



The impact of translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms in South Africa:

The case of Diepsloot

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Research report submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for a Master of Arts

MASTER OF ARTS IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

In the

Department of Translation & Interpreting

University of Witwatersrand

Faculty of Humanities

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Date: 2025



DECLARATION

I, Dzunisani Gift Mathevula, declare that this dissertation, submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Translation Studies at the University of Witwatersrand, Gauteng, is my original work. It has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other institution. All sources used in this study or quoted have been appropriately indicated and acknowledged through complete references.

Signature:  Date: 06/06/2025



DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the little girl who always shows up for herself and fights for what is hers, despite all odds.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to give all thanks to my greatest helper, the Almighty God.

To my supervisor, Dr C. Hlongwana, thank you for your unwavering and incredible support throughout my research journey.

To the schools in the Diepsloot community who participated in this research, your support has made this work possible.

To my wonderful husband, Liven Mathevula, thank you for encouraging me and allowing me time to focus on my studies, even when it meant spending less time together.

To my precious sons, Ntalo and Werhu Mathevula, looking at you every day is motivation enough to keep going and secure a brighter future.

To my greatest supporter and reviewer, Auday T. Rikhotso, thank you for your invaluable guidance.

I am deeply grateful to Nonkululeko, Nomonde, and Lungisani for always offering guidance and a listening ear throughout this journey.

Special thanks to my parents, my mother Josephine Ngoveni and my father Sikheto Ngoveni, for your love and support throughout my studies.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to all my friends, family and everyone who supported me, directly or indirectly, along this incredible academic journey.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

RSA	Republic of South Africa
CSP	Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy
UTP	Ubuntu Translanguaging Pedagogy
LoLT	Languages of Learning and Teaching (LoLT)
DBE	Department of Basic Education
MST	Mathematics, Science, and Technology
EU	European Union
SCA	Statistical Content Analysis
TCA	Thematic Content Analysis
P	Participant
Q	Question



ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the impact of translanguaging practices on multilingual classrooms in Diepsloot, Gauteng Province, South Africa. Specifically, this research seeks to understand how teachers perceive and implement translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy to address present linguistic diversity in classrooms. Using translanguaging theory, data are collected through interviews with a sample of teachers to explore their experiences and insights regarding translanguaging practices. This study found that translanguaging significantly enhances communication and comprehension among learners, fostering a more inclusive learning environment. It revealed that teachers utilise translanguaging to facilitate understanding across different languages, thereby promoting engagement and participation among learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds. The findings highlighted the importance of integrating translanguaging into teaching methodologies to better accommodate the linguistic needs of all learners. It was recommended that further research be conducted to explore the broader implications of translanguaging in different educational contexts.

KEYWORDS: *Translanguaging; Multilingual; Classrooms; Language; Learners.*



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Language, as defined by Garcia and Wei (2014, p.6), is a structured system of rules acquired for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In multilingual settings, this system becomes a dynamic and flexible tool, enabling individuals to navigate linguistic boundaries effectively. Translanguaging leverages this flexibility, allowing learners to utilise their entire linguistic repertoire, thereby enhancing meaning-making and communication. Garcia (2009) highlights translanguaging as a teaching strategy that integrates linguistic resources to facilitate understanding and bridge linguistic divides in multilingual classrooms. Numerous studies suggest that translanguaging is considered an effective pedagogical approach within educational settings (Charamba, 2020); however, it is important to note that the implementation of this practice may vary significantly depending on the specific context and language policies of individual schools. This study aims to explore the impact of translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms in Diepsloot, South Africa. Translanguaging, initially conceptualised by Cen Williams and colleagues in 1980 under the Welsh term '*trawseithu*' (Williams et al. 1980), has evolved into a dynamic pedagogical approach that challenges the notion of languages as discrete entities. By fostering the fluid use of multiple language resources, translanguaging enhances communication and learning, particularly in diverse multilingual contexts.

This chapter focuses on the following: the background of the study, the research problem, the aim of the research, the research questions and objectives, ethical considerations, and the significance of the study. Together, these elements provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the rationale, scope, and importance of the research.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the context of Gauteng Province, this linguistic diversity is similarly reflected. Nationally, isiZulu is the most spoken home language, followed by isiXhosa, Afrikaans, Sepedi, Setswana, English, Sesotho, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, isiNdebele, and SiSwati. According to the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21), isiZulu is also the most spoken home language in Gauteng, spoken by 25% of households. Other widely spoken languages in the province include Sesotho (13.4%), Sepedi (12%), English (10.7%), Setswana (9.8%), Afrikaans (7.2%), isiXhosa (7.2%), and Xitsonga (6.2%).



Additionally, smaller percentages of households report speaking isiNdebele (2.3%), Tshivenda (2.2%), SiSwati (0.7%), Sign Language (0.1%), or other languages (3.2%) (Khanyile, 2022). This multilingual landscape positions Gauteng as a dynamic linguistic environment shaped by migration, urbanisation, and cultural diversity, with all 12 official South African languages represented across the province. This provincial linguistic profile highlights the multilingual realities that learners and teachers navigate daily, underscoring the importance of translanguaging as an inclusive pedagogical approach within Gauteng's classrooms. Translanguaging has gained prominence as an inclusive approach to addressing these challenges, enabling learners to bridge linguistic gaps and fostering an environment of cultural and linguistic validation (Garcia (2009)). Cummins (2007, p.238) posits that translanguaging supports inclusive learning by validating learners' home languages, enhancing their cognitive skills, and promoting critical thinking. This approach enables learners to connect their home languages with the language of instruction, fostering smoother transitions between linguistic contexts and improving engagement and academic outcomes.

