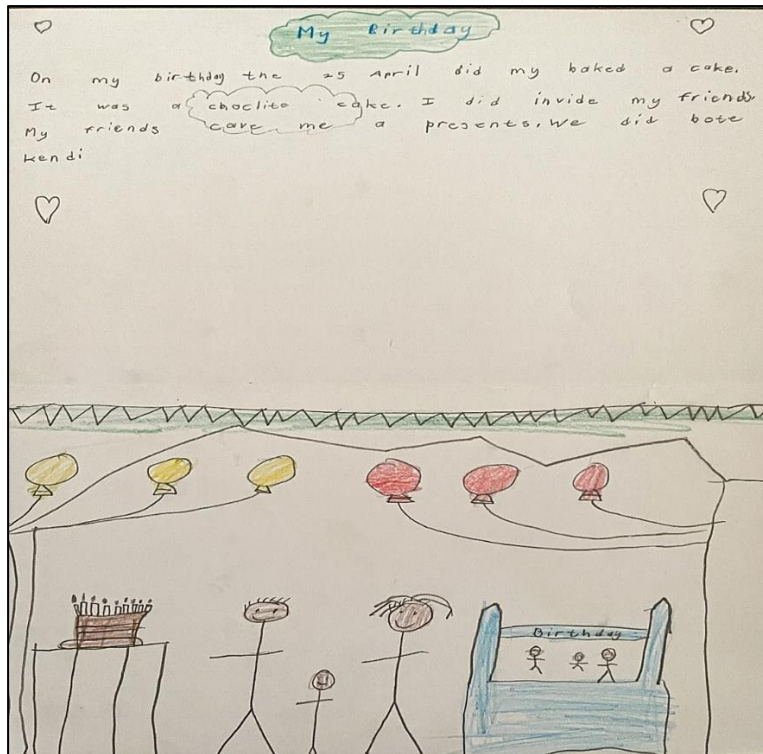


In Figure 5.3.1.7, Sally's writing was not grammatically or syntactically correct, however, she was able to express herself through her writing. She told of how she heard noises coming from her home and felt excited. They ate cake on her birthday. The figure on the left was surprised and excited to see someone bringing a cake, indicating a surprise party was arranged for Sally. Sally was able to grasp the idea of a birthday surprise from reading the passage. Like Lebo, who was surprised on her birthday, she made a link between the garden and a park in the story. Through the brainstorming session, she learnt the spelling of relevant words and how to apply them in a sentence. The introduction to the new words and linking of the words with her home language (Afrikaans) during the brainstorming session helped with knowledge transfer and an improvement in her reading and writing skills.

Clive wrote a short story and drew a picture of his understanding from the reading comprehension passage (Figure 5.3.1.8). During the classroom discussion, he was able to express that a cake was made for him on his birthday, his friends were invited, and presents were given. He also wrote ‘bote kendi’, which means they ‘bought candy’.

Figure 5.3.1.8

Clive's Story

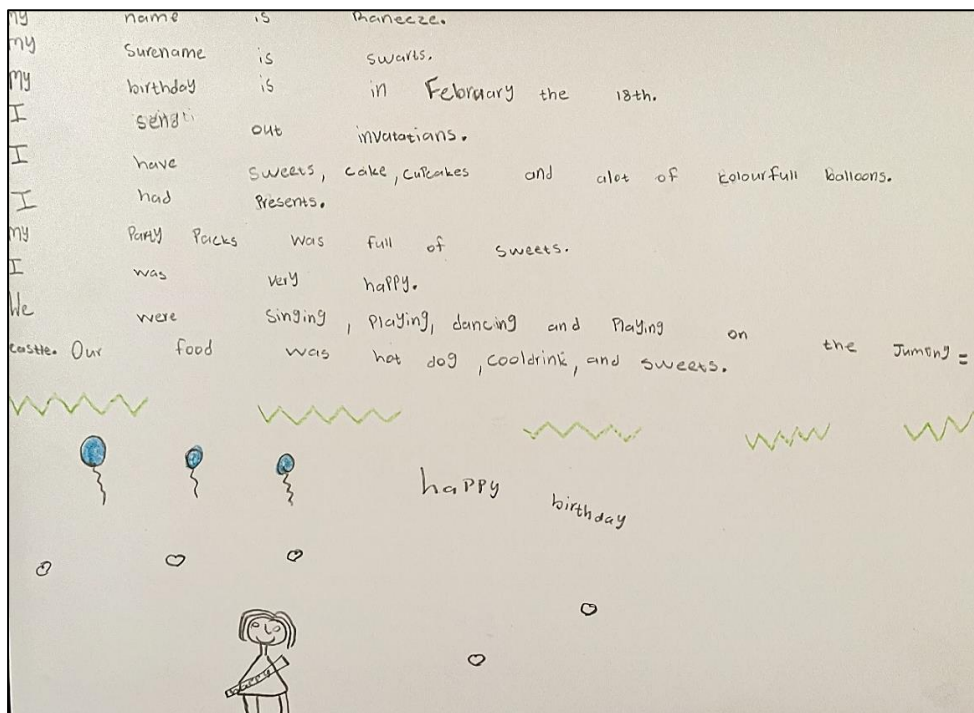


Clive's Eersterust community has their own lingo and unique accent. A translanguaging pedagogy brings into perspective the way in which learners bring their cultural background into the act of learning; it does not separate the school and community in the process of learning. In this activity, the learner also linked home and classroom literacies. Here the word 'bought' is pronounced 'bote' and 'candy' is 'kendi'. In the classroom discussion, the words sweets and party packs were mentioned, but not candy. Therefore, the learner applied his background knowledge and history and introduced his own cultural expressions and pronunciation of words into the classroom activity.

Raneeze's story was sectioned into different parts. First, she introduced herself, then told us when her birthday was and what was done at the party. During the brainstorming session, the learners were asked how they felt on their birthdays, and what they did and ate on their birthdays. This learner was able to section her writing into an introduction, body, and conclusion as seen in Figure 5.3.1.8.

Figure 5.3.1.9

Raneeze's Story

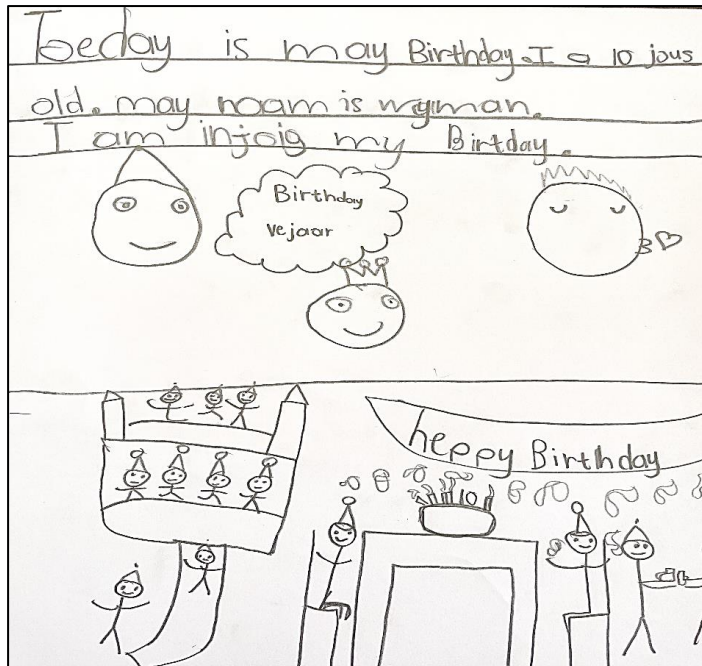


When teaching writing, it is important for the learners to know how to section their writing into different parts. Learning about sequencing helps the learners improve their reading, as they know what to look out for in different sections of the story as they read. Raneeze (figure 5.3.1.9) was able to plan her writing according to the correct sequencing of the story just as it was discussed during the brainstorming session. This improved her ability to write, as she had been introduced to new words and the sequencing of events in the stories and in her writing, which, in turn, increased her vocabulary and reading skills.

Figure 5.3.1.10, Wyman's drawing, does not include much writing; only a few simple sentences were included. Wyman said that it was his birthday and introduced himself, saying old he was. Here we see a good example of how what was discussed verbally through an engaging classroom discussion was represented visually through a drawing and writing.

Figure 5.3.1.10

Wyman's Drawing

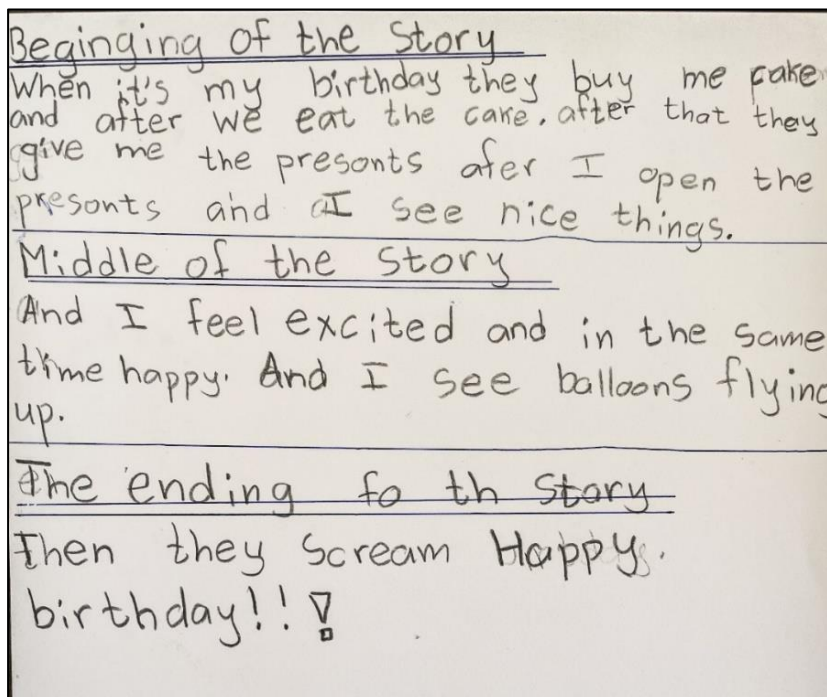


This learner also spelt out words the way they were pronounced in the community, 'jous', 'toeday', and 'heppy'. Here a link is made between pronunciation and translanguaging. Wyman drew a jumping castle, which was brought up during the discussion of what one does on their birthday. The learners were scaffolding words in English. The researcher also asked them what the meaning of the word would be in Afrikaans. Wyman also drew people around a table singing for someone who had received a birthday cake. Even though he was only able to express himself through a few simple sentences, his drawing enhanced his story and indicated that he understood what the classroom discussion and reading passage were about. Wyman was able to take part and draw on experiences from his own life. A translanguaging pedagogy recognises that learners are able to express their understanding of what was learnt multimodally, not just through the written mode, which is often given preference, but also in the visual mode, as in Wyman's drawing.

During the brainstorming session, the learners were also taught the sequencing in which writing takes place, that is, an introduction, a body, and an ending. In his writing, as shown in Figure 5.3.1.11, Philippe wrote a beginning where he began with what they did on his birthday, using the words and ideas he had gotten from the brainstorming session. In the middle of his story, he said how he felt on his birthday. Lastly, the ending told that after the opening of presents, singing took place.

Figure 5.3.1.11

Philippe's Writing

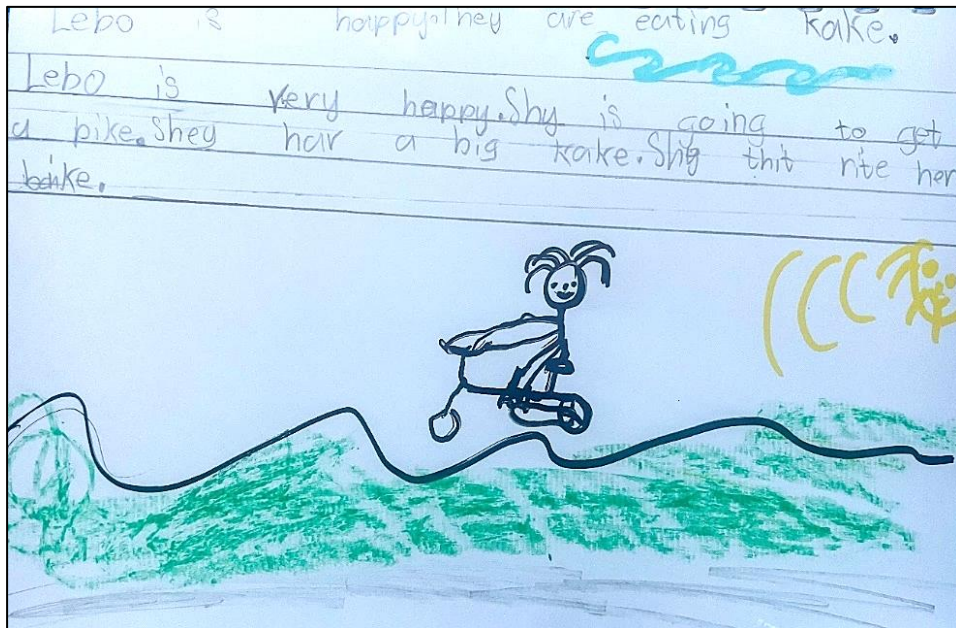


Brainstorming sessions also assist learners in drafting, organising, and revising their writing. Philippe's writing was able to make sense to him through his sectioning and organising his writing.

Phiwo chose to write about Lebo's birthday and not her own. Her writing was below the required standard for Grade 3, with spelling and grammatical errors. However, her drawing was of a girl who was happy and riding a bicycle (Figure 5.3.1.12)

Figure 5.3.1.12

Phiwo's Drawing

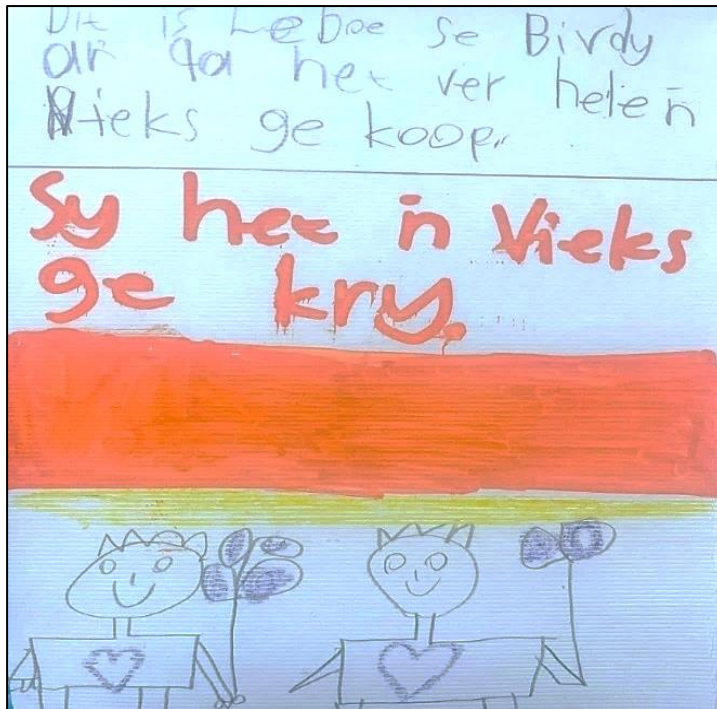


In her writing, she also placed an emphasis on the bicycle that Lebo received as a present and how happy she was to have received her new gift. This shows understanding and creativity on Phiwo's part as she was able to show understanding through a drawing and writing about the comprehension passage.

Caylin (figure 5.3.1.13) chose to draw rather than write about Lebo's birthday. She asked if she could rather write in Afrikaans as it was the language she felt more comfortable writing in. However, her writing in Afrikaans, her home language, was also below the required Grade 3 level.

Figure 5.3.1.13

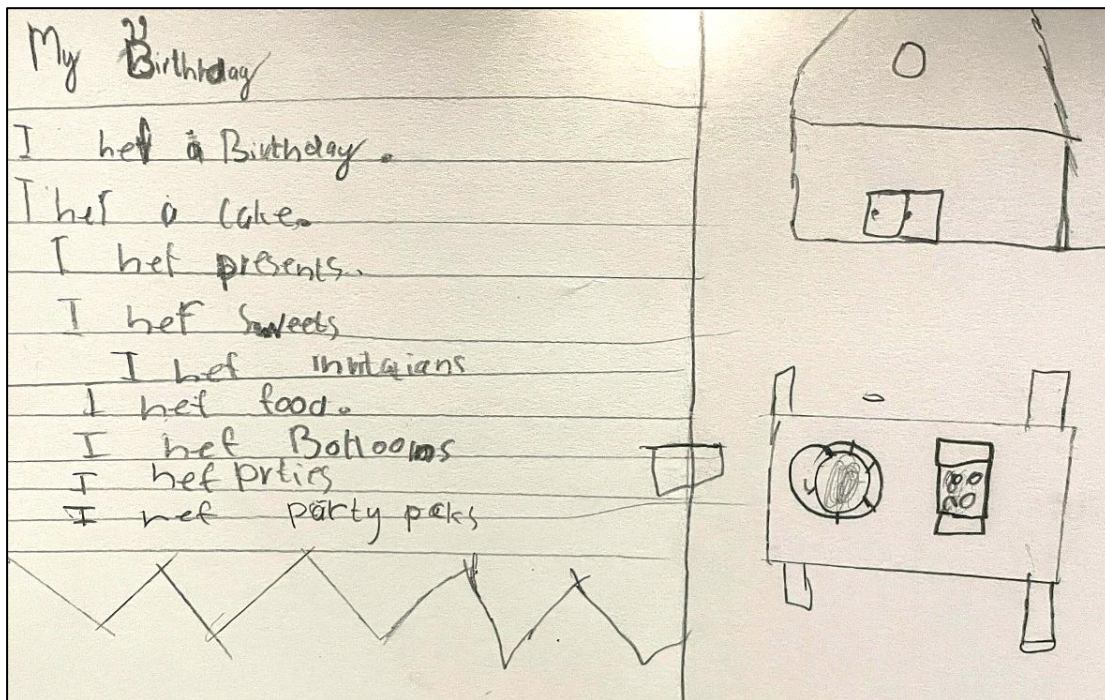
Caylin's Drawing



She wrote, 'Sy het n vieks ge kry'. What she is referring to as 'vies' is actually 'fiets', a bicycle. Her drawing shows two individuals with smiling faces, Lebo and her dad with a birthday surprise for her. The learners in this community also struggled to read and write in Afrikaans, which is the main language that is spoken in Eersterust. However, in her writing she was able to get the main essence of what the comprehension passage was about – the birthday surprise that Lebo received from her father.