Further, Garcia (2009) extends Williams' foundational work by emphasising the potential of translanguaging to reshape language policies and practices in multilingual education. By recognising the interconnectedness of languages and the natural integration of linguistic resources, translanguaging challenges traditional monolingual approaches that often marginalise linguistic diversity. Instead, it highlights the importance of leveraging learners' linguistic assets to enhance educational equity and inclusivity.

Given South Africa's multilingual landscape, there is a need for more research on the impact of translanguaging in educational contexts. As a result, this study focuses on multilingual classrooms in Diepsloot to investigate the influence of translanguaging on learners' academic performance, language development, and classroom engagement. It aims to explore learners' responses and teachers' perceptions of translanguaging compared to traditional monolingual methods, contributing to the broader dialogue on optimising South Africa's linguistic diversity for educational advancement.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

South Africa's educational system faces considerable challenges in accommodating the linguistic diversity present in classrooms, particularly in multilingual communities like



Diepsloot. Traditional monolingual or bilingual approaches to education often marginalise learners whose home languages differ from the primary language of instruction. This linguistic disconnect can result in low academic performance, disengagement, and exclusion for many learners. The limited implementation of multilingual language policies in education has delayed the promotion of multilingualism and contributed to the ongoing decline of indigenous languages in the classroom (DHET, 2020:11). In light of these issues, there is a critical need to explore translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy to effectively implement multilingual language policies in South African classrooms. Translanguaging offers the potential to bridge the linguistic gap, promote inclusivity, and support the academic success of learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds, making it an essential strategy for addressing these systemic challenges.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1.4.1 How does translanguaging influence the academic performance and engagement of learners at the primary and secondary school educational levels in Diepsloot?
- 1.4.2 How do learners in multilingual classrooms in Diepsloot react to translanguaging practices?
- 1.4.3 How do teachers perceive the effectiveness of translanguaging strategies in enhancing learning outcomes and learner participation in their classrooms?

1.5 RESEARCH AIM

This study aims to investigate the impact of translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy to foster inclusivity and support multilingual learners in Diepsloot, South Africa.

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 1.6.1 To evaluate the impact of translanguaging on learners' academic engagement and participation by observing their interactions and responses during classroom activities, comparing these outcomes with those in settings where only traditional language practices are used in Diepsloot primary and secondary schools.



1.6.2 To explore learners' reactions when employing translanguageing compared to traditional methods in multilingual classrooms in Diepsloot.

1.6.3 To assess teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of translanguageing strategies in enhancing learning outcomes and learner participation by conducting surveys and interviews with educators at primary and secondary schools in Diepsloot.

1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethics, as defined by Hammersley and Traianou (2012), refers to a set of principles that exemplify what is good or right, aiding in the identification of what is bad or wrong. The primary aim of ethical considerations is to prevent harm to participants throughout the research process. Two fundamental ethical principles that researchers must uphold are informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality. Merriam (2009, p.22) emphasises that obtaining permission is essential for accessing relevant data, which necessitates applying for ethical clearance from the appropriate committee.

In this study, informed consent was secured from all participants to ensure the confidentiality of personal and academic information. Approval was also obtained from school administrations and all relevant parties. All participants were made aware of the benefits, risks, and procedures involved in the research, enabling them to make an informed decision about their participation (Flick, 2016, p.16-17). Participation was voluntary, allowing individuals to choose not to disclose information they were uncomfortable sharing. Participants were also permitted to withdraw from the study at any time.

Privacy is a crucial aspect, wherein the researcher is obligated to keep the information confidential and use it solely for research purposes (Masonto, 2019, p.7, citing Matthews & Ross, 2010). Confidentiality entails respecting the participants' right to decline to answer questions they find uncomfortable (Masonto, 2019, p.7, citing Hammersley & Traianou, 2012). Under this principle, participants retain the right to control who can access their information, including their identities. Interviews were conducted exclusively with teachers, and learners were observed during lessons.



1.8 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

South Africa, with its rich tapestry of linguistic diversity, provides a unique context to study the implementation and impact of translanguaging in educational settings. This research aims to delve into the application and effects of translanguaging practices within multilingual classrooms in South Africa, offering insights into its potential to transform educational outcomes by breaking language barriers and promoting inclusivity.

In the landscape of South African education, where numerous languages converge, the traditional approach to using primarily English or Afrikaans as the medium of instruction has increasingly been identified as a limiting factor in learner performance and engagement. This study is based on the theory that translanguaging, which entails the use of multiple linguistic resources by teachers and learners, can enhance learning by validating the learners' linguistic identities and improving their academic performance, which the researcher examines and confirms by conducting this research.

This study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge through empirical insights, providing empirical data on the practical outcomes of translanguaging in a context as linguistically diverse as South Africa. It will examine specific classroom dynamics that have not been extensively documented, incorporating an element of observation and thus filling a significant gap in translanguaging literature. The importance of this study is encapsulated in its potential to initiate change in educational practices and policies to embrace linguistic diversity as a resource rather than a barrier. By leveraging translanguaging as a pedagogical tool, education in South Africa can be made more accessible and equitable, thus improving the quality of education and promoting social cohesion in a culturally diverse nation.