Figure 5.3.1.14

Fidel's Drawing

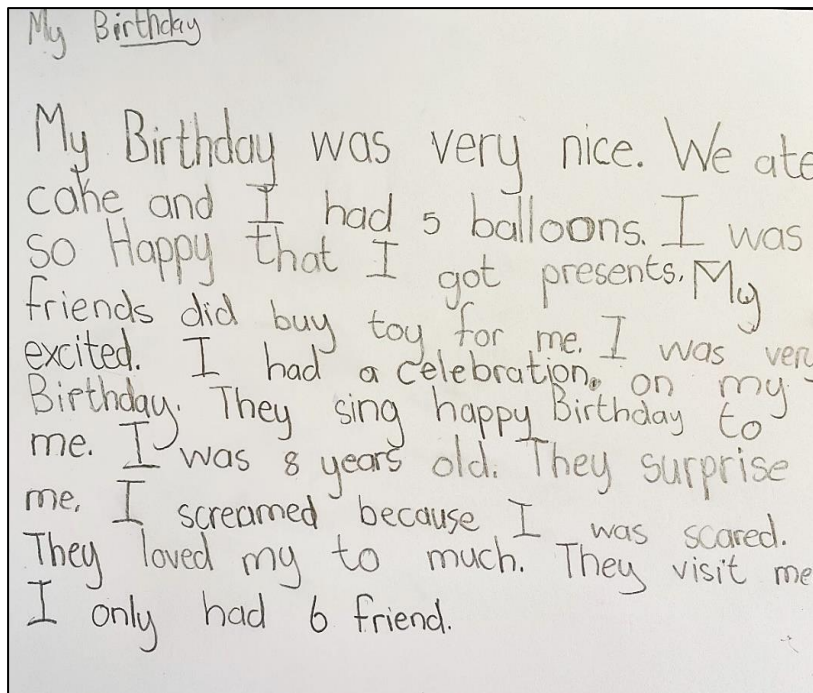


In his drawing, Figure 5.3.1.13, Fidel wrote repetitive sentences about what he ‘had’ on his birthday. All the words he used were from the brainstorming session. He copied each word and incorporated them into simple sentences. This session introduced Fidel to new words and the spelling of these words. Had it not been for the brainstorming session, his vocabulary would have been limited, and he would not have known how to start writing, or what to write about. In his writing, a link was made between pronunciation and translanguaging. He uses the word ‘hef’ instead of ‘had’, this is the way the word ‘had’ is usually pronounced in the community of Eersterust.

However, Samuel (figure 5.3.1.14) decided to write about his birthday and his experience of what he did on his birthday. His writing was the best of all his classmates. He was able to get the spelling right for words such as ‘screamed’ and ‘celebrations’. In Eersterust, literacy levels are low, and a culture of reading is not fostered in schools or the community.

Figure 5.3.1.15

Samuel's Writing

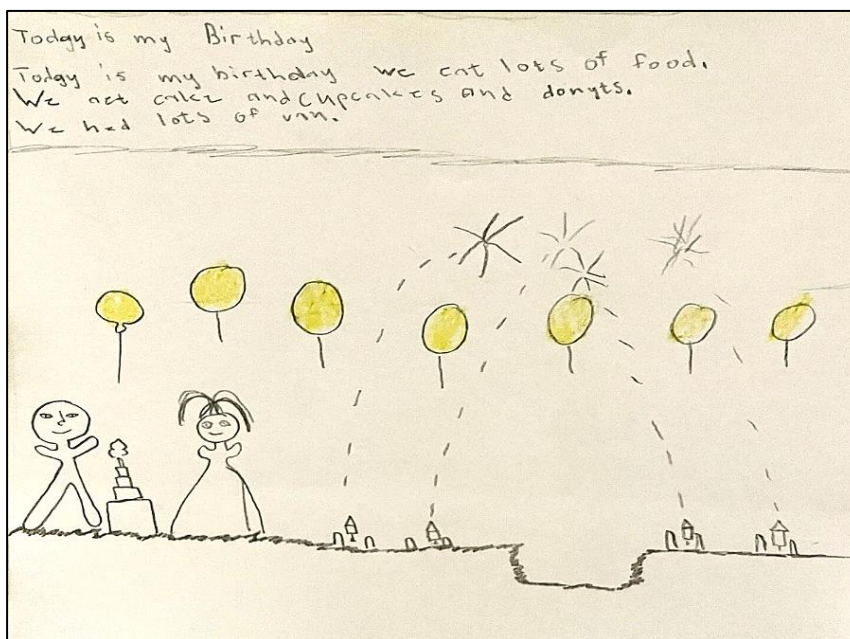


Some learners did read for enjoyment and were able to read by Grade 3 – Samuel was one of those few learners. His classmates, on the other hand, were below the required level for Grade 3 reading and writing. Even for a learner who did not struggle as much his classmates, the brainstorming session still guided him on how to structure his writing and gave him ideas that he could incorporate into his writing. Exercises like this helped him and other learners to draft their writing and, with practice, their writing would improve.

Owing to the many learning difficulties, most of the Grade 3 learners at both the participating schools had a writing ability below the required Grade 3 level, only being able to express themselves in a few sentences. Zaski's drawing (Figure 5.3.1.15) illustrates this. Zaskia kept her writing simple using only a few sentences. She spelt the word 'fun' as 'van' because, in Afrikaans, the 'v' sound is similar to an 'f' sound in English. The learners made connections between words with similar sounds in their home language and the LoLT. This was evident in many of their writings. Zaskia was better able to express herself through her drawing of a girl who was happy who had been surprised with many balloons and a cake on her birthday.

Figure 5.3.1.16

Zaskia's Drawing



5.3.2 Observation of Intervention Session Two (Activity 2, Passage 3: Lebo's Birthday)

What I observed from the session was how exciting a topic like a birthday was for the learners. This was something they could relate to as children often enjoy birthday parties. Many of the words from the brainstorming cluster were words that the learners had brainstormed together as a class. Here, we see the elements of collaborative work done through a classroom discussion. My role as the researcher was to ask which words were in their home language, being Afrikaans. Through the brainstorming session, the learners were introduced to new words and also to the spelling of the words. This increased the learners' vocabulary. The learners also transferred meaning from their home language to the LoLT. There was excitement once again

when they could make use of the art supplies to create their own writing and drawings about their birthdays. The materials supported the lesson and led to increased engagement by the learners.

5.4 Translanguaging and Developing Comprehension Skills (Activity 3, Passage 4)

5.4.1 Activity 3, Passage 4: *Jabu*

For Activity 3, the reading passage ‘Jabu and his Dog’ was read and discussed by the learners (Figure 5.29). At School B, the researcher asked the learners what their understanding of the word ‘trick’ was. Through an oral discussion, the teacher explained what ‘trick’ meant and how dogs often liked to play tricks. The teacher asked the learners for answers on how dogs liked to play tricks and what words they could come up with that rhymed with trick. The learners came up with words such as stick, click, kick and so on.

Figure 5.4.1.1

Jabu and his Dog

Assessment I	
Passage reading (PR)	
Chart 3./	
	Words per line
Jabu had a little dog. The little dog was fat and happy.	12
One day Jabu and the dog went out to play in the park behind his house.	16
The little dog liked to play tricks and he ran away.	11
The little dog got lost. Jabu was sad. But after a while the dog came back.	16
He had been gone for only a little while.	9
Jabu took the dog home.	5
When they got home, Jabu gave the dog a bone. The dog ate it.	14
The little dog was happy, so he slept. Jabu also went to sleep.	13
They both slept for a very long time and played again when they woke up.	15
	111

Language comprehension describes a learner's ability to understand and communicate using language (Catts, 2018). This includes the skills that the learners built as the teacher asked questions before, during, and after the read-aloud story sessions. Language comprehension is what, how, and why learners read (Catts, 2018). The learners were asked if any of them had a pet at home and what type of animal it was. This allowed the learners to draw on their background knowledge (home literacies) or schema to comprehend what they were reading. For a child to be proficient in reading comprehension (the ability to process written texts, to understand their meaning, and to integrate this meaning with what the learner already knows), both word reading and language comprehension skills have to be strong (McGraw Hill, 2024). For intervention programmes aimed at learners who are struggling in their ability to read effectively, a learner's specific weakness, be it word reading or language comprehension, has to be addressed. In this activity, the researcher focused on a specific word in the passage that learners were not familiar with and expanded on this word, in this case, trick.

Figure 5.4.1.2

Brainstorming Rhyming Words

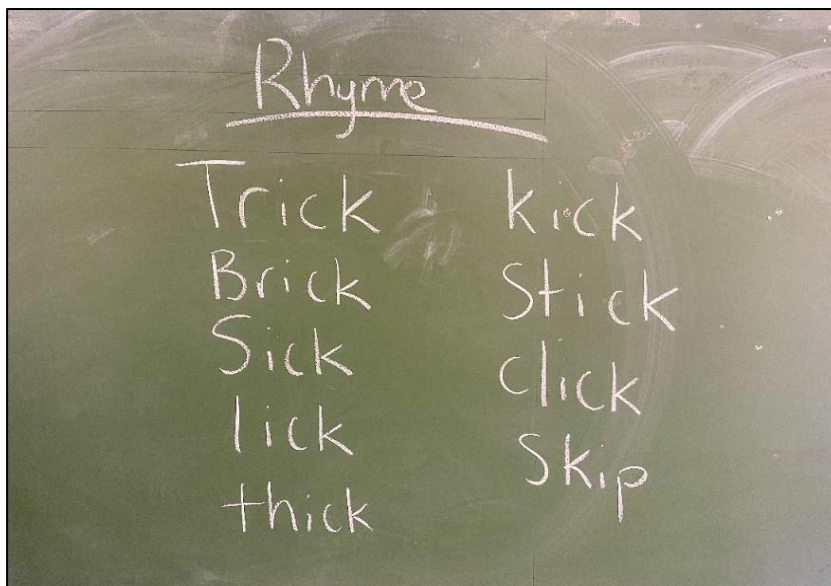
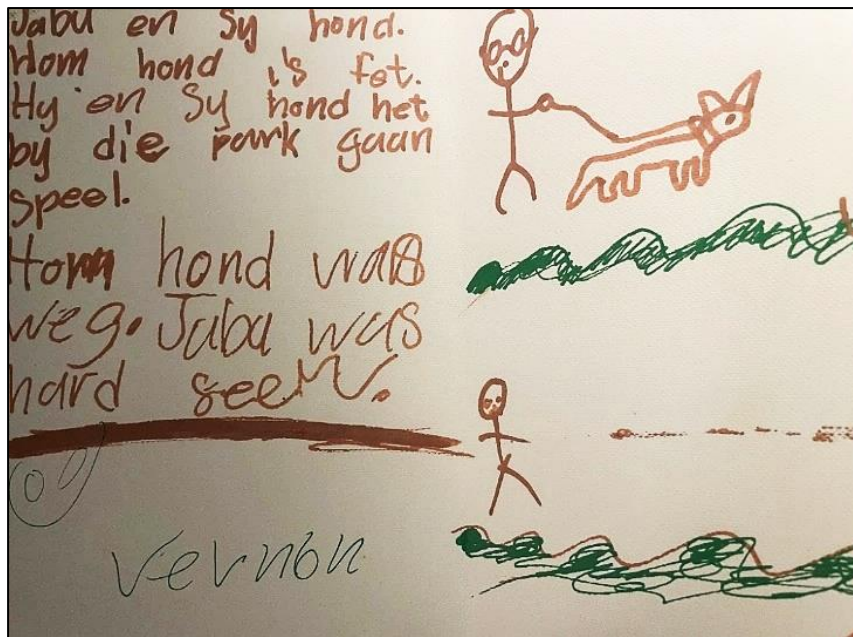


Figure 5.4.1.3 is an example of a drawing by Vernon. Vernon asked if he could write a short story in Afrikaans with drawings that were based on his understanding of the reading passage. Vernon indicated that Jabu's dog was 'fet' (vet) and that the dog had run away, 'hom hond was weg' and that it made him very sad, breaking his heart. 'Jabu was hard seer'.

Figure 5.4.1.3

Vernon's Drawing

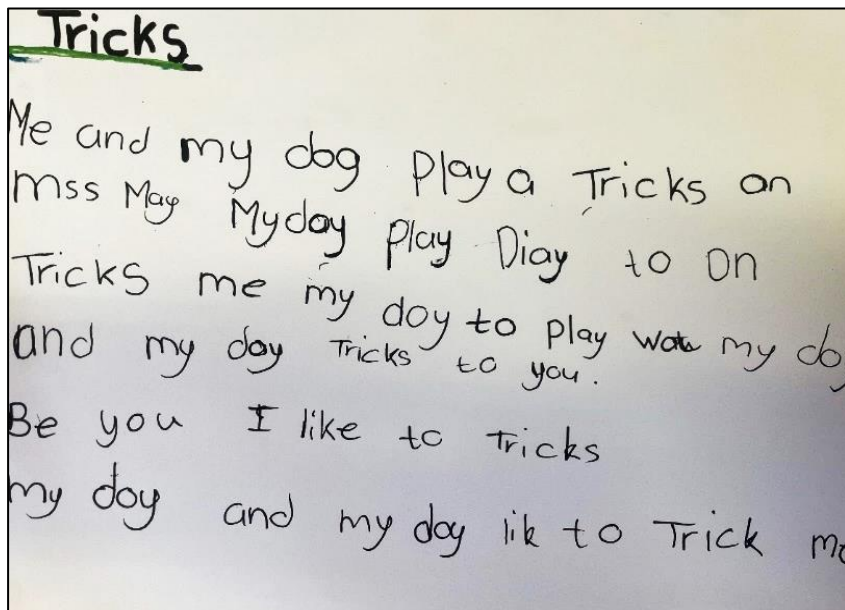


The comprehension passage in Figure 5.4.1.1, that each learner received was written in English, however, Vernon could transfer meaning by writing what he understood about the passage in Afrikaans, and he drew a visual illustration of a boy with his dog on a leash. Vernon was able to solve the problem described in the passage, that is, that the dog ran away because he was not on a leash. This 'solving of a problem' (Barrett's taxonomy) falls under evaluation of Barrett's taxonomy on comprehension skills. Here, the learner evaluates and analyses the text to make a judgement. Making links between the LoLT and the home language helps learners to transfer knowledge from one language to the other.

After reading the passage aloud with the learners, a discussion (in both English and Afrikaans) created an engaging classroom environment in which the majority of the learners participated. In Figure 5.4.1.4, Ronald decided to write about his understanding of the reading passage and focusing on the word trick. Ronald's ability to write in English was very poor. However, the verbal discussion and engaging classroom activity focused on the passage above, helped him to understand that dogs like to play tricks.

Figure 5.4.1.4

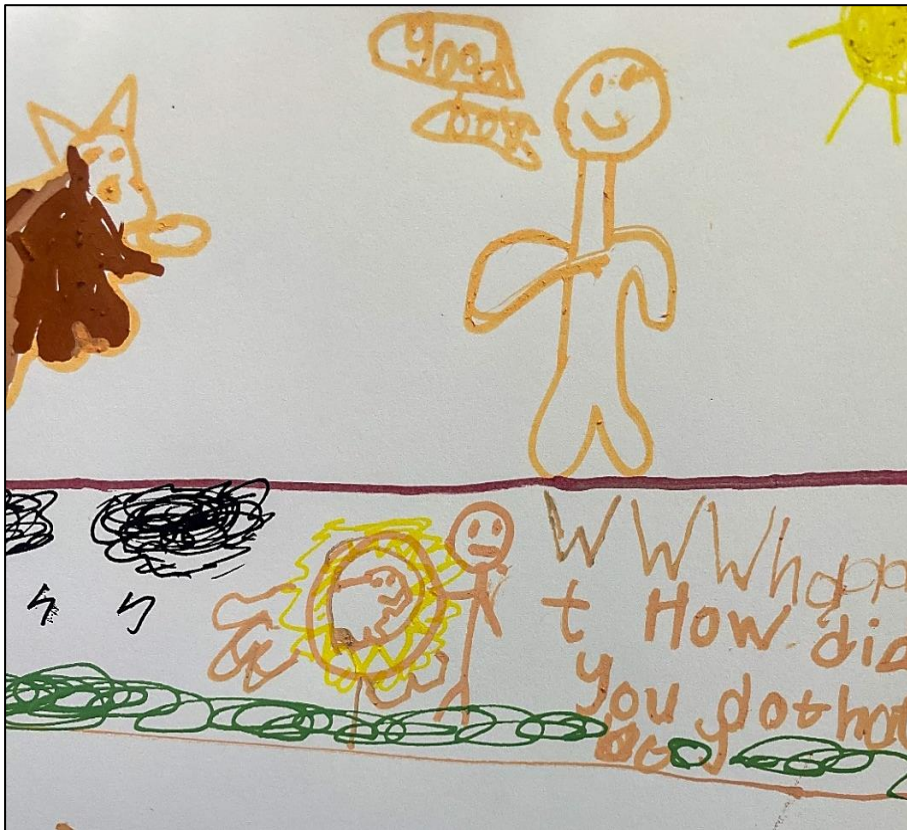
Ronald's Writing



Translanguaging as a practice emphasises classroom engagement and discussion in both languages (English and Afrikaans) for the struggling learners. In the classroom, the learners with low proficiency in the LoLT were not merely passive recipients of knowledge but were still able to engage with the content (in both languages), understand what the reading passage was about, and apply the information to their background knowledge.

Figure 5.4.1.5

Daniel's Drawing



In Figure 5.4.1.5, Daniel illustrated a boy with his dog. One cannot clearly make out his writing in this drawing. However, we can see the letters of 'good boy', as he refers to a dog. It is evident that he understood what the comprehension passage was about. The dog jumping through a hoop indicates an understanding of how dogs perform tricks or acts. There was no mention in the passage of how a dog performed certain acts or tricks. The learner applied his prior knowledge to his understanding of the reading passage. Linking his prior knowledge to the passage helped the learner to make connections between what he already knew and the new knowledge he had acquired during the lesson.

Figure 5.4.1.6

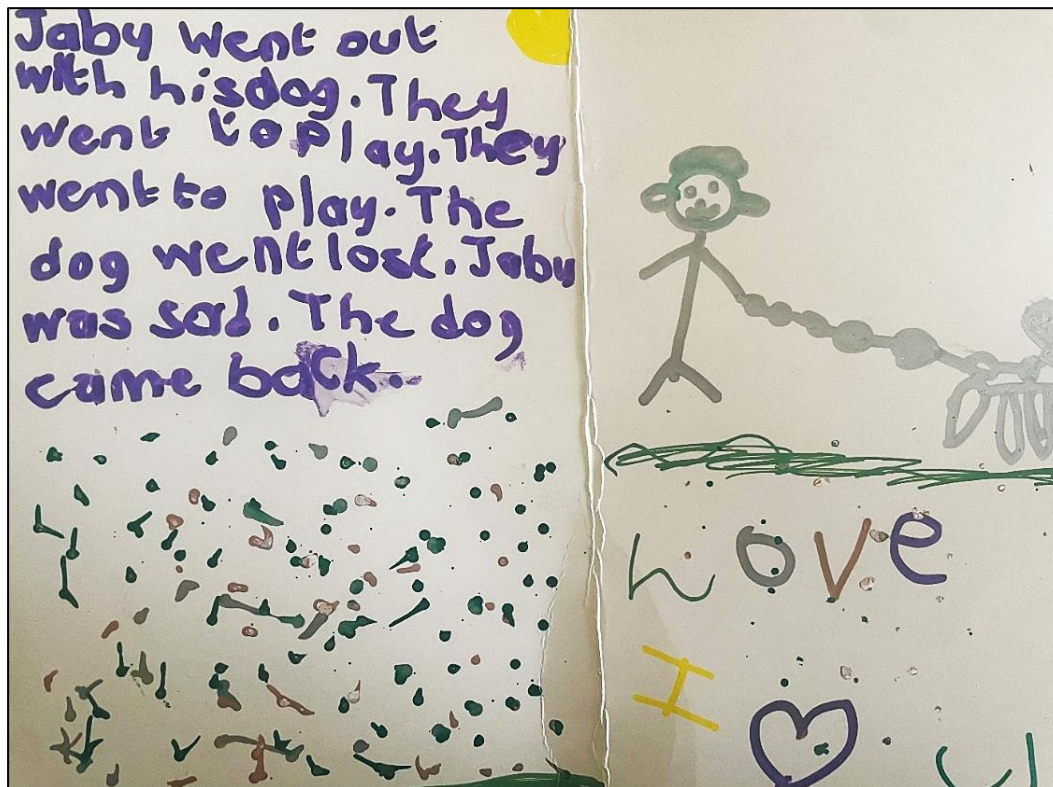
Layla's Drawing



In Figure 5.4.1.6, Layla chose to draw herself with her dog. The class had a discussion (in both English and Afrikaans) on how dogs often like to play tricks and which of them had pets at home. Through the drawing, she was able to bring her own lived experience to the activity; she stated during the classroom discussion that she had a dog at home. Layla had a clearer understanding of the reading passage from the classroom discussion. She drew herself and her dog and included the word 'trick' at the top of the drawing. Layla was able to participate in this activity by drawing on her background knowledge and including it in the classroom discussion and her drawing.

Figure 5.4.1.7

Ben's Drawing



Ben (figure 5.4.1.7) kept his drawing simple. It was of a person and a dog on a leash. Like Vernon, he was able to solve the problem described in the passage, in that the dog ran away because he was not on a leash. The learner knew that the passage was about a boy and his dog. In a few short sentences, he was able to express what he understood about the passage, in that the dog went missing and came back. He was, therefore, able to summarise the main points of the passage; this falls under reorganisation in Barret's taxonomy of reading comprehension. The participating learners in this context had a low ability to read and write in Afrikaans, but through an engaging classroom discussion conducted in both English and Afrikaans, along with a drawing activity, the learners could express their understanding of the reading comprehension passage.

5.5 Observation of Intervention Session Three (Activity 3, Passage 4: Jabu and his dog)

What I observed from Intervention Session 3 was how culturally relevant texts increase learner engagement. The name of the boy in the story was Jabu; this is a common name for boys and girls in South Africa. The story was also about Jabu and his dog. Many of the participating

learners shared that they had a dog or other type of pet at home. Many of the learners were initially unfamiliar with the word trick and had difficulty understanding what the word meant. I explained what was meant by the word trick and asked the learners to come up with words that rhymed with trick. When I asked the learners what was meant by a rhyme, many stared with blank expressions and did not know what the word meant. The point of the rhyming session was to increase vocabulary development. I emphasised to the learners that rhyming words have a similar sound. I explained that one needed to observe how the last three letters of ‘ick’ are all the same.

5.5 Translanguaging and the four-box organiser (Activity 4, Passage 5)

5.5.1 Activity 4, Passage 5: Nomsa

Learning and teaching support materials (LTSM) are a variety of learning and teaching materials used in the classroom. These can range from resources created by the teachers themselves to classroom posters, wall charts, workbooks, textbooks, readers, and stationery and science kits (DBE, 2011). Effective management, use, and maintenance of LTSMs in the classrooms can increase the quality of teaching and learning. LTSMs were used in each intervention session to support each comprehension passage that was read. The materials included items such as cardboard paper, acrylic paint pens, wax crayons, colouring pencils, and coloured markers. These materials supported the lessons and made each activity more enjoyable for the learners. The lesson incorporated activities the learners could hear (through the classroom interaction), see (through the brainstorming done on the blackboard), and touch (through the posters, drawings, and writings they produced). Since these were Grade 3 learners, each activity also played an element in which sensory and motor skills could improve.

Figure 5.5.1.1

LTSMs Used by the Learners for Their Four-Box Organiser Activity

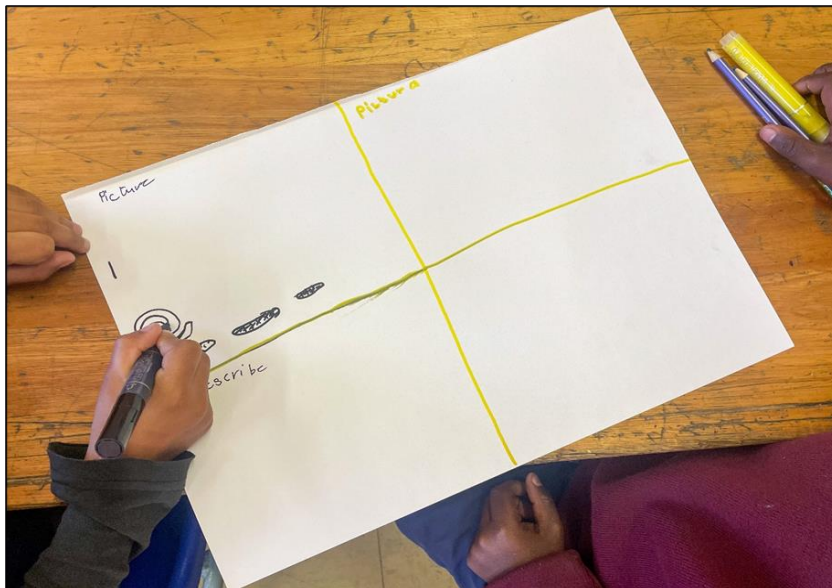


Figure 5.5.1.2

Nomsa and the Plastic Snake

Assessment 2

Passage reading (PR)

Chart 3.2

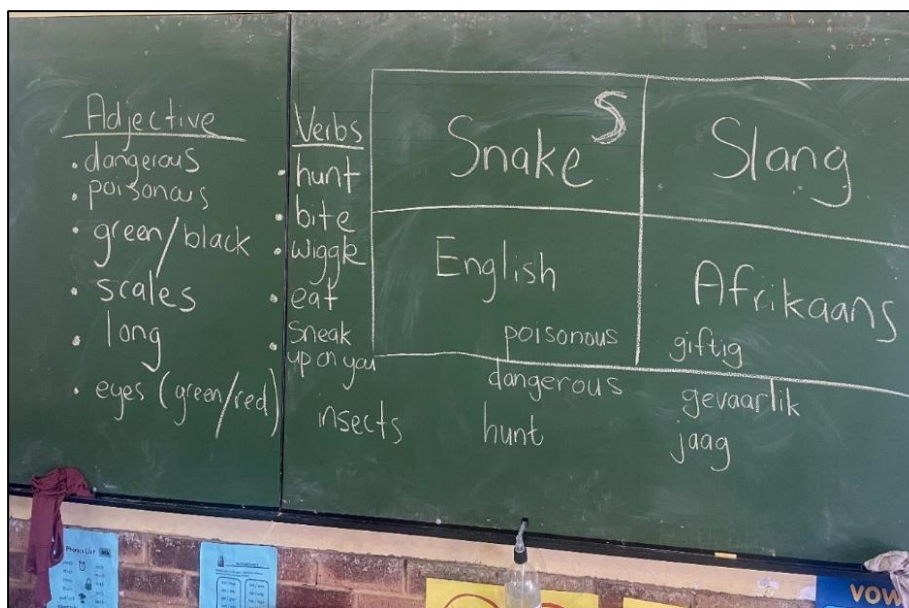
	Words per line
Everyone was in the playground at the school.	8
It was after the holidays. The children were playing with their toys.	12
Nomsa had brought a plastic snake along. She had bought it while on holiday with her parents.	17
Mrs May, their teacher, called everyone inside.	7
Anne liked to play tricks. Anne had an idea. She wanted to play a trick on Mrs May.	18
Anne cried out that she could see a snake in the playground.	12
Sipho said he could see it too. Ben asked what kind of snake it was.	15
Mrs May told them it was a black adder. Anne smiled. She said it was only a plastic snake.	19
After Anne had played her trick, all the children started reading their interesting story books.	15
	120

To develop listening and speaking skills through translanguaging, a four-box organiser activity was done with the participating learners. During the classroom discussions, listening and speaking took place in both languages (English and Afrikaans) to improve the participating learners' ability in both English and Afrikaans. The participating learners worked in groups or pairs which also enhanced their vocabulary and introduced them to new words. This, in turn, improved their writing and reading.

The learners read a comprehension passage titled 'Nomsa and the Plastic Snake'. The teacher then wrote the words 'snake' and 'slang' side by side, emphasising that both started with a 'sss' sound. The teacher and the learners then brainstormed words to build their sentences, using words to describe a snake (adjectives) and what snakes like to do (verbs). The learners asked for the Afrikaans meanings of words such as 'dangerous', 'poisonous' and 'hunt'. The teacher then translated these words into Afrikaans.

Figure 5.5.1.3

Four-Box Organiser Classroom Discussion School A



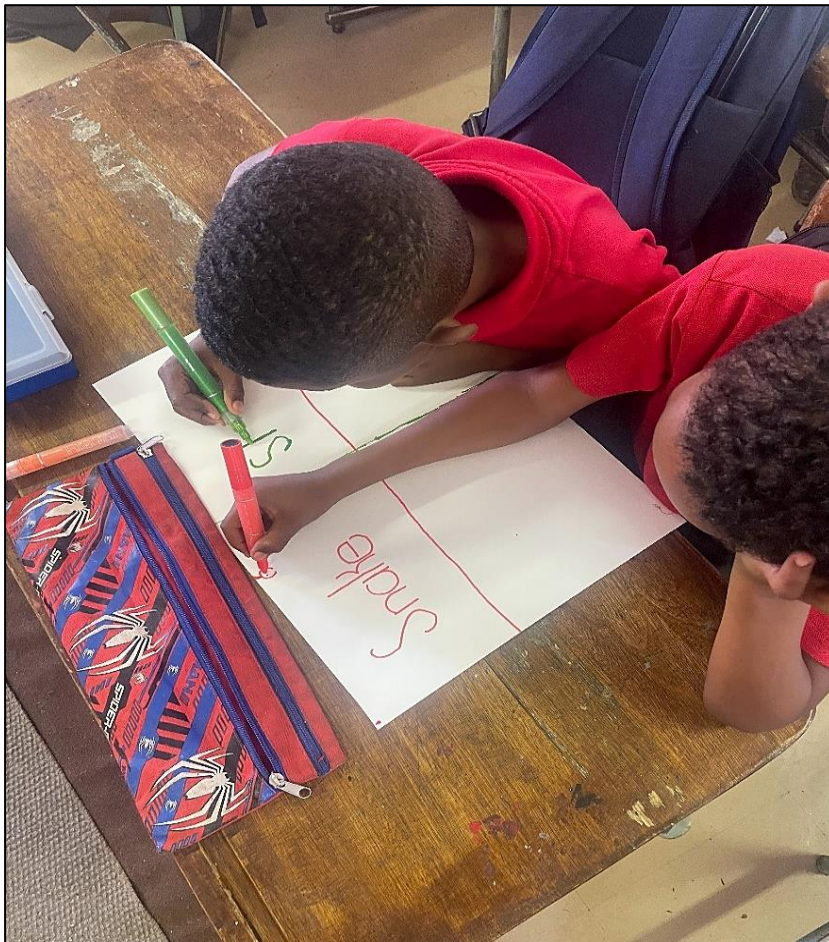
The learners were asked to work in pairs to write their own short sentences based on the passage 'Nomsa and the Plastic Snake'. In some instances, the researcher paired learners who were more proficient in the LoLT with those who were not. The teacher and learners orally shared ideas about what they were going to write and translated the meaning of words from English to Afrikaans. The learners wrote their sentences in the language they were most comfortable

speaking and writing in, which was Afrikaans. The teacher then taught the learners that sentences start with a capital letter and what the purpose of certain punctuation marks, such as commas and full stops, were.

When incorporating translanguaging, it is helpful to identify the sounds of words that are similar in the LoLT and home language. After reading the passage ‘Nomsa and the Plastic Snake’ the teacher noticed how the words snake and slang sounded similar in English and Afrikaans. The researcher then pointed this out to the learners, in order for them to transfer meaning and make connections between the English and Afrikaans words snake and slang. The learners were also introduced to new words in Afrikaans through the oral discussion. They did not know what poisonous, dangerous, and hunt (these words were not part of the comprehension passage but were words the learners brainstormed to describe snakes) were in Afrikaans. The learners were asked what their understanding of certain words were in Afrikaans and were given examples of how these words could be used in a sentence.

Figure 5.5.1.4

Learners Participating in the Four-Box Organiser Activity in Pairs



A four-box organiser made up of a table with columns and rows were done by incorporating the following:

- The vocabulary or written word
- A visual representation of the word
- A definition of the word
- A sentence using the word.

A four-box organiser is used as a graphic representation to teach new vocabulary. This activity takes on a multimodal approach where reading, writing, listening, speaking, drawing, and gesturing all take place. This creates a translanguaging reading space where all the learners are able to take part in classroom activities. To construct sentences requires that teachers and learners play a collaborative role. Scaffolding also took place amongst the learners themselves

when they were placed in groups to work together on their four-box organisers. Here the learners who spoke the same home language were grouped together to create sentences and draw images. The learners who are also more proficient in the LoLT were grouped with those who were less proficient in order to scaffold the activity.

Figure 5.5.1.5

Four-Box Organiser Classroom Discussion School B

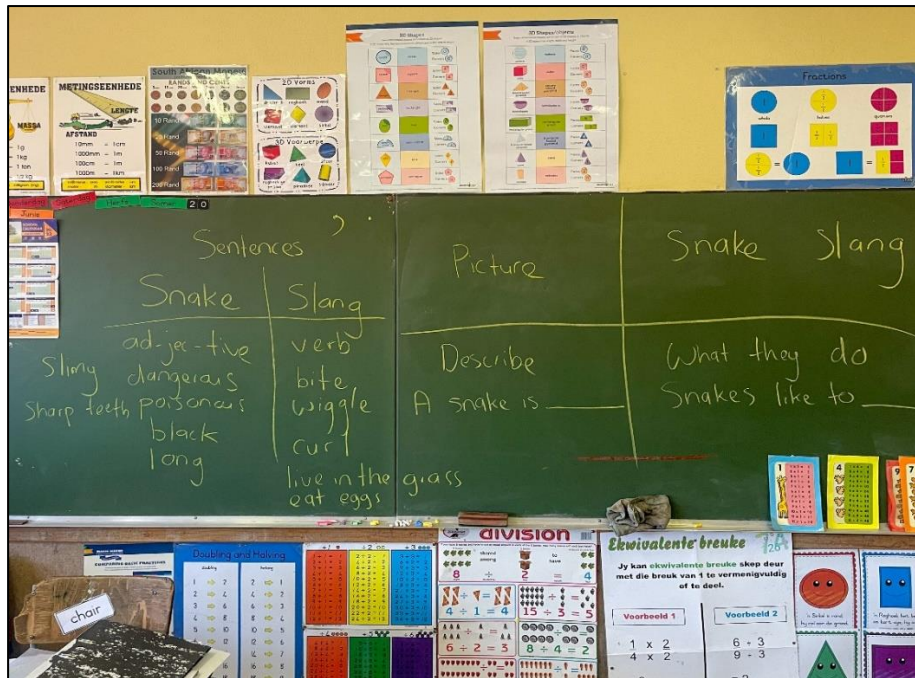
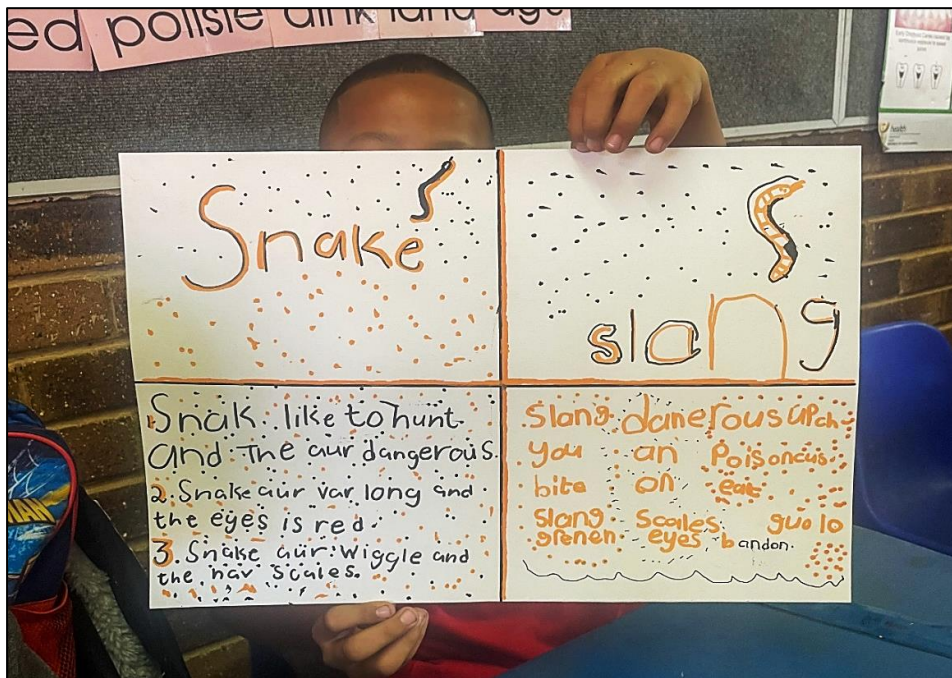


Figure 5.5.1.6

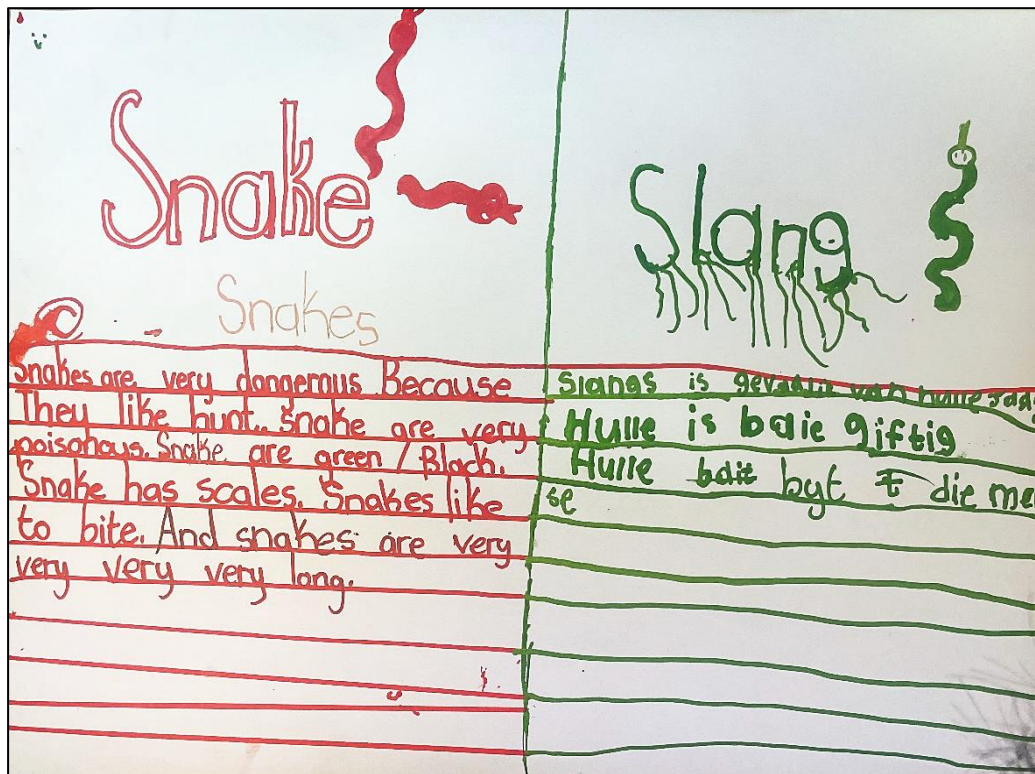
Dylan and Joshua's Four-Box Organiser Activity



Dylan and Joshua (figure 5.5.1.6) wrote very simple sentences about snakes. Their ability to write in English was low on the level required for Grade 3, with numerous spelling and grammar errors. However, through the brainstorming session, they were introduced to the spelling of longer words such as 'dangerous' and 'poisonous'. These words were not in the reading passage but were introduced to help scaffold the learners' understanding of the story. The learners did not know how to spell these words or how to apply these words to a sentence. The learners in the lesson knew what verbs and adjectives were, however, they were not able to apply them in a sentence. The session introduced them to new words (those that were included in the story and ones that were not part of the story) in English and Afrikaans and increased their vocabulary. The learners like Dylan and Joshua who had a low proficiency at the required level for Grade 3 English were supported through aids such as the classroom discussion and art materials. They could create a poster they could be proud of that the teacher placed on the classroom wall. The learners were able to take part in the lesson and developed an improved understanding of longer words and the reading comprehension passage.