In conclusion, this research not only aims to enrich the academic discourse on translanguaging but also seeks to provide practical, impactful insights that could transform educational practices and policies in South Africa and beyond. Its significance is rooted in its potential to effect real-world change by enhancing the educational experiences and outcomes for multilingual learners, thereby contributing to a more inclusive and effective educational system.



1.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study focused exclusively on primary and secondary school learners in Diepsloot. The researcher does not claim that the findings of this study can be generalised to other regions or educational contexts. The study concentrated solely on the direct or indirect experiences of translinguaging practices among learners and teachers' perspectives in Diepsloot primary and secondary schools. This study did not focus on the views of administrators, parents, community members, or other stakeholders. Initially, the research proposal outlined plans for the researcher to interview both teachers and learners directly to gather first-hand insights into their experiences with translinguaging practices. However, challenges arose when attempting to secure parental consent for interviewing learners, introducing ethical concerns regarding their participation. As a result, while the researcher was unable to conduct formal interviews with the learners, alternative methods were employed to capture valuable data on learner engagement.

1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter introduced the concept of translinguaging. The background section provided definitions and a historical overview of translinguaging. The problem statement outlined the research problem addressed in this study. Additionally, the chapter presented the purpose, research questions, and objectives of the study. Ethical considerations were also discussed. Finally, the significance of the study was highlighted. Chapter 2 will focus on the literature review and the theoretical framework.

1.11 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the topic, stating the research problem, objectives, and questions. It lays out the significance of the study, the rationale behind the research, and its expected contributions to the field of education. The goal of this chapter is to set the stage for the reader, providing context and the scope of the research, and to clarify what the study intends to accomplish.



CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews existing research and theories related to translanguaging, focusing on previous studies. I present this literature following these sections: the role of translanguaging in multilingual education, translanguaging in multilingual contexts, language policy and translanguaging in South African education, challenges and opportunities for translanguaging in Diepsloot classrooms, lastly, the researcher provides theoretical framework underpinning the study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents detailed description of the research design, including the mixed-method approach, data collection methods (surveys, interviews) and analytical techniques.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter deals with the presentation of the collected data, both quantitative and qualitative. Analysis of how translanguaging influences academic performance, and perceptions of learners and teachers.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF ANALYSIS IN RELATION TO THE LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses the findings emanating from the data gathered. It explores the implications of translanguaging practices for academic performance and educational strategies.

CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarises the study's findings, discusses the limitations, and suggests areas for further research. Provides recommendations for educators and policymakers based on the research outcomes.



CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to review literature on translanguage practices and their impact in multilingual classrooms. This study will rely on the works of various scholars.

2.2 THE ROLE OF TRANSLANGUAGING IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

Translanguaging redefines traditional language use in education by positioning language as a flexible and integrated resource that facilitates both learning and communication (García & Wei, 2015, p.229). It advocates for using learner's full linguistic repertoire within a classroom, which enriches cognitive development, strengthens identity construction, and enhances academic engagement (García, 2009). This approach allows learners to fluidly alternate between languages as they process and express knowledge, thus providing a more holistic, dynamic way of learning that respects the complexities of multilingualism.

In South Africa, where multilingualism is prevalent, the advantages of translanguaging practices have been widely recognised. Studies within South African classrooms highlight how translanguaging supports learners' engagement and academic success by validating their linguistic backgrounds. Research conducted by Coetzee-van Rooy (2016) and Madiba (2012) shows that translanguaging practices enable greater access to curriculum content, deepen comprehension, and enhance learner participation by incorporating learners' home languages into classroom instruction. When learners can draw on their linguistic strengths, they feel more connected to the material, contributing to an environment that is both culturally responsive and inclusive. This approach is particularly effective in fostering a sense of pride and identity for learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds, as it upholds their linguistic and cultural heritage within an educational context traditionally dominated by English.

2.2.1 Translanguaging as a Resource in Multilingual Education

Translanguaging serves as a powerful educational resource, particularly in multilingual classrooms where learners come from various linguistic backgrounds. By allowing learners to utilise their full linguistic repertoires, translanguaging enhances understanding and engagement, fostering an environment where all languages are equally valued. This practice



disrupts language hierarchies and challenges the dominance of any single language, promoting an egalitarian and collaborative learning atmosphere (Makalela, 2015, p.28). In recognising each language as a potential resource for learning, translanguaging allows learners to navigate between languages, enriching their cognitive processes and allowing them to form deeper connections to the content.

The benefits of translanguaging extend beyond academic comprehension. By affirming learners' cultural and linguistic identities, translanguaging builds confidence and promotes a sense of belonging among learners. García and Lin (2016, p.11) argue that translanguaging can bridge linguistic divides in the classroom, thereby promoting social cohesion within diverse communities. Soniya Antony, R. Ramnath, and Adil Ellikkal (2024, p.214) argue that integrating translanguaging into teaching practices fosters linguistic inclusivity and enhances effective communication, thereby creating an environment where students feel valued and supported within diverse multilingual classrooms. Moreover, Kadek, A. (2020, p.76) believes that translanguaging facilitates cross-cultural understanding in classrooms. They highlight that most participants used inter-sentential translanguaging, consciously employing this strategy to address challenges in conveying meaning, promote inclusivity, and enhance students' comprehension. They argue that translanguaging positively impacts classrooms by helping students engage with cultural topics, improving comprehension of cultural concepts, attitudes, and beliefs, and assisting learners by connecting their learning experiences with local cultural wisdom.