Figure 5.5.1.7

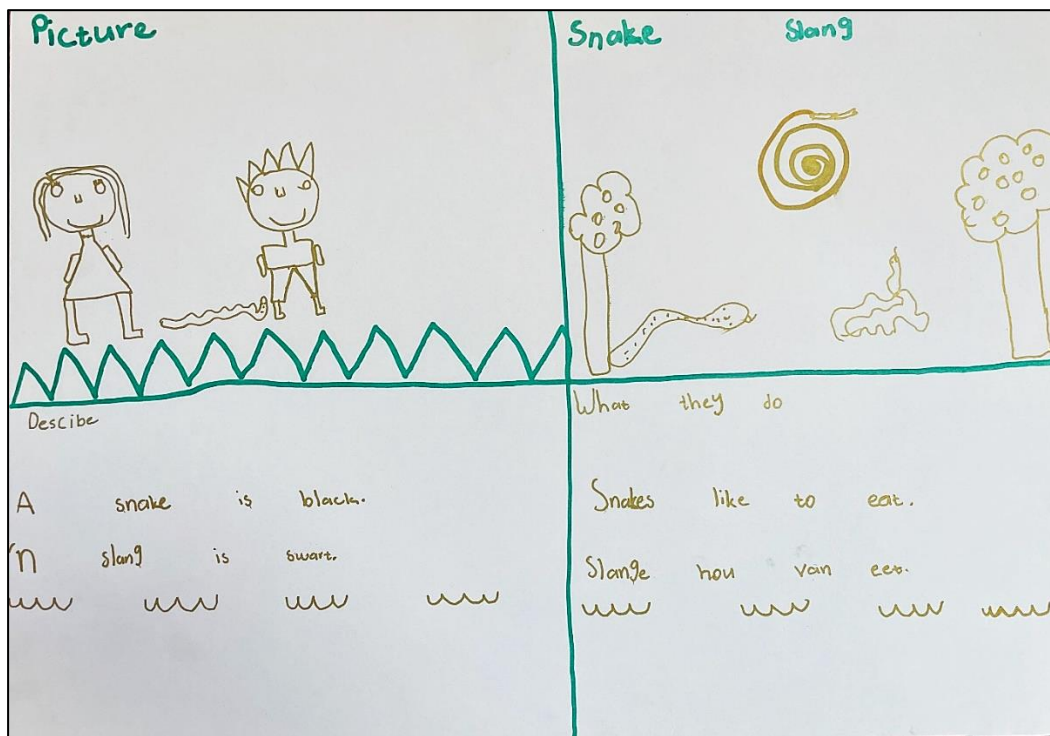
Nathan and Jake's Four-Box Organiser Activity



The four-box organiser done by Nathan and Jake (figure 5.5.1.7), the box on the left describes the snake and what snakes like to do in English and the box on the right describes what snakes like to do in Afrikaans. In the box on the right, the learners wrote 'hulle is baie giftig' (they are very poisonous), 'hulle is gevaarlik' (they are dangerous) and 'hulle byt die mense' (they bite the people). The point of this activity was not merely for translation, as translanguaging is more than just translation. The learners could create sentences in two languages and represent them side by side. This means that knowledge is being transferred from one language to another, in this instance from English to Afrikaans.

Figure 5.5.1.8

Shiloh and Gabriella's Four-Box Organiser Activity

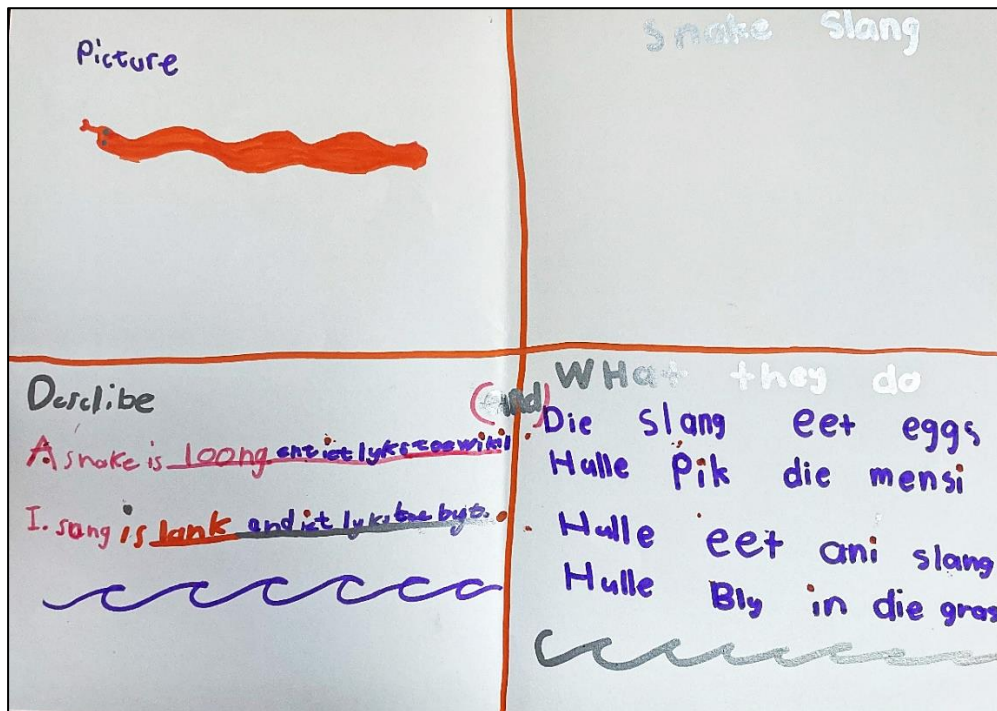


In Figure 5.5.1.8, Shiloh and Gabriella wrote a direct translation from English to Afrikaans for both their sentences. In this example the learners were able to see the sentences side by side in two languages – one in the learner's home language (Afrikaans) and the other in the LoLT (English). This helped the two learners to compare and see how sentence structure differed in the two languages.

This activity helped the learners to see what aspects of sentence structure were similar in their home language and English, and what aspects were different. This improved their comprehension of the meaning of each grammatical component in the English sentence because they could refer to the home language translation (Garcia et al., 2012). Creating spaces where both languages are shown together improved the learners' vocabulary development which, in the end, improved their reading skills (Garcia et al., 2012).

Figure 5.5.1.9

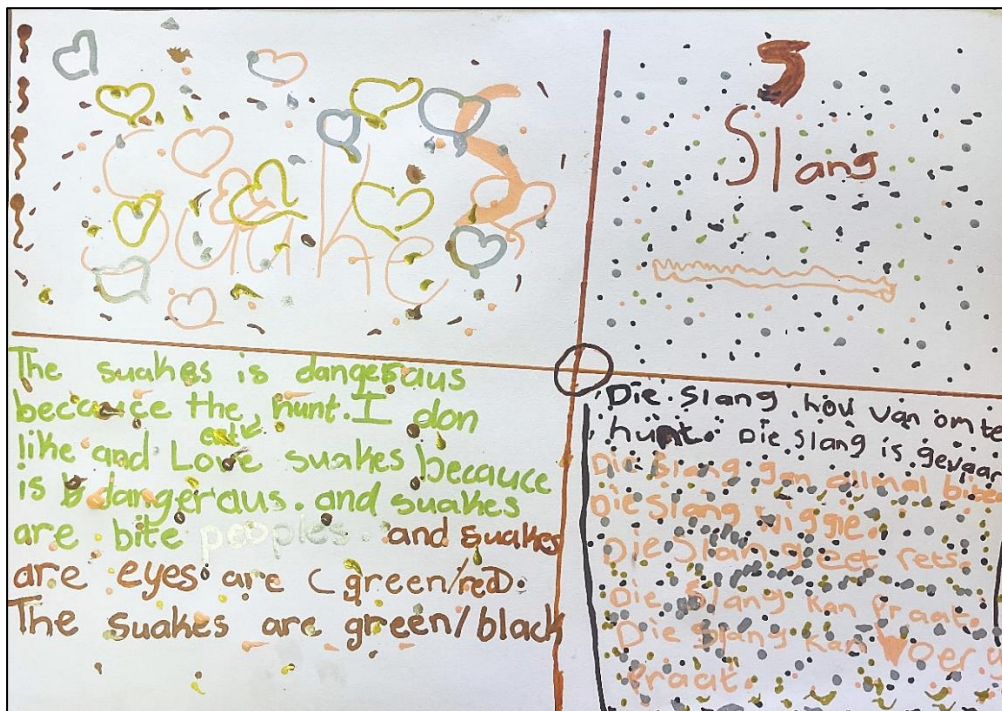
Brenda and Anne's Four-Box Organiser Activity



In Figure 5.5.1.9, Brenda and Anne chose to write most of their sentences in Afrikaans rather than in English. However, the elements of translanguageing were evident in how the learners incorporated two languages into one written product. When they wrote, 'A snake is loong en it lyk too wikil' they were attempting to say that snakes like to wiggle, by adding the conjunctions in Afrikaans such as 'en' instead of 'and'. In the box on the right, the meaning of words written in English on the board were transferred to Afrikaans sentences, describing what snakes like to do, 'Die slang eet eggs' (the snake eats eggs), 'hulle pik di mensi' (they bite people), 'hulle by in die gras' (they live in the grass). The words bite, wiggle and eat were all words the learners had brainstormed on what snakes like to do. The class also discussed snakes eating chicken eggs. During the discussion the learners were introduced to new words, which increased their vocabulary. The learners acquired new knowledge during this activity which is said to improve reading and learning.

Figure 5.5.1.10

Catherine and Annabelle's Four-Box Organiser Activity



In Figure 5.5.1.10, this box organiser was done by Catherine and Annabelle. In the right box, Anne incorporated English and Afrikaans into her sentences. 'Die slang hou van om te hunt' (the snake likes to hunt) and 'Die slang wiggel' (the snake wiggles). Words such as 'dangerous', 'hunt' and 'wiggle', which had been written on the board as writing prompts, were incorporated into the sentences that the learners formed. This might indicate how these were new words that were introduced to the learner's vocabulary and that the discussion assisted the learner with the spelling of these English words. Taking a specific word from the passage, such as 'snake' and expanding on the word in English and Afrikaans increased the vocabulary in two languages and assisted the learners in making links between the two languages.

Figure 5.5.1.11

Dimpho and Bokang's Four-Box Organiser Activity



In Figure 5.5.1.11, Dimpho and Bokang directly translated from English to Afrikaans for their sentences. 'Snake are dangerous' (Slang is gevaarlik), 'snake have poisonous' (slang is giftig). Seeing the words side by side and hearing the way they were pronounced was a way for the learners to make connections between their languages (English and Afrikaans) and to acquire new vocabulary (Garcia et al., 2012). The sentences that these learners formed were simple, however, knowledge transfer took place between the two languages. Before the session, the two learners were not aware of the spelling of certain words such as poisonous or the meaning of such words in Afrikaans. The learners acquired new vocabulary during this session, in both English and Afrikaans.

Figure 5.5.1.12

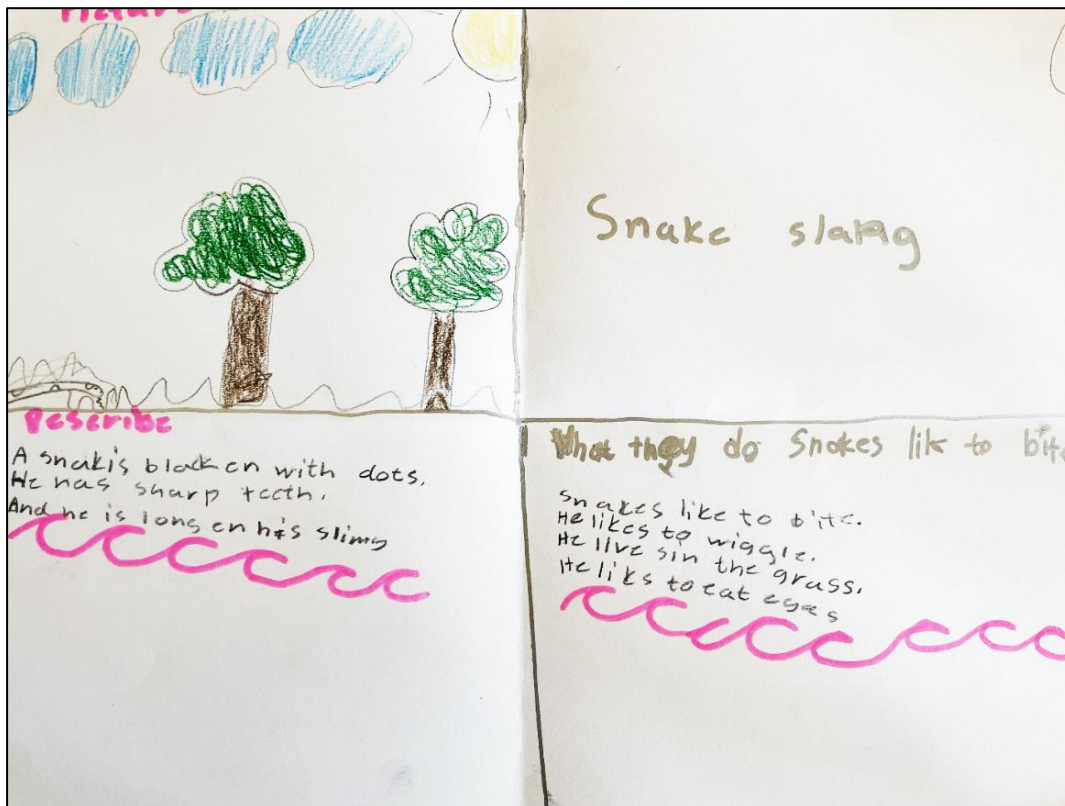
Adam and John's Four-Box Organiser Activity



Adam and John (figure 5.5.1.12) had a low proficiency in their ability to write in English and struggled to form clear sentences. However, by looking at their four-box organiser, one can see that they were able to describe a snake and could also indicate what snakes like to do in English and Afrikaans. For the learners who had a low proficiency in their ability to read and write in English, the activity was able to help them to write sentences. Here, in this sentence in the left box, Adam and John say 'kan' instead of 'can'. They did this throughout their activity by incorporating both Afrikaans and English words into their sentences, although they were kept simple. An activity like this, in which they were scaffolded by the teacher to introduce them to new words or even words they were familiar with and transferred the meaning of these words into their home language assisted in vocabulary development. Brainstorming adjectives and verbs with the learners helped them to develop critical-thinking skills; they had an opportunity to draw from their background knowledge and participate in a classroom discussion instead of merely being passive recipients of knowledge. Many learners in the class did not know what words such as poisonous and dangerous were in Afrikaans. The classroom discussion increased vocabulary development in both languages as the learners transferred meaning from one language to the other.

Figure 5.5.1.13

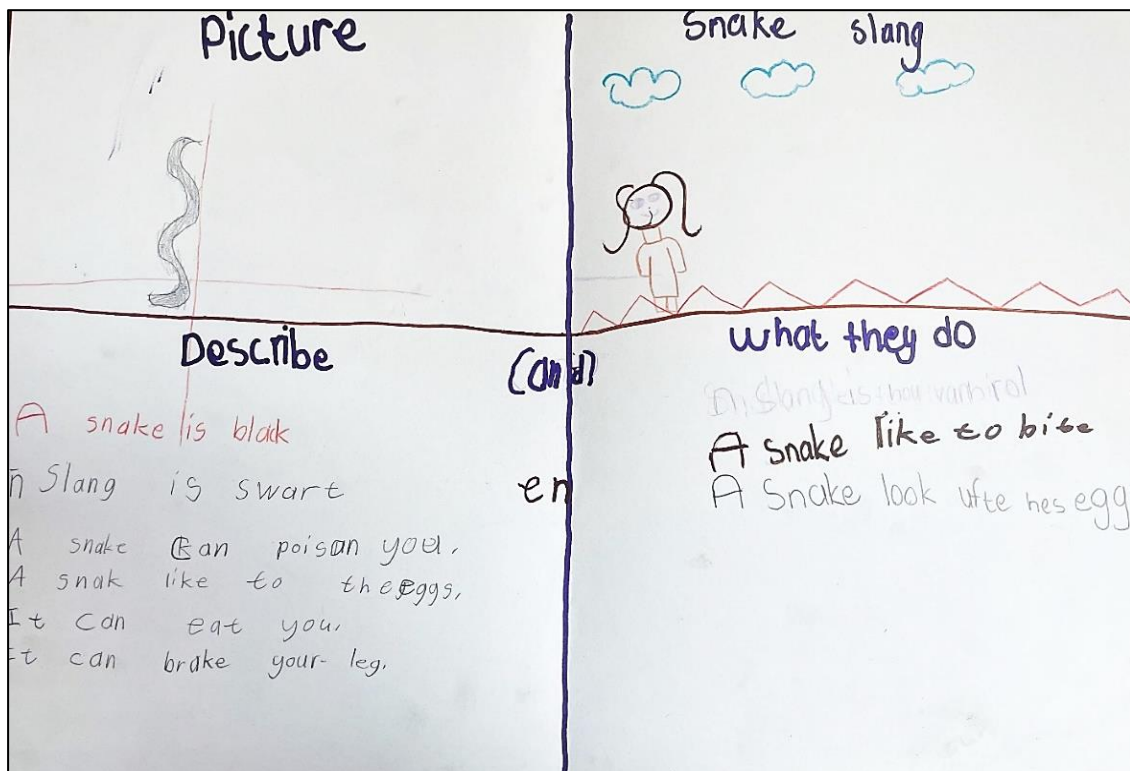
Angel and Sarah's Four-Box Organiser Activity



Angel and Sarah's (figure 5.5.1.13) four-box organiser is mainly sentences written in Afrikaans. However, through collaboration they were able to write fairly good sentences on their understanding of what snakes like to do and how to describe them. In the left box, even though the sentences were written in English, they both used the Afrikaans word 'en' instead of 'and'. 'en' means 'and' in Afrikaans. Here, we see elements of translanguaging in writing for multilingual learners. Learners are sometimes more familiar with high-frequency words in their home language and will incorporate those words into a sentence where the majority of words are written in English. This is also shown in the previous four-box organisers. It is a common occurrence for multilingual learners as they transfer meaning from one language to the other. English teachers may see this as the learners having 'bad' English or grammar. However, from a translanguaging perspective, the learner speaking or writing bilingually during class is not linguistically confused or demonstrating 'bad' English, as seen by most teachers in the classroom. Rather, they are leveraging their full linguistic repertoire to communicate (Hamman-Ortiz, 2020).