2.3 TRANSLANGUAGING IN MULTILINGUAL CONTEXTS

Translanguaging is increasingly acknowledged as an essential pedagogical tool in multilingual settings, particularly within educational systems characterised by linguistic diversity. García and Wei (2014) describe it as a practice that transcends the conventional use of multiple languages, allowing individuals to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire to interact with learning materials, teachers, and peers. Similarly, Cenoz and Gorter (2017) argue that this approach fosters inclusive learning environments, enabling learners to access knowledge, express themselves fully, and enhance their cognitive and academic development. In multilingual societies such as South Africa, where learners speak a range of indigenous languages alongside colonial languages such as English and Afrikaans, translanguaging offers the potential to enhance educational outcomes by incorporating learners' home languages into classroom practices. The implementation of translanguaging



practices represents a significant shift in language pedagogy, one that can address barriers to learning, promote greater inclusion, and help bridge gaps between learners' cultural and linguistic backgrounds and the formal education system.

2.3.1 Global Perspectives on Translanguaging

The concept of translanguaging has gained considerable attention globally, particularly in contexts where learners speak multiple languages and face educational systems that predominantly use one or two languages of instruction. In regions such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Puerto Rico, the Basque Country, and various parts of Africa, translanguaging has been explored as a flexible and effective approach to multilingual education (Mazak & Carroll, 2016). While the specifics of translanguaging practices may vary across regions, the central idea remains the same: to utilise the full range of linguistic resources available to learners to promote deeper understanding, foster inclusivity, and enhance the learning experience.

In the United States, the work of Hornberger and Link (2012) has been instrumental in framing translanguaging within the broader context of biliteracy development. They propose a model that integrates four key components: the development of biliteracy, the medium of instruction, the context in which learning takes place, and the content of the curriculum. This model underscores the importance of recognising and building on learners' full linguistic repertoires, allowing them to engage with both the curriculum content and the learning process in meaningful ways. By fostering biliteracy, learners are not only able to read and write in multiple languages but also develop cognitive and analytical skills that are transferable across disciplines. The idea of translanguaging as a tool for biliteracy aligns with the understanding that language is not merely a tool for communication, but also a cognitive tool that shapes how learners perceive and process the world around them.

Similarly, in the United Kingdom, Blackledge and Creese (2010) conducted an ethnographic study in complementary schools across four cities and concluded that translanguaging serves as a flexible pedagogical approach that facilitates communication and interaction among multilingual learners and teachers. Their research highlights how translanguaging helps learners navigate their complex linguistic and cultural identities while engaging with academic content. They found that by using multiple languages within the classroom,



learners were better able to express their ideas, negotiate meaning, and establish connections with others, which enhanced their learning outcomes.

Furthermore, in the Basque Country, Cenoz (2017, p.196) explores translanguaging as a pedagogical tool aimed at enhancing learning in multilingual classrooms. By enabling learners to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire, translanguaging helps to facilitate communication between learners who speak different languages, allowing them to work together more effectively and understand one another's perspectives. Cenoz's study also shows that the incorporation of translanguaging practices into the classroom setting can improve language proficiency and promote a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

In Puerto Rico, Rivera and Mazak (2017, p.124-125) conducted a case study in an undergraduate classroom setting to analyse learners' perceptions of pedagogical translanguaging. The findings indicated that learners had either neutral or positive perceptions of translanguaging, recognising its value in enhancing their learning experience. This highlights a growing acceptance of translanguaging as a legitimate and effective educational practice, particularly in contexts where learners' linguistic backgrounds differ from the formal language of instruction.

Translanguaging has been embraced as a powerful tool for educational transformation in Africa. Makalela (2016, p.187-196), in particular, introduced the concept of Ubuntu Translanguaging Pedagogy (UTP) in South Africa, which focuses on the idea of creating inclusive spaces for learning that reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity of the learners. UTP emphasises the importance of understanding language not merely as a vehicle for instruction, but as a tool for connecting people across cultural boundaries and fostering a sense of community. In his work, Makalela demonstrates that translanguaging can help preservice teachers enhance their linguistic repertoires, enabling them to better meet the needs of multilingual learners. This approach aligns with the broader global perspective on translanguaging as a flexible, dynamic and inclusive educational practice.

In addition, the global adoption of translanguaging reflects an increasing recognition of the value of multilingualism in educational contexts. Scholars and educators alike have emphasised the importance of moving away from monolingual approaches to education, which often marginalise learners whose home languages differ from the language of instruction. Translanguaging practices challenge traditional boundaries between languages and promote a more integrated, holistic approach to learning.