Figure 5.5.1.14

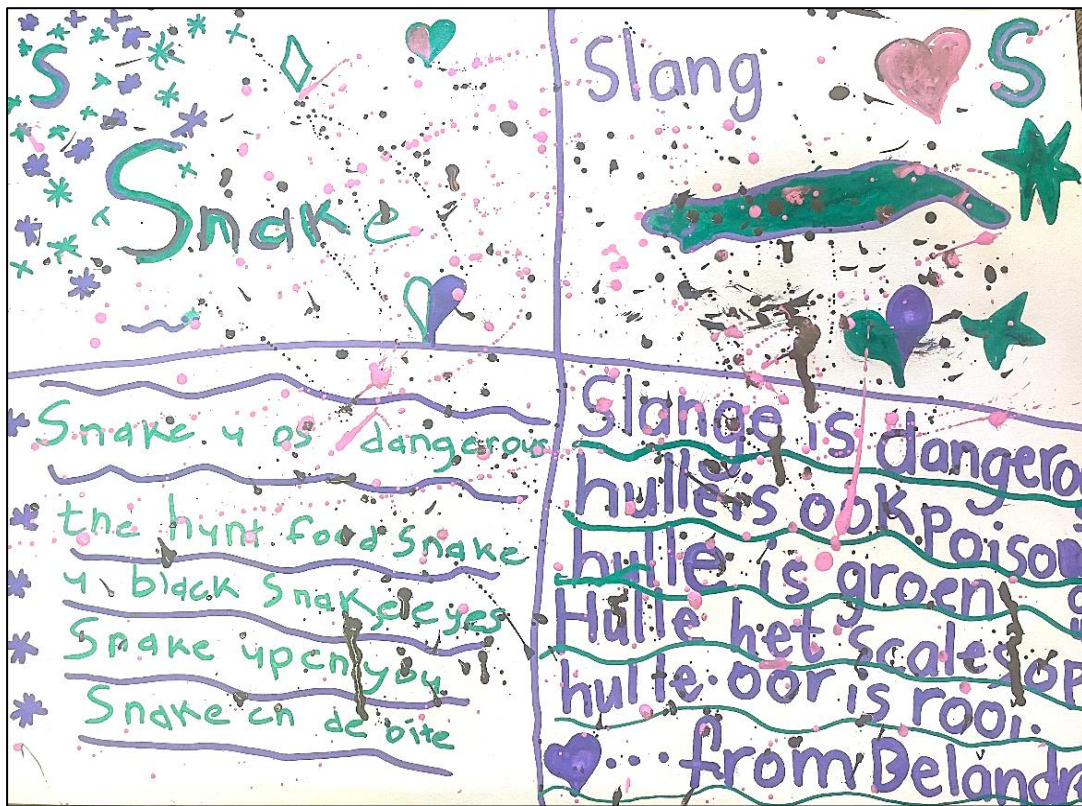
Ben and Alan's Four-Box Organiser Activity



Ben and Alan (5.5.1.14) chose to write the majority of their sentences in English, with a translation for one of their sentences. They also translated the words 'en' and 'and'. Both learners' writing was below the level required for Grade 3, with grammar errors and spelling mistakes. Here, too, the learners mixed up the words 'kan' and 'can'. As previously discussed, it is important for teachers to point out similarities and differences in words in their home language, which in this case was Afrikaans and the LoLT. In this way, the learners were able to transfer knowledge. The two boys, however, fixed their spelling mistakes. They wrote most of the sentences and words in English to improve their vocabulary and writing ability in English. Even though their sentences were short, they were scaffolded through the activity to create sentences with new words they had learnt and the spelling of these words.

Figure 5.5.1.15

Aiden and Delandre's Four-Box Organiser



Aiden and Dan (figure 5.5.1.15) worked together on their four-box organiser. In the left box is Aiden's writing. He struggled to form complete sentences and ones that made sense. The learners were supposed to work together on forming sentences. However, these two learners separated the boxes and wrote their own sentences. Aiden's ability to write in English was far below the level required for Grade 3. In the right box, Delandre wrote a sentence that, like the other learners, incorporated both English and Afrikaans words. She wrote, 'Slang is dangerous' (snakes are dangerous), using the English word for dangerous instead of using the Afrikaans word, which the class had brainstormed together. She also wrote, 'hulle is ook poisonous' (they are also poisonous), again using the English word for poisonous instead of the Afrikaans word. All the four-box organiser examples have elements of translanguaging in the writing. Where the learners were more familiar with words or phrases in their home language, they wrote in Afrikaans. Had Delandre assisted Aiden, like the previous learners, his sentences might have made more sense.

5.5.2 Observation of Intervention Session Four (Activity 4, Passage 5: Nomsa and the plastic snake)

During my observation of the fourth intervention session, I found one teacher's willingness to participate in the activity. Collaborative work also took part in this session where the learners had to work together to write their multilingual sentences. Mrs M (pseudonym) from School B participated in the intervention session. She took out an Afrikaans dictionary and looked up the translations of the words dangerous, poisonous, and hunt. The learners were not familiar with the meaning of these more complex words in Afrikaans. Assistance from the teacher increased the learners' vocabulary as they were introduced to new words in Afrikaans and made the connections between English and Afrikaans. Mrs M made use of learning support material in the form of a dictionary to improve the quality of education in the classroom. After the session, Mrs M also expressed how proud she was of her learners for the posters they had created and put up the posters on the classroom walls. This made many of her learners feel proud and valued. The teacher next door also praised her learners for the posters they had created. Here was an example of a teacher who, through assistance with the researcher was willing to incorporate a culturally responsive pedagogical approach for her learners.

5.6 Conclusion

The aim of this intervention, done over four sessions, was to incorporate all the modes of learning (listening, writing, speaking, and reading) into one act of learning. A multilingual approach, incorporating different languages, in this case English and Afrikaans, allowed the learners to draw and respond in their home language even though their language proficiency was poor. This resulted in the learners being more engaged, and not mere passive recipients of knowledge. From the evidence, many learners struggled to write proficiently in English although the activities did help the learners to construct sentences that made more sense. Through the use of engaging, interactive classroom activities, the learners were able to participate and bring their lifeworld experiences into the lesson and produce their drawings and writing. A translanguaging pedagogy places emphasis on multimodality, multilingualism, and an engaging classroom environment. In the following chapter, the quantitative results of the study are discussed.

Chapter 6

Quantitative Results

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the quantitative findings of the study. Sixty-three learners wrote a pre- and post-test in the form of a reading comprehension assessment. The tests took place in an examination format. The learners had 40 minutes to complete the test, which was the duration of the lesson. The means, standard deviation, learning gain or loss were calculated for the two tests written by the two groups in the study and then compared. In analysing quantitative data in this study, the researcher ran a related sample non-parametric test on SPSS. A Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to match the two means scores from the pre- and post-test. Non-parametric tests make minimal assumptions about the underlying distribution of the data being studied, the data also does not have a normal distribution; thus, it was most suited for this study. A paired samples t-test was used as the variables were independent and had two levels.

This chapter also shows the descriptive statistics findings from questionnaire items the learners completed during the post-test. The demographic items consisted of 'yes' or 'no' questions to make it easy for the learners to fill out. The results from questionnaire items were captured on an Excel spreadsheet which then automatically generated percentages from the learner responses.

The results presented were analysed to address the following research questions for the study:

Was there a difference in learner performance after a translanguaging intervention was administered?

Hypothesis:

H₁: There is no difference between the pre-test and post-test following the intervention.

H₀: There is a statistically significant difference between pre- and post-test.

6.2 Findings – Descriptive Statistics

Table 6.1 represents results from questionnaire items.

Table 6. 1

Results from Questionnaire Items

	Question	Yes	No
Item 1:	Do you speak English at home?	37%	63%
Item 2:	Do you have books at home?	87%	13%
Item 3:	Do you enjoy reading?	87%	13%
Item 4:	Do you read to find out about new things?	83%	17%
Item 5:	Do you think you are good at reading?	80%	20%

Questionnaires were presented to 64 learners to fill out post-test. This was to ascertain whether results from the pre- and post-test were either confirmed or contradicted by the learners' responses. Of the 63 learners, 46% were male and 54% were female. In the class, the learners were from two ethnic backgrounds, 60% were Coloured learners and 40% were Black African. Both participating schools were Quintile 1, non-fee-paying schools.

The first question the learners were asked was if they spoke English at home. From the learner responses, only 37% answered yes. Eersterust is diverse as a community, deriving learners from the neighbouring townships of Mamelodi and Nellmapius. In South Africa, a township refers to a suburb or city occupied by predominantly Black African people according to previous apartheid legislation. Afrikaans is spoken by the majority of learners in the community. There is no surprise that the majority of learners answered no. This was also evident in the qualitative results of the learners' ability to write in English. Many learners struggled to express themselves in English, especially in their ability to write in English.

For questionnaire item 2, the learners were asked if they had any books at home, the majority indicated that they had books at home. According to the learners, they did have books available at home; however, one is not certain of the number or quality of books available, or whether

these books were being used by the parents and learners at home. The third questionnaire item asked the learners if they enjoyed reading. Nearly all of the learners answered yes at 87%. The learners might have enjoyed the reading comprehension that took place from a translinguaging and multimodal perspective. The teachers at both schools stated that the learners struggled with reading and a culture of reading was not fostered at home. However, from what was presented in the qualitative results (Chapter 5), there was evidence to suggest that the learners understood what the reading comprehension passages were about.

The fourth questionnaire item asked the learners if they read to find out about new things. Again, most of the learners answered yes (83%). From the intervention session, I concluded that many learners needed to be scaffolded during activities and were not able to carry out the assessment tasks on their own. They also needed scaffolding for vocabulary development and had to be introduced to new terms by the researcher. They were, however, able to apply their background knowledge to intervention activities and participate in verbal discussions.

The final questionnaire item asked the learners if they thought they were good at reading, with 80% answering yes. The results from the qualitative chapter, when it came to writing activities, indicated that the learners struggled to read and write at the level required for Grade 3. The pre- and post-test results confirmed this, as there were no learning gains but, rather, a loss in scores. However, a possibility for answering yes might be that through the intervention they thought of themselves as having become better at reading.

6.3 Findings – Inferential Statistics

Table 6.2 represents the results from the pre-test and post-test.

Table 6. 2

Results of the Pre- and Post-Test

School		N. Valid	Min	Max	N. Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation	Loss in scores
A	Pre-test	30	0	5	0	3.0	1.65	-1.1
	Post-test	30	0	5	0	1.9	1.57	
B	Pre-test	33	0	5	1	2.9	1.69	
	Post-test	33	0	5	1	2.4	1.85	-0.5

The learner scores from the pre- and post-tests were captured onto an Excel spreadsheet, where each learner was given a code along with their score. A label of 1 was given as a code for the pre-test, while a label of 2 was given as a code for the post-test. The scores were then run through SPSS to analyse the mean averages of the learner scores. This was to determine if there were any learning gains. Sixty-three Grade 3 learners participated in the study, with 30 learners from School A and 33 learners from School B. The results from School A showed that the learners obtained a mean score of 3.0 in the pre-test with a standard deviation of 1.65. In the post-test, the learners obtained a mean score of 1.9, with a slightly lower standard deviation of 1.57. This means they performed lower in the post-test than in the pre-test and lost by a mean score of -1.1. At School B, the learners obtained a mean score of 2.9 on the pre-test, with a standard deviation of 1.69 and a mean score of 2.4 on the post-test, with a higher standard deviation of 1.85. The standard deviation was higher in the post-test due to there being a wider range in the learner scores at School B. The learners at School B also performed lower in the post-test and lost a mean score of -0.5.

Only four intervention sessions took place between the pre- and post-test. These sessions were also aimed at improving reading comprehension skills. For comprehension skills to improve, a foundation already has to be laid for word recognition and language comprehension. Many of the Grade 3 learners were below the required level for Grade 3 for reading and writing, so there might not have been a significant amount of time for the learner scores to improve.

6.3.1 Non-Parametric t-test

A paired sample non-parametric t-test was run through SPSS to match the two mean scores. Non-parametric t-tests make minimal assumptions about the underlying distribution of the data being studied. Non-parametric tests are used when there is skewed data, and they comprise techniques that do not depend on data pertaining to any particular distribution. The data presented for the study below does not show a normal distribution but a distribution that is skewed. The word non-parametric does not mean that these models do not have any parameters (Pappas & DePuy, 2004). The fact is the characteristics and number of parameters are flexible and not predefined. Therefore, these models are called distribution-free models. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test tested the null hypothesis, as the two distributions were identical against the alternative hypothesis that the two distributions differed only with respect to the median (Pappas & DePuy, 2004).

The study design was not considered a true experimental design as there were no control groups for either School A or School B. I conducted a single-subject experimental design. Parametric tests rely on random sample selections and data that is normally distributed. Thus, a non-parametric test was most suitable; the non-parametric test the study used was the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. Below is a graphical representation of the results from the pre- and post-test at School A and School B. I also calculated the effect size, which is a quantitative measure of the magnitude of the experimental effect. Effect size tells us about the difference between groups and indicates the practical significance of a research outcome.

6.3.1.1 Results School A

Figure 6. 1

Results from Pre-Test School A

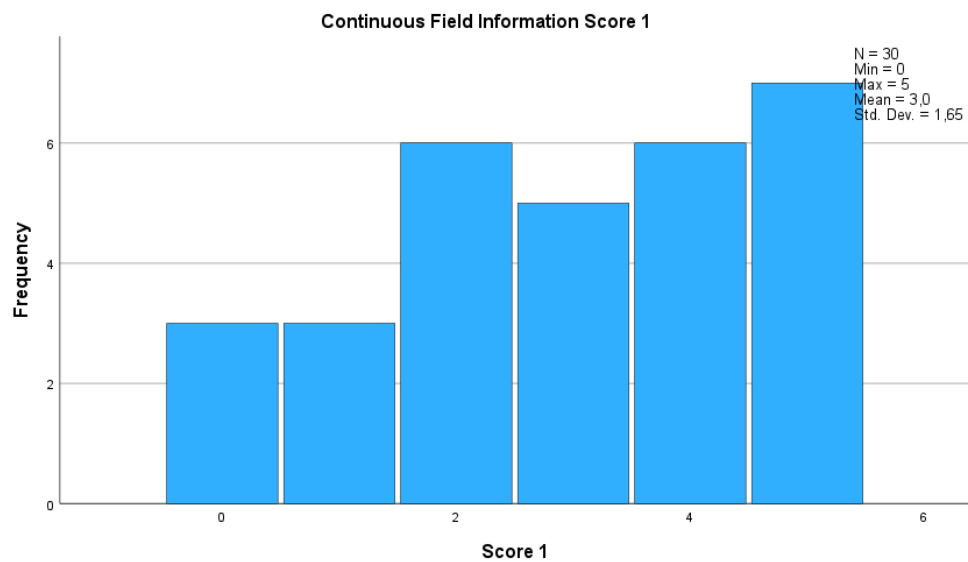


Figure 6. 2

Results from Post-Test School A

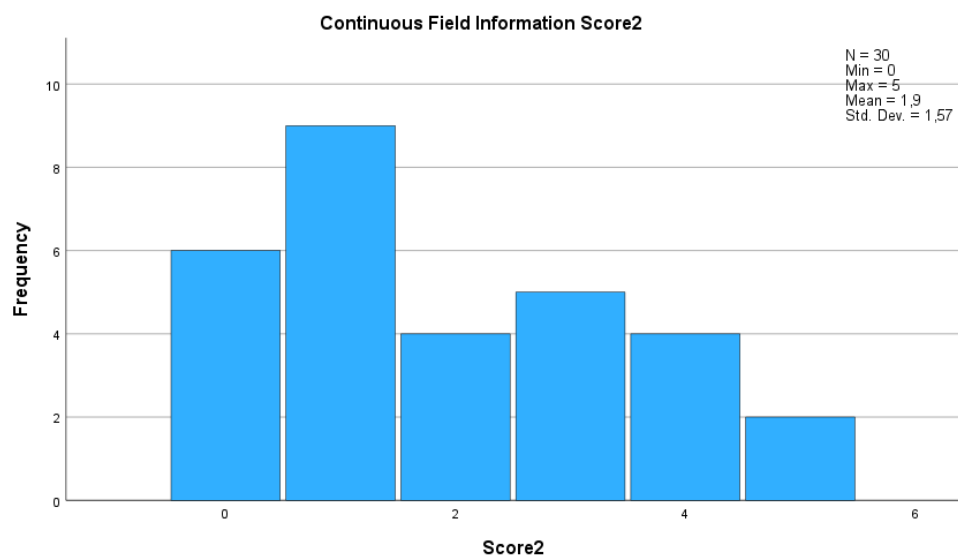


Table 6. 3

Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test Summary

Total	30
Test statistic	93.000
Standard error	39.139
Standardised test statistic	-2.108
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.035

The results from a paired samples Wilcoxon test showed a significance level of 0.035. This value is less than the p-value of 0.05. The results show that it is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The effect size score between the two groups was 0.38, which shows a medium effect and moderate relationship between the two groups.

6.3.1.2 Results - School B

Figure 6. 3

Results from Pre-Test School B

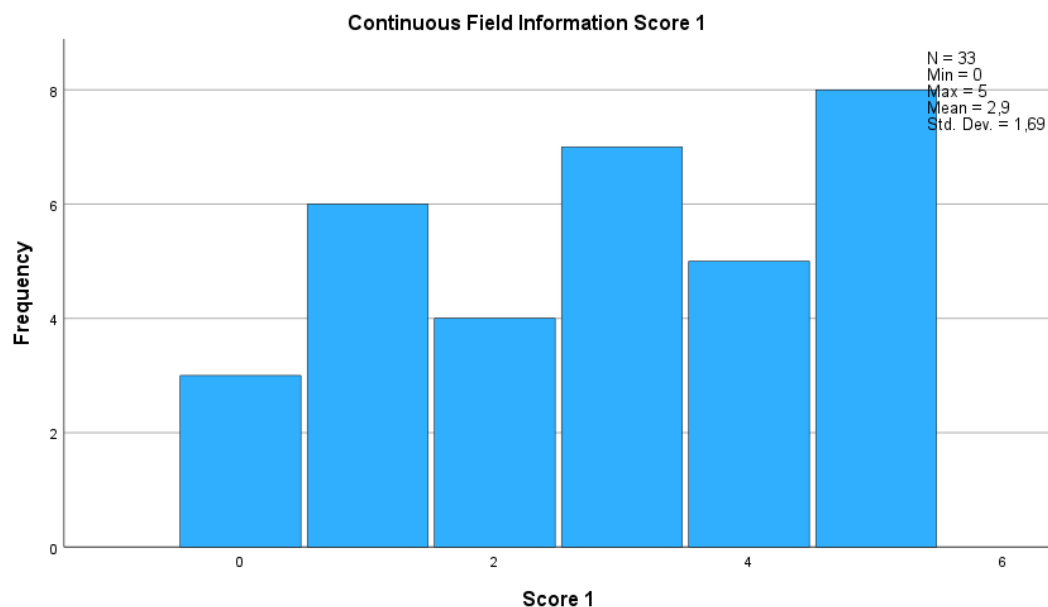


Figure 6. 4

Results from Post-Test School B

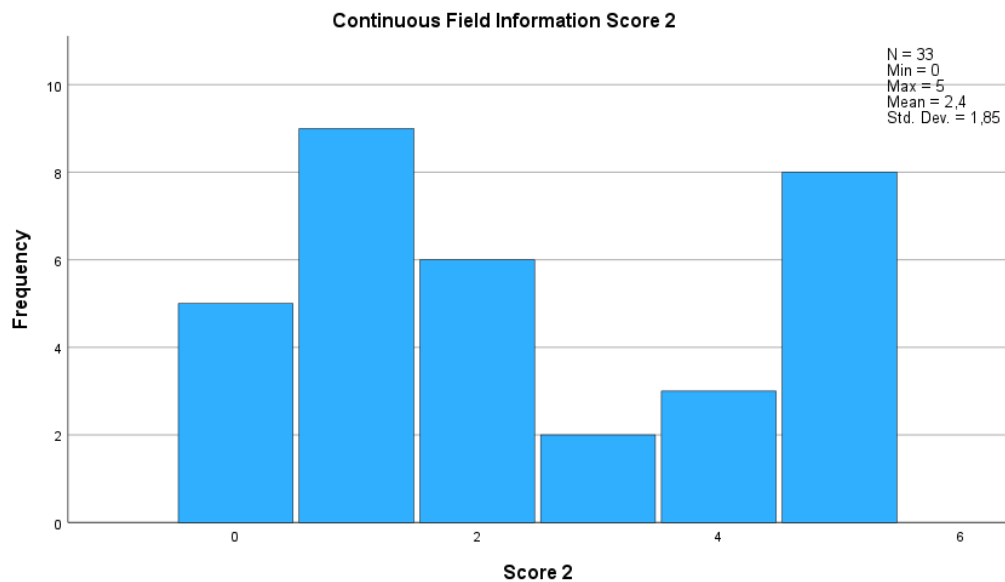


Table 6. 4

Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test Summary

Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test Summary	
Total N	33
Test statistic	177.500
Standard error	48.218
Standardised test statistic	-1.141
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.254

The results from a paired samples Wilcoxon test showed that the significance level was .254. This value is higher than a p-value of 0.05. The results were, therefore, not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted. The effect size calculation was 0.20, which shows a small effect and a weak relationship between the two groups.