2.3.2 Translanguaging in South African Classrooms

South Africa is a linguistically diverse country with a complex educational landscape. The country has eleven official languages, yet English and Afrikaans remain dominant in educational settings, despite the fact that most learners speak indigenous African languages as their home languages. This linguistic inequality is compounded by the fact that many South African schools adhere to a rigid, separatist view of language, which categorises languages into “home languages,” “first additional languages,” and “second additional languages.” This model fails to accommodate the reality of multilingual learners who navigate multiple languages on a daily basis, making it difficult for them to fully engage with the curriculum and succeed academically (Makalela, 2015b).

The continued prevalence of English and Afrikaans as the primary languages of instruction in South African schools has been identified as a key contributor to the country’s low literacy rates. Garcia (2009) highlights the challenges faced by language minority children who are often taught in a language they do not understand, typically a colonial language like English, which limits their ability to access knowledge and contribute meaningfully to classroom discussions. As Garcia points out, this disconnect between learners’ home languages and the language of instruction often leads to educational failure, as learners struggle to comprehend lessons and express themselves effectively.

In light of these challenges, translanguaging has emerged as a potential solution for fostering greater inclusivity and improving educational outcomes in South African classrooms. The concept of translanguaging offers a more flexible, responsive approach to language use in education, one that acknowledges and values learners' linguistic diversity. Rather than adhering to rigid monolingual practices, translanguaging encourages teachers and learners to draw on all the languages available to them, enabling better communication and understanding. By integrating learners’ home languages into the learning process, translanguaging promotes cognitive development, supports academic achievement, and fosters a greater sense of inclusion.

Makalela (2013, p.111) argues that the implementation of translanguaging in South African classrooms would help to dismantle the monoglossic pedagogies that have historically dominated the education system. Monoglossic approaches, which prioritise one language over others, have failed to provide epistemic access for multilingual learners. In contrast,



translanguaging practices allow learners to engage with content in multiple languages, helping them to better understand complex concepts and improving their academic performance. This approach also affirms learners' linguistic identities and empowers them to take ownership of their learning.

The importance of integrating learners' home languages into the classroom is underscored by Garcia's (2009) assertion that teaching children in a language they do not understand, particularly in subjects like mathematics and science, can severely hinder their cognitive development. Research has shown that when teachers incorporate learners' linguistic resources into their lessons, learners are better able to understand content, make connections between different ideas, and develop critical thinking skills. Translanguaging provides a platform for learners to actively participate in lessons, allowing them to express themselves in the language they are most comfortable with while simultaneously acquiring new knowledge.

In addition, the work of Garcia and Lin (2016) highlights the potential of translanguaging to empower learners and promote linguistic inclusivity in South African classrooms. By allowing learners to use their full linguistic repertoire, translanguaging bridges language barriers, helping learners to engage with the content in ways that are more meaningful and relevant to their lives. This approach not only enhances learners' academic performance but also fosters a sense of belonging, as learners see their languages and cultures valued within the educational environment.

Despite the potential benefits of translanguaging, it is important to recognise the challenges posed by entrenched monolingual policies and practices within the South African education system. The shift towards translanguaging requires significant changes in teacher training, curriculum development, and policy-making. However, as research continues to demonstrate the positive impact of translanguaging on multilingual learners, there is hope that South Africa's education system will evolve to embrace these practices, ultimately creating a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all learners.



2.4 LANGUAGE POLICY AND TRANSLANGUAGING IN SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION

2.4.1 Multilingual Language Policies and Translanguaging

South Africa's diverse linguistic landscape, with 12 official languages, necessitates an education system that is both multilingual and inclusive. This recognition of linguistic diversity has shaped the country's educational policies, which aim to balance the preservation and development of indigenous languages with the functional demands of global languages like English. The introduction of translanguaging in South African classrooms is one of the ways in which the education system seeks to address these complex linguistic dynamics. Translanguaging, in its simplest form, refers to the process of using multiple languages in the classroom to enrich learning, where learners draw upon all their linguistic resources to understand and engage with the curriculum.

The South African Constitution enshrines the right to education in an official language of choice, ensuring that language does not serve as a barrier to accessing quality education. In this context, the language policy in South African schools has evolved to allow the use of African languages as Languages of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) for longer periods of a child's schooling. Historically, learners in South African schools would transition from an African language LoLT to English in Grade 4, but recent reforms proposed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) aim to extend the use of African languages as LoLT through Grade 7, particularly in subjects such as Mathematics, Science, and Technology. This policy shift represents a significant change from past educational practices and is designed to promote inclusivity, preserve indigenous languages, and improve the learning experience for learners who speak African languages.

Again, translanguaging fits within this policy as a teaching strategy that allows teachers to switch between languages to help learners understand complex concepts. By incorporating learners' home languages into academic instruction, translanguaging enables learners to bridge gaps between their everyday language use and the specialised vocabulary required for academic success. For example, a teacher might explain a scientific concept using both the learners' home language and English to ensure understanding before moving on to technical terms in English. This approach values all languages equally, thus fostering a sense of inclusion and validating the learners' linguistic backgrounds.



Moreover, translanguaging encourages learners to view their multiple languages as a resource, rather than as a hindrance to learning. In the context of South African classrooms, where learners often speak different languages at home and in their communities. This practice is seen as a vital tool for enhancing cognitive development and fostering a positive learning environment.