6.4 Analysis of the EGRA Passages from Pre-Test and Post-Test

The pre-test comprehension passage (Figure 6.5) had 54 words, while the post-test comprehension passage (Figure 6.6) had 126 words. The word counts more than doubled between the pre - and post-test. Six comprehension passages were used in total, which included the pre- and post-test passages.

Figure 6. 5

Pre-Test Comprehension Passage

	Words per line
Sam and Jill go to school by bus. The bus is red.	12
They take their bags on the bus. The bus stops.	10
What now? Sam looks at Jill. The bus stops for	10
the old man and his dog. The man and his dog get	12
on the bus. They also want to go to school.	10
Total number of words:	54

Figure 6. 6

Pre-Test Comprehension Passage Questions

	Question	Correct (/)	Incorrect (x)
1.	Who goes to school?		
2.	What colour is the bus?		
3.	What do they take with them?		
4.	Who got on the bus?		
5.	Where do they want to go?		

During each intervention the comprehension passages increased in word count (starting from 54, 75, 95, 111, 120, and 126). When reviewing Grade 3 DBE storybooks for the second and third terms, the stories had a length of 150-200 words, which means that the increase in word count of the EGRA passages could not be the result of the learners performing lower on the post-test. The interventions were done during the second and third terms when the learners should already have been familiar with stories that had an increase in word count ranging from 100-120 words.

Figure 6. 7

Post-Test Comprehension Passage

	Words per line
Once there was a giant called Nunu. He was big and ugly.	12
He also liked to eat people. One day he saw a clever and brave girl called Lulu.	17
He caught her. Lulu was very scared.	7
He wanted to eat her, but Lulu was too clever for the giant.	13
Lulu told the giant that she would taste better with salt.	11
The giant put Lulu in his bag. He left the bag on the field.	14
Then he went to get the salt from his house.	10
Lulu got out of the bag and ran home to her family.	12
When the giant came back he found that the bag was empty.	12
He was angry and went to bed hungry that night.	10
Lulu was happy, but the giant was disappointed.	8
	126

Figure 6. 8

Post-Test Comprehension Passage Questions

Question		Correct (/)	Incorrect (x)
1.	What was the giant's name?		
2.	What did he like to do?		
3.	Where did the giant put the girl?		
4.	What did the girl do after the giant had gone to his house?		
5.	Why do you think the giant was disappointed?		

It seems that the EGRA reading passages were not more difficult than what is found in Grade 3 DBE workbooks. Although the results showed that the learners' performance was lower in the post-test, it was not by a significant margin. Many learners in this context have not developed the basic building blocks of what is required for reading comprehension. The Simple View of Reading formula makes it clear that for a child to have strong reading comprehension, both word reading and language comprehension skills have to be strong (McGraw Hill, 2024). Therefore, for intervention programmes aimed at learners who are struggling to read effectively, a learner's specific weakness, be it word reading or language comprehension, has to be addressed. This intervention was, however, not specifically aimed at teaching basic reading skills but how a translinguaging and multimodality intervention could enhance comprehension skills in Grade 3 learners.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of the quantitative section of the study. The results from the pre- and post-tests indicated that the translinguaging intervention made no difference in learner performance and that the learners obtained a higher score on the pre-test than on the post-test. However, the results from the qualitative chapter indicated that the learners had an improved level of understanding of the reading comprehension passages. This was evidenced by their drawings and oral classroom discussions. The following chapter discusses the integrated findings of the study.

Chapter 7

Integrated Discussion of Results

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 presented the qualitative results of the study in which 64 learners participated in a translanguaging intervention that created a translanguaging space. The chapter presented drawings and written products by the participating learners during the intervention. The findings in Chapter 5 indicate that the learners used creativity and criticality in the drawings and writings they produced. The observations of the intervention sessions confirmed that this created a translanguaging environment in which the learners multimodally engaged with the content and participated in class discussions. The learners brought their personal histories and background knowledge into the lessons and activities that accompanied each lesson. Chapter 6 presented the quantitative results of the study in the form of descriptive and inferential statistics. Chapter 6 also presented results from the pre- and post-tests. No correlation between learner performance and the intervention was found, as the results indicated that there was no improvement in learner scores. This chapter presents an argument for why the summative results did not improve.

This chapter starts by presenting an integration of the results, followed by a discussion which integrates the qualitative and quantitative results of the study. The chapter also relates the findings to the literature review and theoretical framework (translanguaging theory, constructivism, multimodality, and ubuntu translanguaging theory) of the study and specifies whether the main premises of the literature review and theories agree or disagree with the findings. The four themes that this chapter considers are: creating a translanguaging reading space through drawing, translanguaging and the extension of vocabulary, translanguaging and comprehension skills, and translanguaging and four-box organisers. The chapter concludes by discussing similarities in the findings with the literature review and new insights from the study.

7.2 Integration of Results

Table 7. 1

The Integrated Results of the Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Theme	Qualitative Results	Quantitative Results
1. Creating a translanguaging reading space through drawing	The learners' drawings showed that they were able to apply the comprehension skills of organisation and inferential skills through their drawings.	The quantitative results showed that the majority of learners did not speak English at home. The results from the pre-and post-tests indicated a decrease in learner scores.
2. Translanguaging and the extension of vocabulary	The learners struggled to write at the required level for Grade 3. However, vocabulary extension was possible through the brainstorming session. The learners acquired new words and were scaffolded during the writing activity. The learners also activated their own background knowledge during the writing activity. Drawings that were part of this activity displayed creativity and criticality by the learners.	The majority of the learners answered in the questionnaire that they had books at home, enjoyed reading and read to find out about new topics. However, post-test results contradicted these responses.
3. Translanguaging and comprehension skills	Choosing a culturally relevant text increased learner engagement in both their drawings and writing. The learners were introduced to the meaning	The quantitative results from the post-test showed that there was a weak and negative relationship between the two groups. The null hypothesis is thus accepted; there was no

	and example of rhyming words which aided in vocabulary extension.	statistical significance between the pre- and post-test.
4. Translanguaging and four-box organisers	The learners were introduced to new words in both the home language and LoLT. The learners were able to form sentences in both Afrikaans and English; therefore, meaning was transferred from the home language to the LoLT.	The effect size score for School A, 0.38, showed a medium effect and moderate relationship between the two groups. The effect size for School B, 0.20 showed a weak effect and a negative relationship between the two groups.

The qualitative data for the study foregrounded themes and sub-themes in the study which could not be measured quantitatively. Next, I discuss some of these sub-themes.

7.2.1 Learners' Personal Lifeworld and Background Knowledge

The learners drew on their personal lifeworlds, experiences, and background knowledge in designing their drawings by making links between their home literacies and classroom literacies. The comprehension story was about Mpho's visit to a farm. Animals such as rabbits, sheep, or cows, which were not included in the comprehension story, were incorporated into their drawings and stories. Therefore, the learners included their personal experiences of visiting a farm. This involved a process of creativity and criticality; on Barrett's taxonomy of comprehension skills this is known as appreciation, where a learner appreciated what was read and identified with the characters or events which took place. As the learners were able to critically analyse the story about a boy and his friend's visit to a farm, they expressed their creative understanding by incorporating their personal experiences into their drawings. A translanguaging view of literacy encouraged learning to take place from a multimodal perspective; the learners' understanding of the text was not only assessed through the written mode, but also through drawings and gesturing.

7.2.2 Comprehension Skills Shown Through Drawings

According to Barrett's taxonomy of comprehension skills, reorganisation requires the organisation of information explicitly stated in the text through summarising the main points or stating similarities and differences. Tshepo's drawing (Figure 5.2.1.5) visually organised events in the story; he divided his drawing into three levels and numbered these 1, 2, and 3. Each of these sections retold an event in the story. This brought in both creativity and criticality; he was able to critically analyse what happened in the story and retold the events in the correct sequence (part of Barrett's reorganisation skills) through a drawing. Inferential skills are the learner's engagement with information explicitly stated in the text, such as explaining the main ideas, drawing comparisons, and making predictions. Thabo (Figure 5.2.1.3) and Jason (Figure 5.2.1.6) were able to draw inferences, as both learners included information that was explicitly stated in the text and their drawings, therefore, captured the main ideas of the story. Both drawings correctly included someone who was drowning, and a friend on the side was about to rescue them, as narrated in the passage about a visit to a farm. Evaluations are questions that deal with judgements concerning value and worth. This requires that learners make judgements based on facts, opinions, logic, and reasoning. Vernon (Figure 5.4.1.4) was able to solve the problem described in the passage by stating that the dog ran away because he was not on a leash and by including a dog on a leash in his drawing. This 'solving of a problem' falls under the evaluation of Barrett's taxonomy of comprehension skills, as the learner evaluated and analysed the text to come to a judgement. Vernon's drawing made a judgement about why the boy was sad. In the three examples, we see how drawing was used as a means of communication.

7.2.3 Translanguaging Through Writing

Many of the learners included elements of translanguaging in their writing, as they incorporated both English and Afrikaans. The Eersterust community has their own lingo and unique accent. Therefore, a translanguaging pedagogy brings into perspective how the learners incorporated their cultural backgrounds into the act of learning, which did not separate the school and community in the process of learning. Many learners (Clive, figure 5.3.1.8; Wyman, figure 5.3.1.10; and Fidel, figure 5.3.1.13) wrote words such as 'toeday', 'heppy', 'hef' and 'kendi' according to the way that many Coloured people might pronounce these words. High-frequency words that the learners were familiar with in Afrikaans were incorporated with English to form sentences in their writing. This also brings in creativity and criticality. Many English teachers

at the participating schools would see this as the learners using ‘bad’ English or grammar. However, when a bi/multilingual learner speaks or writes by incorporating two languages within the same sentence, this does not mean they have inadequate English grammar, rather that the learner is ‘leveraging their full linguistic repertoire to communicate’ (Garcia, 2020, p. 557).

The point of the activity was not for learners to get the task ‘right’ but to allow all the learners to participate and leverage what they already knew and to combine this with new knowledge acquired during the lesson in a writing and drawing product. This enabled all the learners to participate, even though their writing was below the level required for Grade 3. Many links were made in the learners’ writing between home literacies and classroom literacies, which translanguaging as a practice promotes. In their writings about a birthday, traditional South African dishes were mentioned, such as chakalaka.

7.2.4 Culturally Relevant Texts

Culturally relevant texts are passages that are appropriate to the learners’ cultural and linguistic background. The comprehension passages chosen for the study included stories that were culturally relevant to the learners. The names of the characters such as Jabu, Mpho, and Lebo are names you would typically find in South Africa. These names are found in classrooms and were the names of some of their friends. By choosing these passages relevant to the learners’ context, the researcher was able to get relevant responses from the learners when questions were asked. Choosing culturally relevant texts is important for learner engagement. Themes from the comprehension passages, such as a visit to the farm, birthdays, and dogs were topics the learners were interested in reading about. These relevant topics created interest and, subsequently, the learners’ writing, and drawings are creative learning products.

7.2.5 Learning and Teaching Support Materials

LTSMs are a variety of learning and teaching materials used in the classroom. These can range from resources created by the teachers themselves such as arts and crafts, classroom posters, wall charts, workbooks, textbooks, readers, and stationary and science kits (DBE, 2011). Effective management, use and maintenance of LTSMs in the classrooms can increase the quality of teaching and learning. LTSMs were used in each intervention session to support each comprehension passage that was read. The materials included items such as cardboard paper, acrylic paint pens, wax crayons, colouring pencils, and coloured markers. These

materials supported the lessons and made each activity more enjoyable for the learners. The interventions incorporated multimodal activities that the learners could listen to (through the classroom interaction and reading aloud of the comprehension passages), see (through the brainstorming of words written on the blackboard) and touch (through the posters, drawings, and writings they produced). Each activity also improved their sensory and motor skills, for instance, the learners had to use wax crayons and paint pens to draw and write their stories. It is important, especially for young learners, that learning does not become a rote recall of information but that they are able to engage through discussions and by drawing.

7.2.6 Group Work and Scaffolding

Collaboration was involved in the last intervention session, where the learners had to work in pairs to create sentences in both English and Afrikaans. A collaborative classroom discussion also took place where the learners, together with the researcher, brainstormed words to describe snakes and what they do. The learners were introduced to new words in English and Afrikaans. The classroom teacher at School B also aided the lesson by having an Afrikaans dictionary on hand to translate words such as dangerous, poisonous and hunt. None of the learners in the classroom knew what these words were in Afrikaans. The classroom teacher also helped in scaffolding this lesson thus allowing a translanguaging space to be created to improve her learners' vocabulary. Scaffolding was also done when the researcher asked questions at the beginning, during, and end of each reading exercise by asking the learners to recall the main events in the story and their understanding of the story (Taber, 2018). The researcher scaffolded the learners' vocabulary development by affording them opportunities to answer questions in the language they were most comfortable with.

7.3 Discussion of Results

7.3.1 Theme 1: Creating a Translanguaging Reading Space Through Drawing

The first theme to emerge from the findings was creating a translanguaging space through drawing. The aim of the first intervention session was to determine the learners' understanding of a comprehension passage ("Mpho Goes to the Farm", presented in Chapter 5) through the drawings they had produced. This first intervention session took place right after the pre-test. The researcher and the learners read and discussed the comprehension passage together. A translanguaging pedagogy entails that teachers and learners read a passage in one language and then discuss the passage in another language. After each line of the passage was read, the

researcher asked the learners what their understanding of the passage was; the learners were allowed to answer in Afrikaans, and some chose to do so, as they were more comfortable communicating in Afrikaans. What was also evident during the observation of this intervention session was the multiple modes, such as gesturing, image, and text, that the learners made use of to communicate (Chan et al., 2017). The learners also chose to answer questions through facial expressions and hand gestures.

According to Phatudi (2015), one method to encourage the sound mastery of a second language is to allow learners to express what they know by drawing pictures, as language acquisition and meaning making can take place across different modes (Eisenmann & Meyer, 2018; Jewitt, 2009; Magnusson & Godhe, 2019). Young children enjoy drawing and do it willingly. Therefore, drawing was well suited for this age group, that is, the participating Grade 3 learners (Mackenzie, 2014). Drawing and writing are also related ways of communicating, as the participating learners drew a picture and also wrote a short passage on what they understood about the passage. Mackenzie (2014) also agrees that when children are encouraged to draw as the first step in communicating, they tend to become confident in other means of communication, such as speaking and writing (Mackenzie, 2014). What was evident from the majority of the participating learners' writing, however, was that their ability to write was below the required level for Grade 3.

Crucially, all the drawings produced by the learners mirrored their understanding of the comprehension passages. They were able to articulate the main plot of a story through their drawings, for instance, where one boy was drowning, and the other had to save him (Thabo, figure 5.2.1.3; Tshepo, figure 5.2.1.5; and Jason, figure 5.2.1.6). The learners also drew from their life experiences of visiting a farm (John, figure 5.2.1.4; Adam and Kyle, figures 5.2.1.7 and 5.2.1.8; and Jaden, figure 5.2.1.9) and incorporated that into their drawings. One learner drew on his experience of a visit to the zoo (Jacob, figure 5.2.1.10). According to Barrett's taxonomy, inferential skills are the learner's engagement with information explicitly stated in the text. Through their drawings, the learners were able to reorganise information that was explicitly stated in the text; one learner was able to summarise the main points of the story in their drawing (Thabo, Tshepo and Jason). Another learner's reorganisation skill was the ability to summarise the main points in the correct sequence in which they took place. In Figure 5.2.1.5 Tshepo was able to do this creatively; he divided his drawing into three sections, where each

section represented the introduction, body, and conclusion of the story. Here both learners were able to display creativity and criticality.

The questionnaire items showed that most of the learners did not speak English at home. This was to be expected as Eersterust is a linguistically diverse community; parents who stay in Mamelodi and Nellmapius prefer that their children go to schools in Eersterust. Schools also teach learners from other countries such as Zimbabwe. The results from the pre- and post-tests, however, showed that the learners did not gain higher scores in the post-test. Instead, the learners from both groups scored less and had a lower mean average in the post-test: a score of -1.1 for School A and -0.5 for School B. Although there was a loss in mean average scores, it was, however, not by a substantial margin. The verbal and written modes were favoured over other forms of assessing a learner's understanding of subject content (DBE, 2011). Nevertheless, research shows that by analysing children's drawings it is possible to tell what they know about a particular topic; this challenges standard views that only the verbal and written modes should be considered (Peterson & Friedrich, 2023). However, various authors agree that only a few educational researchers have looked into children's drawings as a means of communication and acquiring an additional language (Bartoszeck & Tunnicliffe, 2017; Bland, 2012; Kendrick & McKay, 2002; Kim & Kim, 2016; Peterson & Friedrich, 2023).

Translanguaging practice is more concerned with language as a practice-based and interactional skill for multilingual individuals than as something to be assessed formally (Donley, 2022). During discussions of comprehension passages, the learners were engaged and enthusiastic and were not passively rote learning. In the classroom, the translanguaging approach drew on all the linguistic and semiotic (gestures, images, or objects) resources of the learner to maximise understanding and achievement (Perera, 2018). The participating learners showed their understanding through gesturing and engagement during classroom discussions and through their drawing products more so than their writing. Language learning should focus on the strengths of the individual learner and the style of representation they prefer, which in this study was to draw. According to Kendrick and McKay (2004), unlike standardised methods of assessments, drawings provide insight for teachers and parents into the world of children and how they make sense of the complex world of learning in their lives, both inside and outside school.

Translanguaging and multimodalities can help change the view that certain teachers have about emergent bilingual learners. They can embrace their learners' cultural and linguistic diversities by allowing them to bring their personal experiences and lifeworlds into the act of learning (Kim & Kim, 2016). The participating learners expressed meaning through another mode, their drawings, and not just through the favoured verbal or written mode. Therefore, a translanguaging space is a multimodal space characterised by openness and creativity.

7.3.2 Theme 2: Translanguaging and the Extension of Vocabulary

The second theme that emerged was translanguaging and the extension of vocabulary. The aim of the second intervention session was to determine and extend the learners' knowledge of vocabulary in English through a translanguaging writing activity. During this intervention session, the teacher and the learners read the comprehension passage, 'Lebo's Birthday'. Afterwards a brainstorming session took place where the researcher and the learners discussed birthdays as a topic. Words were brainstormed on describing what birthdays entail, what one does on their birthday, and how one feels on their birthday. Some of the words were translated into Afrikaans so that the learners could transfer word meanings from Afrikaans to English. Scaffolding during a brainstorming session has the ability to improve a learner's vocabulary; the participating learners were introduced to new words, which in turn, improved their reading comprehension. In the creation of translanguaging spaces, teachers can adapt the assessment of their learners through different modes such as drawing, speaking, writing, gesturing, or the use of technology.