However, while the introduction of translanguaging is seen as an important step toward promoting multilingualism, its success is contingent on effective language policy implementation. The Department of Basic Education's shift to extend African languages as LoLT through Grade 7 aligns with the constitutional commitment to linguistic diversity. Yet, for translanguaging to become an effective practice across South African classrooms, it must be supported by solid policy, sufficient teacher training, and the development of appropriate resources. This approach also requires a shift in attitudes, as many educators still view English as the dominant language of instruction and may resist the idea of integrating African languages in academic subjects.

2.4.2 Implementation Challenges of Translanguaging in South African Schools

While the move towards multilingual language policies and the adoption of translanguaging offers significant potential benefits, several challenges remain in the implementation of these policies in South African schools. These challenges primarily involve teacher preparedness, resource availability, and resistance to change.

One of the main obstacles is the inadequate training of teachers in translanguaging pedagogy. Educators are often not equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively integrate multiple languages in the classroom. Traditional teacher education programmes have largely focused on teaching subjects in English, with little emphasis on the pedagogical strategies needed to teach in a multilingual context. As a result, teachers may lack confidence in using African languages to explain complex concepts, especially in subjects like mathematics, science, and technology, which require specialised academic language. This gap in teacher training means that many educators are not prepared to fully implement the language policy and effectively use translanguaging techniques in the classroom.

In addition to inadequate teacher training, there are varying language attitudes among educators and policy-makers. While some educators are enthusiastic about using African



languages in teaching, others remain convinced that English is the key to accessing global knowledge and economic opportunities. These differing attitudes toward the role of English versus African languages in the classroom can lead to inconsistent implementation of language policies across different regions and schools. In some areas, teachers may choose to prioritise English even when the official policy supports the use of African languages as LoLT. This inconsistency undermines the effectiveness of the multilingual education system and the potential benefits of translanguaging.

Another significant challenge is the structural limitations in educational policies and the lack of resources to support multilingual teaching. The successful implementation of the new language policy requires the development of instructional materials and textbooks in African languages, particularly for MST subjects. In many cases, these materials do not exist and creating them requires significant investment in time and resources. Without appropriate materials, teachers are left without the necessary resources to implement the curriculum in the learners' home languages. Furthermore, logistical challenges, such as the lack of trained translators and the need for localised content that reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of the country, further complicate the implementation process.

Additionally, there is a need to develop a comprehensive academic lexicon in African languages, particularly for subjects like mathematics, science, and technology, where specialised vocabulary is often only available in English. The development of this academic lexicon is essential to ensure that learners can access the full range of knowledge in their own languages and are not at a disadvantage when it comes to learning technical subjects.

In response to these challenges, the Department of Basic Education has outlined plans for the roll-out of the new language policy. The focus will initially be on preparing Grade 4 learners for the use of African languages as LoLT in MST subjects by 2025. However, the success of this initiative will depend on overcoming the barriers of teacher training, resource development, and attitudinal shifts within schools and communities. Provinces have been tasked with developing localised plans that consider the unique language needs of their regions. These plans may involve pilot studies, professional development programmes for teachers, and the creation of new learning materials in African languages.

The implementation of multilingual policies in South African schools is also guided by theoretical frameworks that view language as a basic human right. According to Ruiz (1984), language is not only a means of communication but also a tool for inclusion and



empowerment. In the South African context, this view aligns with the constitutional right to education in one's language of choice. It challenges the notion that English should be the sole medium of instruction in schools and promotes the idea that indigenous languages should play a central role in education. By ensuring that language policy is inclusive of all official languages, South Africa's educational system aims to create an environment where learners can thrive academically without the need to abandon their linguistic heritage.

In line with this, the European Union Commission (2014) has called on member states to adopt policies that promote multilingualism and enhance the quality of language learning. The EU's position underscores the importance of teaching multiple languages from an early age and exploring innovative methods for developing language competencies. South Africa's multilingual language policies draw on these global best practices and seek to foster a similar approach to multilingual education, emphasising the need to develop proficiency in both local and global languages.

2.5 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSLANGUAGING IN DIEPSLOOT CLASSROOMS

2.5.1 English Dominance and Indigenous Language Use

In Diepsloot classrooms, as in many other South African schools, English dominance in education poses significant challenges to the effective implementation of translanguaging. While South Africa is a linguistically diverse country with 12 official languages, the educational system has long prioritised English as the primary language of learning and teaching (LoLT), especially in higher grades. This often leads to a situation where indigenous languages are marginalised, limiting their role in education. The shift to English as the LoLT from Grade 4 onwards, despite the use of indigenous languages in the early years, can lead to challenges for learners whose first languages differ from English. This language shift creates cognitive and emotional barriers for learners, as they must navigate the complexities of English vocabulary and syntax, which may not align with their foundational knowledge acquired in their indigenous languages.

Moreover, English language dominance in South African schools not only affects academic performance but also impacts the learners' identity and self-esteem. Vogel and Garcia (2017) highlight the importance of not isolating languages, urging for a more fluid and integrated approach to language use in classrooms. They emphasise that languages should be viewed as part of a *horizontal continuum* rather than as fixed, separate entities. This



perspective could alleviate the challenges of English dominance by promoting multilingualism and allowing learners to utilise their full linguistic repertoire. In Diepsloot, this could enable learners to engage more fully in lessons and discussions while maintaining their cultural and linguistic identity, thus fostering a more inclusive and participatory learning environment.