Many of the learners' stories were below the level of writing ability required for Grade 3. However, through translanguaging pedagogy, the learners incorporated English and Afrikaans into one written product such as Clifford's writing. Clifford used words she was more familiar with and wrote them in Afrikaans, and through the brainstorming session, she gained more of an understanding of English words and their spelling (Figure 5.3.1.4). When implementing a translanguaging pedagogy, the focus is on how the learners apply background knowledge and engage with the content, rather than getting the task 'right'. Translanguaging as a pedagogy and practice recognises the importance of verbal and written language resources, as well as multimodal resources and learner life experiences in literacy development (Garcia, 2020). Many learners' writings included high-frequency words such as 'and', 'there', and 'have' that were written in Afrikaans, while the rest of their sentences incorporated English words. The brainstorming session assisted them in making links between the Afrikaans and

English words. Even though many of the learners struggled with their ability to write, they were still able to take part in the activity and were not excluded (such as Tim, Paul and Christian). The activity extended the struggling learners' vocabulary by introducing them to new words and the spelling of these words in both English and Afrikaans.

What was also interesting was how the learners tapped into their own cultural backgrounds during the act of learning. In many of the written products, a link was made between translanguaging and pronunciation. Eersterust as a community has its own lingo and unique accent; a translanguaging pedagogy did not separate the school and community in the process of learning. Therefore, the learners were allowed to link home (community) and classroom literacies (such as Clive, figure 5.3.1.8; Wyman, figure 5.3.1.10; Fidel, figure 5.3.1.13). The learners wrote words in the way they would be pronounced in the community ('hef', 'toeday', 'heppy', 'khendi', 'bote'); the learners also wrote of traditional South African dishes (chakalaka)s that they would eat on their birthdays. Translanguaging design and ubuntu translanguaging pedagogy centre on making home-school connections. A learner's family and community influence their learning. The learners were influenced by their community in the way they pronounced certain words and how words were spelt out according to their pronunciation. A classroom activity can incorporate these elements where the learner and their personal background and cultural histories are viewed as a resource for meaning making (Donald et al., 2014).

Teachers open up translanguaging spaces once they start viewing language from the learners' perspective and not as something that has fixed and prescribed features (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016). Translanguaging is more concerned with how language as an interactional skill is practised by multilingual learners than with formal assessments; many of the learners' writing did not have the correct grammar and was below the level required for Grade 3 (Donley, 2022). However, the focus of the exercise was on meaning-making and helping the learners to transfer meaning and understanding from their home language to EFAL, and vice versa. Through translanguaging, a space was created in the classroom in which the learners' home language was accepted and valued in their writing. The home language and LoLT were not seen as being in competition with one another but instead drew from one another, which helped the learners to transfer and form meaning (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016). Vocabulary development was improved as a space was implemented where various languages were used in an interactional and communicative way.

The exercise also took place in an interactive and communicative way in line with constructivist methods of teaching. The learners were not merely passive recipients of knowledge but took part in the brainstorming activity along with the researcher. For instance, the learners had to participate by thinking about words related to a birthday. Through the writing activity, they were taught to reflect on their own experiences, create mental representations, and apply background knowledge (Fernando & Marikar, 2017). The end goal of constructivism is to promote deeper learning and understanding of the subject matter.

Results from questionnaires the learners filled out indicated that the majority of the learners (87%) enjoyed reading, and read to learn new topics (83%). The majority of the learners reported having books at home, although, one cannot be sure of the educational quality of these books. One would assume that this, in itself, would increase a learner's vocabulary development. However, the learners were below the required level for Grade 3 in their ability to read and write, as shown in the post-test results. There does not seem to be a correlation between the qualitative and quantitative results of the study. The quantitative results showed that there was no improvement in learner scores. As previously said, standardised methods of assessment are not always a true indication of what a learner knows inside and outside the classroom. The learners might have indicated that they enjoyed reading as a result of the intervention sessions by creating a translanguaging space. The classroom reading activity took place from a multimodal perspective, which included listening, speaking, reading, writing, and drawing. By incorporating a variety of methods for literacy development, the privileged 'literacies' of standardised methods could be modified to accommodate multilingual learners (Iyer & Luke, 2010). Only once the different learning preferences of the learners were recognised, could standardised models of literacy education be adapted to benefit multilingual learners (Magnusson & Godhe, 2019).

7.3.3 Theme 3: Translanguaging and Comprehension Skills

Language comprehension describes a learner's ability to understand and communicate using language (Catts, 2018). This includes skills that learners build as the teacher asks questions before, during, and after read-aloud story sessions. Language comprehension is what, how, and why learners read (Catts, 2018). During the third intervention session, the learners read the comprehension passage titled 'Mpho and his Dog'. Mpho's dog enjoyed playing tricks and got lost for a while. After the comprehension, the learners were asked if any of them had pets at home and what type of animal it was. This allowed the learners to draw on their background

knowledge (home literacies) or schema, to comprehend what they were reading. A short brainstorming session also took place when the learners were asked if they knew what the word ‘trick’ meant and how dogs, in particular, enjoyed playing tricks. The researcher and learners then brainstormed words that rhymed with ‘trick’. When providing the learners with a comprehension passage, it is important to consider texts that are culturally relevant to the learners and texts that spark their interest; this way, the learners are more likely to engage more during classroom discussions and bring in creativity into their drawings and writings.

The name of the boy in the story was Jabu, which is a common name for boys and girls in South Africa. The story was about Jabu and his dog. Many of the participating learners shared that they had a dog or other type of pet at home. Many of the learners were initially not familiar with the word trick and had difficulty understanding what the word meant. Through scaffolding, the learners were guided through what the word trick meant and brainstormed words that rhymed with the word trick. When I asked the learners what was meant by a rhyme, many stared blankly at me, not knowing what the word meant. The point of the rhyming session was to increase vocabulary development. As the researcher, I emphasised to the learners that rhyming words have a similar sound. I explained that they had to look at the last three letters, ‘ick’, which were all the same for the rhyming words. Rhymes help learners to recognise how certain words have similar ending and beginning sounds, when learners are introduced to a range of words with similar sounds, this has the potential to increase vocabulary development (READ, 2019).

Two learners (Vernon, figure 5.2.1.6; and Ben, figure 5.4.1.8) were able to draw conclusions about the text through their drawings and writing. They were both able to solve the problem in the text about why the dog ran away. Both drawings included a boy with a dog, however, the dogs were on leashes. In the story, it is not stated that Mpho’s dog was tied to a leash. The learners displayed the skill of evaluation, according to Barrett’s taxonomy of comprehension skills, as both learners were able to evaluate and analyse the text and come to a judgement about how to ‘solve a problem’. Another learner (Daniel, figure 5.4.1.6) drew a dog jumping through a hoop; his drawing included some writing, but it was difficult to make out what the learner was trying to say. However, his understanding, facilitated by the classroom discussion of how dogs liked to play tricks, was shown through his drawing. In a creative way, he displayed his understanding of information, stating explicitly in the text that Mpho’s dog

enjoyed playing tricks. Another learner (Layla, figure 5.4.1.8) drew a picture of herself and a dog; this learner stated that she had a dog.

These examples illustrate that it is important to provide learners with culturally relevant texts. These types of texts increase engagement and are stories that the learners are able to relate to. Many of the learners in the classroom had pets, including dogs who enjoyed playing tricks. The learners brought their personal lifeworlds into the act of learning. Relevant texts also took into consideration the learners' home language, culture, gender, prior or background knowledge, reading abilities or proficiency, and socioeconomic circumstances.

Quantitative results from the post-test showed that there was a weak and negative relationship between the pre- and post-tests. The null hypothesis indicates no statistical significance between them. As shown in Chapter 6, Figure 6.8, the comprehension questions required the learners to answer questions that were explicitly stated in the text. According to Barrett's taxonomy on comprehension skills, literal comprehension is information that is explicitly stated in the text, this involves naming, stating, identifying, listing points, and describing. Many of the participating learners lacked this skill; the learners' ability to write was also below the level required for Grade 3. There were learners, as previously mentioned, who were able to display this comprehension skill through their drawings but lacked the ability in their writing. This accounted for the lower score in the post-test with no statistical significance between the two groups. Even though the pre- and post-tests showed that the learners did not have a literal understanding of the passages, in their multimodal engagement (multimodal drawings and discussions) they displayed all the levels of Barrett's taxonomy, even the highest levels of evaluation and appreciation.

7.3.4 Theme 4: Translanguaging and Four-Box Organisers.

In the fourth intervention session, the learners read the comprehension passage 'Nomsa and the Plastic Snake'. The researcher wrote the words 'snake' and 'slang' side by side, emphasising that both started with an 'sss' sound. The teacher and learners then brainstormed words for building their sentences, such as words (adjectives) to describe a snake, and what snakes like to do (verbs). The learners asked for the Afrikaans meanings of words such as dangerous, poisonous, and hunt. The class teacher assisted in this activity by using an Afrikaans dictionary to translate these words into Afrikaans. The learners were asked to work in pairs to write their own short sentences based on the 'Nomsa and the Plastic Snake' passage. In some instances,

the researcher paired learners who were more proficient in the LoLT with those who were not. The teacher and learners orally shared ideas about what they were going to write and translated the meaning of the words from English to Afrikaans. The learners wrote their sentences in the language they were most comfortable speaking and writing in, which was Afrikaans.

In this interaction, scaffolding was present when the researcher assisted the learners with vocabulary development by introducing the learners to new words in a reading exercise. This was done by focusing on one particular word (snake or slang) and then transferring the meaning to the home language of the learners, Afrikaans. This created a space where both languages were shown together for the purpose of vocabulary development. The teacher wrote words and parts of words that were too difficult for the learners to spell on their own. In this way, the learners were able to interactively create a more complex text than their writing ability in English would allow. A language-rich environment is important in developing a learner's language skills. This is especially true for EFAL learners, who rely on their home language to make connections between new ideas and words in the LoLT (Liu & Fang, 2020).

When the teacher scaffolded the learners, she helped them connect new knowledge with their prior knowledge. The teacher challenged the learners by providing them with a task that required critical thinking skills, such as writing sentences side by side in two languages (Donald et al., 2014). This interaction created a ZPD, a space between what the learner already knew or could do (the actual level of development) and what they would be able to master when provided with support from a knowledgeable peer or teacher (potential development) (Shabani et al., 2010). This type of teaching was focused and structured, and the learners were able to link new knowledge with what they already know, enabling them to make connections between their home language and LoLT (Wei & Lin, 2019). Translanguaging practice can be used as a means of scaffolding, such as through concept clarification when a learner is confused (Lin & Leung, 2023). Therefore, translanguaging and constructivism as classroom practices create a space where multilingual learners are supported. Both theories support learning as social interaction through multiple languages, as teachers or more knowledgeable learners support those who are emergent.

At School B, the class teacher (Mrs M) participated in the intervention session; she used an Afrikaans dictionary to find the translation of the words dangerous, poisonous, and hunt, as the learners were not familiar with these words in Afrikaans. An ubuntu translanguaging pedagogy

was evident here as the teacher was proactive in using an LTSM that supported her learners' linguistic background (Phatudi, 2018). This increased the learners' vocabulary as they were introduced to new words in Afrikaans and could make connections between English and Afrikaans. After the session, Mrs M expressed how proud she was of her learners for the posters they had created, and she put the posters up on the classroom walls. This made many of her learners feel proud and valued. The teacher next door also praised Mrs M's learners for the posters they had created. This is an example of a teacher who, in assisting the researcher, was willing to incorporate a culturally responsive pedagogical approach for her learners.

Therefore, during this exercise the learners incorporated translanguaging in their writing. This was done through the use of English and Afrikaans in their sentences. The learners were more familiar with certain high-frequency words in Afrikaans. For more difficult English and Afrikaans words, the learners were scaffolded through the brainstorming exercise. One language was incomplete without the other, as postulated by translanguaging (Wei, 2018). Even though the learners' written products were not wholly grammatically correct at Grade 3 level, the exercise created a dialectic disruption of linguistic boundaries and the shifting of old boundaries, which formed new translanguaging practices in which languages and various modalities were combined (Makalela, 2018). Their products (four-box organisers) represented their linguistic (writing), verbal (discussing), visual (drawing) and spatial (designing) understanding of the reading passage. A four-box organiser includes the written word, a drawing of the word, and a sentence with the word in it. This box incorporates multimodal elements of drawing, writing, oral, and visual elements. The learners in this session displayed the multiple ways in which they communicated meaning and understanding of the reading comprehension passage. As new communication channels were opened, literacy in the classroom was viewed in ways that went beyond conventional language teaching (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2019). In the literacy classroom, pedagogies that embrace translanguaging can assist multilingual learners in a variety of ways. In my study, the use of reading strategies, such as summarising and clarifying terms and concepts, was promoted in each intervention session (Pacheco & Miller, 2015).

The effect size calculation for School A was 0.38, which showed a medium effect and moderate relationship between the two groups. It was interesting to observe how the learners at School A performed better than those at School B in the post-test, indicating that the intervention sessions might have had more of an influence on their results than in School B. The effect size

calculation for School B was 0.20, which showed a weak effect and a negative relationship between the two groups.

7.4 Similarities and Differences With Case Studies in the Literature

My study reveals similar results to case studies in the literature, especially those that implemented strategies that took on a multilingual and multimodal approach. Kim and Song (2019) designed a family literacy project in New York City where parents and children from immigrant backgrounds worked together to create a multilingual storybook. Creativity and criticality were evident in the storybooks designed by the families who brought in their cultural histories and personal backgrounds, making a link between the home and classroom literacies. In Garcia's (2020) study, the teachers created a translanguaging space with Latin bilinguals during a read-aloud activity. The learners read a book in English, and the following day, a Spanish version of the same book was read. During discussions of the book, the teachers encouraged the learners to act out, draw, and add music to their deliberations on the scenes in the book. A multimodal and multimodal approach was used in this study to determine the learner's understanding of a book that was read. Ebe and Chapman-Santiago (2016) used translanguaging as a literacy device in a Grade 8 English Language and Arts class in New York as part of the Cuny-Nysieb project. The teacher chose to create a translanguaging space for her learners by choosing a culturally relevant text. The translanguaging spaces created in the above case studies indicated how choosing culturally relevant texts was able to result in increased engagement with the learners; in the above case studies, the learners were also able to bring in background knowledge resulting in creativity and criticality, which was also shown in the current study.

Kendrick and McKay (2004) conducted a study with learners in Grades 1 and 2 in Canada where they were asked to draw a picture in relation to reading or writing done at home or school. The study showed that the drawings were used by the learners to express their understanding of reading and writing, which they otherwise would not have been able to comprehend if only the verbal or written mode had been used. Similar results were shown in my study. In another study by Kim and Kim (2016), a Korean immigrant family in New York took part in a literacy project in which a storybook on dinosaurs was read in English and then translated into Korean. The participating children used drawings as a mode for meaning making and for understanding the storybook they read. Peterson and Friedrich (2023) showed how the learners were also able to express meaning through drawings, gestures, and the use of multiple

languages, not just through the verbal or written mode. The above studies point to the importance of a culturally responsive pedagogy and how learners showed an understanding of what was being taught in the classroom through the use of different modes and languages.

The findings of my study also corresponded with the studies that carried out translanguaging interventions. Mgijima and Makalela (2016) carried out an intervention with 64 Grade 4 learners at a primary school in the Eastern Cape. Translanguaging was applied to help the learners draw conclusions from the text by applying their background knowledge. The results of the pre-test and post-test showed that the translanguaging intervention had a positive impact on the participants' performance in the two languages used at the school (isiXhosa and English). Mgijima and Makalela (2021) conducted a more recent study in the Eastern Cape to examine the effects of translanguaging on learners' ability to reorganise texts after reading passages in Xhosa and English. The results showed that the ability of the participating learners to reorganise texts in both languages had improved following the translanguaging intervention. Makalela (2016) created a translanguaging space consisting of Grade 6 learners at a rural school in Limpopo. During the reading comprehension exercise, the learners were provided with the text in Sepedi and English; they gained a deeper understanding of the text through rewriting, summarising, and retelling the story in English and Sepedi. Lastly, Charambo and Zano's (2019) study of a translanguaging intervention with Grade 10 pupils in a Physical Science class at a farm school in the Free State province also showed learning gains and a high effect size score. The above studies indicated gains in learner scores from the pre- and post-tests, whereas for this study, there was a loss in learner scores.

The studies conducted by Mgijima and Makalela (2016, 2021) were carried out in the Eastern Cape, the lowest-performing province in the country according to the PIRLS 2021, whereas Makalela's (2016) study was conducted in the province of Limpopo. There have not been enough studies conducted in other provinces on whether translanguaging improves the reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills of multilingual learners. There are also few researchers taking an interventionist approach to translanguaging and multimodal studies.

7.5 New Insights

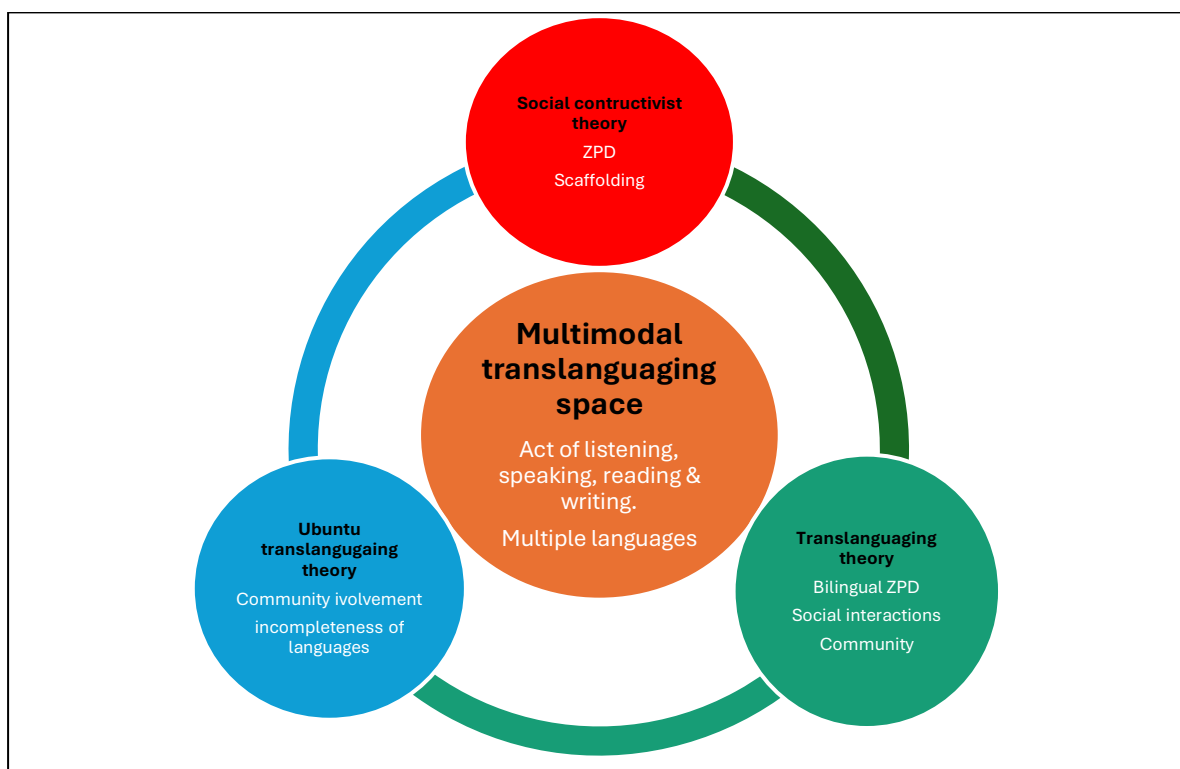
One of the main purposes of this study was to design and implement a translanguaging and multimodal intervention in a remedial education programme. Therefore, the study investigated how designing a translanguaging space impacted Grade 3 learners' ability to engage with the

learning content. The conceptual rationale for the study was how the term translinguaging space could be contextualised in the South African or African context. This space was created through the intervention sessions where the learners were able to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire, cultural identity, and background knowledge in the process of learning. This was evident in many of their drawings and writings, as presented in Chapter 5. The study indicates how this space was created and conceptualised in two South African classrooms.

Figure 7.1 represents how this translinguaging space was conceptualised in the South African context. This space was created in South Africa classrooms through the acts of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Figure 7. 1

Translinguaging Space in the South African Classroom



These integrated acts took on different modes, which catered to the learners with a diverse range of learning styles and speaking different languages. Social constructivism, translinguaging, and ubuntu were present in one space, where there was a constant interchange and exchange between the principles of each theory in the classroom. Constructivism

emphasises learning as a social product, through methods of incorporating scaffolding and the ZPD, which were evident in the translanguaging space. Translanguaging encourages the use of a learner's full linguistic repertoire through the use of multiple languages within the classroom and collaboration among the learners. In the translanguaging space, these learning partnerships amongst the learners provided mutual support through various languages and created a bilingual ZPD.

Ubuntu translanguaging emphasises complex multilingual encounters in the classroom and views one language as incomplete without the other (in this case, English and Afrikaans) and indicates that learning is a social product. The researcher/teacher and the learners in the classroom collaborated and the learners' cultural and linguistic backgrounds brought value to the classroom activities. Crucially, the space emphasised the learners as a resource. My study showed that translanguaging, ubuntu translanguaging, and constructivism, along with multimodality, have the potential to create spaces in which gestures, sounds, drawings, writing, movement, and spatial design contribute to maximising learning. This space allowed the learners to draw on their available modal resources in order to make meaning in their discussions, drawings, and writing during the intervention lessons. Therefore, all four theories in the classroom created a space unique to the South African context in which learning took place in a circular flow with movement between different theories, modes (visual, auditory, written, gestural, aural, and spatial) and languages. Teachers can create these translanguaging spaces through the use of community involvement, various languages, and modes.

The summative pre- and post-tests (their writing skills) did not indicate an improvement in their scores based on the intervention, but the qualitative findings indicated that the learners' engagement with reading activities increased or improved as they incorporated and drew on all their senses (multimodality) and language resources (translanguaging) through cooperative, supportive learning activities (ubuntu). Their discussions and drawings showed that they understood the gist of the reading passages and activities. However, they could not express this understanding as clearly through their writing as the learners' writing skills were below the level required for Grade 3.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings of the study based on the following four themes: creating a translanguaging reading space through drawing, translanguaging and the extension of

vocabulary, translanguaging and comprehension skills, and translanguaging and four-box organisers. What was evident from the qualitative results was how the learners expressed their understanding of the comprehension passages through their drawings; however, post-test results showed a loss in learner scores. The following chapter gives a summary and conclusion for the study.

Chapter 8

Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1. Introduction

Chapter 6 presented the integration of the results and Chapter 7 discussed the integrated qualitative and quantitative results of the study. The previous chapter also related the findings to the literature review and theoretical framework (translanguaging theory, constructivism, multimodality, and ubuntu translanguaging theory) of the study and specified whether the findings agreed or disagreed with the main premise of the theories and literature. The four themes found in the study were: creating a translanguaging reading space through drawing, translanguaging and the extension of vocabulary, translanguaging and comprehension skills, and translanguaging and four-box organisers. The chapter concluded by discussing similarities in the findings with the literature review and new insights of the study. This chapter presents a summary of the study. The research questions are revisited, and evidence is provided to answer the two research questions of the study. The limitation of the study is discussed along with a reflection on the methodology chosen for the study, and what other possible methods could have been used. Recommendations are then given for future studies and possible implications that the study might have presented.

8.2 Summary of the Study

In Chapter 1, the study was introduced along with its purpose which was to design and implement a translanguaging and multimodal intervention in a remedial education programme. Therefore, the study investigated how designing a translanguaging space influenced the ability of Grade 3 learners to engage with the learning content and how offering a pedagogical perspective on translanguaging could assist teachers in creating a translanguaging space of their own. The study also wanted to investigate what this space would look like in the South African and African setting by incorporating the African philosophy of ubuntu alongside constructivist methods of teaching and a translanguaging pedagogy. The participating learners came from Eersterust, a multicultural, linguistically diverse community. The effects of apartheid are still present, as the township and rural communities suffer from low literacy levels, with language being the biggest obstacle to learning. A culture of reading has not been established in communities such as Eersterust, with many learners coming from low-income households and whose parents themselves are illiterate. The Grade 3 learners at both the participating schools

were also below the level required for Grade 3 in their ability to read and write, and they lacked an understanding of the basic components of reading such as word recognition (phonological awareness, decoding, and sign recognition). The main reason for conducting this study was to investigate the challenges that the learners experienced in their reading and writing; it was, therefore, appropriate to design a translanguaging intervention aimed at improving their comprehension skills with each intervention session incorporating reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The study posed two main research questions, one to answer the qualitative part of the study and the other to answer the quantitative part of the study. The qualitative research question was: How does implementing a translanguaging space as an intervention improve learners' ability to engage with the content taught? The quantitative research question was: Was there a difference in learner performance after a translanguaging intervention was administered? The null hypothesis states that there is no statistical difference before and after the intervention, and an alternative hypothesis states that there is a statistical significance.

In Chapter 2, the local and international literature was reviewed on translanguaging spaces that were designed and implemented in classrooms. The literature also reviewed case study interventions done in South Africa and what their pre- and post-test results were. Studies by Kim and Song (2019), Garcia (2020), Ebe and Chapman-Santiago (2016), Kendrick and McKay (2004), Kim and Kim (2016), and Peterson and Friedrich (2023) followed multimodal and multilingual approaches. These studies showed increased engagement amongst the learners. The researchers and teachers chose culturally relevant texts and incorporated various modes of representation to improve the learners' understanding, such as storybooks and drawings. The learners were able to convey a deeper understanding of texts through drawings and gesturing than in the usually prescribed written and verbal modes. This was also evident in the current study, where the learners displayed an increased understanding of the comprehension passages through their drawings. The case studies done on interventions by Mgijima and Makalela (2016, 2021) and Makalela (2016) showed that there were gains in learner scores between the pre-test and post-test; however, in the current study, the learners experienced a loss in scores, thus there was no statistical significance. The studies by Mgijima and Makalela (2016, 2021), and Makalela (2016) were the few studies conducted locally. In research, there are few intervention strategies which incorporate translanguaging and multimodality.

Chapter 3 discussed the theoretical underpinning of space, and, in particular, a translanguaging space. The chapter also conceptualised what a classroom translanguaging space looks like globally and in the South African context. The theories of constructivism, translanguaging, multimodality, and ubuntu translanguaging shared a symbiotic relationship in creating a space that was transformative for the learners. The learners engaged with one another on a social level through multiple languages and modes. Through the incorporation of these methods in a classroom where listening, speaking, reading, and writing were present in the act of learning, learners developed creativity and critical-thinking skills. These theories have been used in the past by various researchers and thus provided the researcher with a suitable framework to relay the findings.

In Chapter 4, the research design and methodology were discussed, as well as the methods used for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the results. Pragmatism was chosen as the paradigm for the study. Pragmatism places an emphasis on purposeful human activity (Morgan, 2014). The human activity that the study sought to investigate was the purposeful translanguaging activities designed by the researcher to incorporate all the modes of learning and to determine how learners would respond to these activities. Pragmatism begins with a problem and ends with a resolution to that problem. The problem for the current study was identified through the researcher's master's study conducted in 2021 on teachers' perception of translanguaging. The participating teachers voiced their concerns about language barriers and learning difficulties that many learners in the community of Eersterust faced. Many learners faced difficulties with the transition from Grade 3 to Grade 4 when the emphasis shifted from learning to read to reading to learn in a language that they were not fluent in. Hence, the need was identified to design an intervention strategy. Pragmatism is the most appropriate paradigm when researchers employ a mixed-methods design where both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods are used to accomplish their goal and achieve triangulation.

Chapter 5 presented the qualitative findings of a translanguaging intervention that took place at two Quintile 1 primary schools in Eersterust. Two classes participated in the study, with 64 learners in total, both from English home language classrooms. The aim of the intervention was to incorporate all types of learning, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in a translanguaging reading intervention. The section also included screenshots of the EGRA passages that were used and the drawings and writing of the participating learners. This chapter

sought to answer the research question of how implementing a translanguaging space as an intervention improves learners' ability to engage with the content taught.

In Chapter 6, the quantitative results of the study were presented. The quantitative results of the study consisted of descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics came from questionnaire items that the learners had to fill out, while the inferential statistics came from the pre-and post-test scores. The items were presented in table format and as SPSS outputs. The results indicated that there was no statistical significance between the pre- and post-tests.

In Chapter 7, the findings were discussed and compared to the literature review and theoretical framework of the study. There was agreement between the qualitative findings and the theoretical framework; however, there was disagreement with the quantitative findings. The reasons for this are summarised in Section 8.3.

8.3 Research Questions Revisited

Question 1: How does implementing a translanguaging space as an intervention improve learners' ability to engage with the content taught?

There were different observations made during the intervention session that helped to answer this question. The comprehension skills of participating learners were revealed in their drawings, which would not have been possible if they had only been allowed to represent their understanding through the verbal and written modes. The learners' lack of writing skills was evident in their written answers, whereas the multimodal oral, gestural, and visual responses more clearly mirrored their understanding of the reading passages. The intervention session also activated the learners' personal lifeworld and background knowledge through creativity and criticality. Activating the learners' background knowledge enabled them to participate in classroom discussions and activities. Consequently, they were not merely passive recipients of knowledge but co-constructed knowledge along with the teacher. Elements of translanguaging were also found in many of the learners' writings. They spelt words as they would pronounce these words and they incorporated English and Afrikaans into one written product. This might be seen as being 'bad English'; however, this was the way the learners conveyed meaning and understanding. Group work and scaffolding in each intervention session allowed the learners to participate and contribute to the activity, whether through their drawings or writing products. This increased their enjoyment and engagement, and it was evident that the learners actively

engaged with the content and understood the comprehension passages as revealed in their drawings.

Question 2: Was there a difference in learner performance after a translanguaging intervention was administered?

The results from the pre- and post-tests showed that there was no difference in learner performance. The learners received a lower score for the post-test; thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. The effect size score for School A was 0.38, which showed a medium effect and moderate relationship between the two groups. The effect size for School B was 0.20 which showed a weak effect and a negative relationship between the two groups. The reason for this could be that the learners were below the required level for Grade 3 in their ability to write. Their drawings clearly indicated the learners' understanding of the reading passages which were accompanied by written descriptions that did not always make sense. However, with the help of the researcher, they were able to produce writing that improved. The EGRA assessments that were used were also forms of standardised assessment, which might not always be a true indication of what a learner does or does not know.

Therefore, the quantitative results indicate that the summative test scores of the learners did not improve. This was caused by the modality in which the tests were offered, the written mode. Conversely, the visual and gestural (drawings), verbal (classroom scaffolding), and spatial (designing of four-box organisers) helped the learners to conceptualise their understanding of the reading passages visually. Translanguaging assisted the learners to co-construct meaning through two languages, and the use of two languages even improved their written responses over the four sessions.

8.4 Limitations of the Study

The study had the following limitations:

- Two Quintile 1 schools were used as research sites. Therefore, the findings are not generalisable. The sampling method was purposive sampling. More schools could have been chosen using a simple random sampling method, including schools from different areas.

- The intervention sessions were conducted over four sessions. Four sessions might not have been adequate to monitor learner results or monitor improvement.
- The study was open to subjectivity as the researcher was part of an NPO that has been working within the Eersterust community for the past six years; this brings bias with it and the researcher's personal perceptions and understandings.
- The study can be applied to the two Quintile 1 schools that participated and not to any other context, therefore making it ungeneralisable.
- The South African EGRA instrument consists of four major individual assessment components: letter sounds, high-frequency words, reading a short locally relevant passage of a few sentences, and simple comprehension questions related to the passage. The current study only tested the learners on the comprehension passages, which was a limitation as many learners did not possess adequate comprehension skills. The learners should also have been tested on letter sounds and high-frequency words.
- Another limitation was that the qualitative data included rich drawings while the quantitative data only presented data from the questionnaire and pre- and post-test results.
- A final limitation is that no control groups were used for the study. Two more schools in other areas could have been used as control groups to increase the number of participants and to compare test results.

8.5. Recommendations for Future Research

8.5.1 Translanguaging Workshops With Teachers

Many teachers are not knowledgeable about the term translanguaging and what pedagogical translanguaging looks like in the classroom. The first recommendation would be to implement translanguaging workshops with teachers in South Africa. More workshops should be done to introduce teachers to what translanguaging pedagogy entails and how they can create translanguaging spaces of their own in their classrooms. Through such workshops, teachers can be encouraged to take up a translanguaging stance, shift, and design. This could alter teachers' monolingual views in considering the learners' linguistic and cultural backgrounds as resources.

Teachers can create a translanguaging space within their classrooms by implementing the following:

- Teachers should be provided with support on how to plan for translanguaging practices and document what type of strategies they implement. This will help teachers analyse translanguaging strategies that assist learners and identify strategies that might need adjusting according to the needs of their learners.
- In the classroom, labels for objects, classroom rules and routines and table names can be displayed in multiple languages.
- Allow learners to scaffold one another by partnering a learner who is more proficient in the LoLT with an emergent speaker.
- Highlight the benefits of using both the home language and LoLT in listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. Learners can be taught songs that incorporate English and their home language.
- Include multilingual and multimodal resources in the classroom, such posters, storyboards, and dictionaries.
- Allow for more collaborative work activities since learning is a social product and learners can learn from one another by comparing ideas or answers.
- Learn phrases or greetings in the learners' home languages, such as including all 11 South African languages. Teach children how to greet each other in the different languages.

8.5.2 Translanguaging in Teacher Education Programmes

Authors such as Blackledge and Creese (2010), Garcia and Kleyn (2016), Gorter and Arocena, (2020), Liu and Fang (2020), Rivera and Mazak (2017), Machado and Gonzales (2020), and Yuvayapan (2019) agree that translanguaging needs to become embedded in teacher education programmes. When translanguaging is implemented in teacher education programmes, teachers enter their classrooms with knowledge of practices of how to guide their multilingual learners (Machado & Gonzales, 2020). By developing a close relationship with the learners whose home languages they are not familiar with, teachers are able to carefully think through which tasks they could implement. This way, teachers are also able to focus on what a learner is able to do when it comes to language, instead of on what they cannot do. As Wei (2017)

suggested, a teacher should be willing to take on the role of a facilitator to ensure that the learners who are not yet proficient in the LoLT do not feel self-conscious about their ability to learn a new language. When a classroom atmosphere is relaxed, and learners realise that the main aim of classroom discussions are not always to provide the correct answer, they will be more likely to participate (Blackledge & Creese, 2010).

8.5.3 Translanguaging Interventions

Meiklejohn et al. (2021) outline five points for successful educational interventions:

- First, the intervention must be aimed at teaching pedagogies, especially those that modify teaching practices to suit the needs of the learners.
- Secondly, the importance of offering an approach to education that incorporates multiple languages in the classroom and the need to scaffold learning in both the home language and English (which is chosen as the main LoLT in South African schools).
- Thirdly, interventions should encourage parental involvement as many parents in South Africa have low education levels and are working low-income jobs that require them to work for long hours.
- Fourth, interventions should focus on teacher professional development as many teachers in the Foundation Phase do not know the basic principles of reading or how to teach Foundation Phase learners to read.
- And, lastly, school management and school effectiveness should be addressed. In addressing teacher effectiveness, one cannot ignore the broader school management context. This includes management of resources, capacity of learner intake, parent involvement, leadership, classroom management and discipline, collaborative lesson planning, reading, and writing homework.

The intervention for the current study was done on a small scale and did not implement all the suggestions made above. A large-scale intervention should be considered where other factors are also considered.

8.6. Implications of the Study

8.6.1 Standardised Assessments

The study showed that when learners are assessed through multimodal means such as oral, written, and drawing tasks, they convey meaning and understanding of the text that they are unable to do when a standardised form of assessment is given. Teachers should be encouraged to implement a suitable form of ‘formative’ and ‘summative’ assessment, which might include activities, such as drawings, and verbal or writing tasks. If teachers see their learners and their cultural backgrounds, histories, and languages as resources, learners will not be left behind in the classroom and will be better able to learn an additional language or content in general. Standardised assessments are also influenced by many outside factors such as stress, tiredness, or hunger. Standardised tests only show which learners are best at preparing for and taking the tests, not what knowledge learners might exhibit if there were no outside factors influencing the test. In this study, the researcher acting as a scaffolder might have influenced the learning, as during the post-test the researcher could no longer scaffold the learners or help them complete the activity.

8.6.2 Basic Principles of Reading

According to the science of reading, children require specific and explicit reading instruction. According to the simple view of reading, a learner must have developed word reading and language comprehension in order to improve reading comprehension and become a skilled reader. Data from PIRLS 2021 states that 78% of South African Grade 4 learners are not skilled readers, which indicates that Foundation Phase learners have not developed the necessary skills of word reading (phonics, decoding, and sight recognition). Therefore, at Grade 3 level, the learners have not developed the skills for language comprehension (such as vocabulary, background knowledge, language structure, and literacy knowledge). This negatively affects their ability to read to learn. Many learners are also below the required Grade level when it comes to their ability to write. As McGraw Hill (2024) states, for intervention programmes aimed at learners who are struggling with their ability to read effectively, a learner’s specific weakness, be it word reading or language comprehension, has to be addressed. Word reading and language comprehension skills can be addressed separately for both assessment and teaching, although both are required to achieve reading comprehension. This might also be a difficult task for teachers to implement with limited resources and overcrowded classrooms.

8.6.3 Policy and practice

The implications of this study on policy is the need for policy makers and curriculum developers to incorporate practices that promote multilingualism in the classroom. While the language in education policy advocates for multilingualism, many schools also adopt an early exit model in which learners transition from their home language to English as the LoLT. The DBE should consider the use of translanguaging as a module given in teacher training institutions. Teachers at training institutions should be well prepared for linguistically diverse learners. Teachers should also learn to differentiate assessment practices which cater for their diverse learners, learners should be allowed to answer (verbal and written) in the language they are most comfortable in. With this becoming an encouraged practice this may lead to a greater investment in home language learning and seeing the learners home language as a resource. This will result in practices in which teachers incorporate translanguaging in lesson planning and design assessment practices that incorporate the diverse languages of their learners.

8.7 Conclusion

The study concludes that designing a translanguaging space led to increased engagement and understanding of reading texts amongst Grade 3 learners. The learners were able to represent their understanding more clearly through their drawings than in their writing. The learners displayed creativity and criticality in their drawings and writings. The creation of translanguaging spaces allowed the learners to bring their cultural backgrounds and personal histories into the act of learning. The designed intervention of the study was in line with the study's theoretical framework. Although the post-test results did not yield the desired outcome, the creation of a translanguaging space or 'third space' was still transformative in nature for participating learners, the classroom teachers, and the researcher who observed the intervention.

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