However, the widespread use of English as a medium of instruction remains entrenched in the curriculum, particularly in subjects like mathematics, science, and technology (MST), which are often challenging for learners who are not fully proficient in English. The growing emphasis on translanguaging offers an opportunity to bridge this gap by using learners' indigenous languages as supportive tools for learning, allowing them to better understand complex concepts while still learning English as a second language.

2.5.2 Resource Limitations and Educator Preparedness

While translanguaging holds great potential, its successful implementation in Diepsloot classrooms is hindered by resource limitations and educator preparedness. Many schools in Diepsloot face challenges in providing adequate teaching materials in indigenous languages due to learners' overpopulation. Resources such as textbooks, study guides, and teaching aids are often only available in English, or they are limited to certain languages, making it difficult for educators to adopt a multilingual approach effectively. This lack of resources exacerbates the challenges faced by both teachers and learners, as educators may struggle to implement translanguaging practices without the necessary materials in the learners' home languages.

Additionally, the training of educators in translanguaging pedagogy is crucial for its success, but many teachers in Diepsloot schools have not received the necessary professional development to implement this strategy effectively. Educators often lack the skills to integrate multiple languages in the classroom and may not fully understand the value of translanguaging for enhancing learner comprehension and participation. According to Mbirimi-Hungwe and Seeletse (2020), teachers may be unfamiliar with translanguaging practices, especially when it comes to navigating large, linguistically diverse classrooms. In such settings, diversity in learners' language backgrounds can be both an asset and a challenge, as educators need to create a learning environment that is responsive to multiple languages while managing the complexities of mixed-language groups.



Moreover, teachers' attitudes towards the use of indigenous languages in the classroom can also impact the implementation of translanguaging. In some cases, educators may view the use of African languages as a hindrance to academic achievement, especially in subjects such as English, mathematics, and science. This attitude often stems from a historical preference for English as a marker of academic success, which can marginalise indigenous languages and restrict the use of translanguaging as a pedagogical tool.

To address these challenges, Mazak (2017) stresses the need for teacher education programmes to incorporate translanguaging pedagogy, allowing teachers to develop the skills needed to support multilingual learners. Furthermore, schools need to invest in resources that support the use of multiple languages in the classroom, ensuring that both educators and learners have the tools they need to succeed. By developing a more inclusive approach to language teaching and creating an environment where all languages are valued, Diepsloot classrooms can provide more equitable learning opportunities for all learners, fostering both linguistic diversity and academic achievement.

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research is grounded in the pragmatic paradigm, which focuses on real-world problem solving and values multiple perspectives, methods, and practical outcomes (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Pragmatism allows the researcher to draw on both qualitative and quantitative data to understand how translanguaging, as a pedagogical approach, addresses the complex linguistic realities of South African classrooms.

In line with this paradigm, the study adopts the Translanguaging Framework as its theoretical lens. Hurst and Mona (2017) argue that translanguaging not only promotes inclusive education but also functions as a tool for advancing equity and social justice for marginalised multilingual learners.

2.6.1 Translanguaging Framework

South African classrooms are marked by extensive linguistic diversity; however, traditional monoglossic pedagogies have largely failed to ensure equitable access to knowledge for multilingual learners (Makalela, 2015). Translanguaging, which integrates learners' existing linguistic and cultural knowledge into the learning process, provides a more inclusive alternative. The term "translanguaging" was originally coined by Cen Williams in Welsh,



describing a teaching practice where the language of input differs from the language of output in bilingual settings (Garcia & Wei, 2015). This approach moves beyond code-switching, enabling multilingual learners to draw on their full linguistic repertoire, thereby enhancing communication and comprehension (Garcia, 2009).

According to Garcia (2009), translanguaging involves not only alternating between different languages but also utilising a range of linguistic resources to optimise communicative abilities. In the South African context, this entails moving away from the rigid classification of languages into categories like 'home language' and 'first additional language,' and instead embracing the dynamic practice of "languaging" (Makalela, 2015). Translanguaging fosters learning environments where learners' cognitive, linguistic, and cultural dimensions are unified to create meaningful educational experiences (Wei, 2011).

The Translanguaging Framework also emphasises the development of creativity and criticality, two vital skills for the 21st Century. Creativity involves learners' ability to navigate and challenge conventional language norms, while criticality refers to the capacity to question established knowledge and articulate thoughtful, reasoned responses (Wei, 2011). These characteristics align closely with the pragmatic paradigm's focus on actionable knowledge, further justifying its relevance. By nurturing both creativity and criticality, translanguaging empowers learners to take an active role in their education, transforming classrooms into translanguaging spaces where learning is enriched and more engaging.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter explored the potential of translanguaging as a transformative approach to education in South African classrooms. It emphasised its role in promoting linguistic diversity, educational equity, and enhancing learning outcomes. By allowing learners to use their home languages alongside the language of instruction, translanguaging bridges the gap between learners' linguistic identities and academic content, fostering an inclusive environment where language fluidity is celebrated. Despite its benefits, the implementation of translanguaging faces several challenges, such as English dominance, inadequate teacher training, and limited resources, which hinder its effectiveness. Additionally, varying attitudes toward language use among educators and policy-makers often clash with the multilingual realities of South African classrooms, where many learners are not adequately prepared for the English demands of the curriculum. Addressing these challenges requires



comprehensive reforms in teacher training, curriculum development, and resource provision, and the alignment of educational policies with the principles of multilingualism and language as a human right. Ultimately, the chapter argued that while translanguaging offers significant opportunities for transforming education in South Africa, its success hinges on overcoming these barriers and ensuring that all learners can thrive in a multilingual, inclusive educational system.



CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research is typically conducted to discover and explore existing knowledge. This allows researchers to collect and interpret information in a meaningful way. To achieve this, researchers employ various methods to gather relevant data for their studies. Methodology refers to the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyse information about a subject (Burns & Grover, 2003, p. 5). This study uses the mixed-methodology approach. The mixed-method approach combines both the qualitative and quantitative research methods. It will enable a comprehensive investigation of the effects of translanguaging practices on learner outcomes and classroom dynamics in South African multilingual classrooms. This chapter presents the methodology employed in this research, highlighting key components such as research design, population, sampling, data collection, data analysis, and quality criteria.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

Research approach refers to the methodology adopted for conducting the study, encompassing the selection of research questions, the conceptual framework, and the choice of appropriate research methods (Burns & Grover, 2003, p. 123). This study was conducted using an exploratory research design. This design enabled the researcher to gain contemporary insights, uncover new perspectives, and enhance understanding of the topic (Cresswell, 2013).

To achieve this, a mixed-method approach was employed, combining both the quantitative and qualitative methods. The mixed-method approach was chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon by integrating numerical data from surveys with in-depth, narrative insights from interviews and observations. This combination allowed the researcher to validate findings through triangulation, offering a more nuanced perspective on the impact of translanguaging practices.



Specifically, the study adopted Translanguaging Theory to deeply explore the experiences and perceptions of both learners and teachers, thereby facilitating the development of theories grounded in empirical data.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design, which integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches in a sequential manner. According to Creswell (2013), this design is particularly useful when initial qualitative findings are used to inform subsequent quantitative phases, especially in areas where existing research is limited.

In the first phase, qualitative data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with teachers. These methods allowed for an in-depth exploration of translanguaging practices and their perceived impact on teaching and learning within multilingual classrooms. The insights gained from this phase informed the development of a structured questionnaire used in the subsequent quantitative phase.

This design facilitated a comprehensive understanding of translanguaging practices by first exploring them qualitatively and then measuring their prevalence and impact quantitatively. The sequential nature of this design ensured that the quantitative instrument was grounded in the qualitative findings, enhancing the study's overall validity.

3.4 RESEARCH PARADIGM

According to McGregor and Murnane (2010, p.419), a paradigm consists of a set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that shape a community's understanding of reality. Creswell (1998, p.5) adds that a paradigm acts as a foundational belief system guiding the research process. Kuhn (1997, p.10) also describes a paradigm as a framework that influences scientific inquiry, affecting how researchers interpret findings and comprehend various phenomena.

In this study, the researcher adopts a pragmatic paradigm to explore how teachers perceive the impact of translanguaging practices in their classrooms. Pragmatism is well-suited to mixed methods research, as it prioritises the use of multiple methods, data sources, and perspectives to understand complex educational phenomena (Creswell, 2014). This



paradigm acknowledges that knowledge is constructed through both objective and subjective means and that researchers can draw on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to answer their research questions. Denzin and Lincoln (2011: 21) highlight that researcher play an active role in meaning-making, and pragmatism supports this by encouraging flexible, context-driven inquiry. This approach allows the researcher to investigate how teachers develop their understanding of translanguaging and how these practices influence learner learning, while valuing both statistical trends and personal experiences.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

Mohajan (2018, p.2) and Creswell (2014, p.174) assert that qualitative research employs various methods for data collection, each accompanied by its own limitations. Common qualitative data collection methods include journals, observations, open-ended questionnaires, diaries, and interviews. In this study, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, employing both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques to achieve a comprehensive understanding of translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms. To achieve the study's objectives, three primary data collection instruments were employed, aligned with the qualitative and quantitative approaches:

1. **Classroom Observations:** Observational protocols were used to systematically document teacher and learner interactions, focusing on the use or absence of translanguaging strategies during instruction. Observations provided contextual insights into classroom dynamics, the practical implementation of translanguaging, and learner responses and participation. Classroom observations involved carefully recording learners' reactions, interactions, and participation, providing a nuanced understanding of how translanguaging influenced the learning environment. Teachers were observed in their natural teaching settings to capture authentic translanguaging practices and classroom dynamics.
2. **Semi-Structured Interviews with Teachers:** Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore teachers' perceptions, experiences, and attitudes toward translanguaging practices. The semi-structured format allowed flexibility, enabling participants to discuss topics in depth while ensuring that key



areas of interest were covered. Interviews were audio-recorded to maintain accuracy and allow for detailed analysis. Additionally, the researcher kept observational diaries to document real-time classroom interactions, teacher strategies, and learner responses. These diaries added rich, contextual insights complementing the interview data.

3. **Structured Questionnaire for Teachers:** To incorporate a quantitative dimension, teachers were asked to complete a structured questionnaire developed based on themes that emerged from the qualitative phase. The questionnaire included both closed-ended and open-ended questions designed to quantify teachers' attitudes, frequency of translanguaging practices, and perceived outcomes. This instrument facilitated the collection of standardised data for descriptive and inferential analysis while also allowing for supplementary qualitative insights.

By aligning each data collection tool with its respective research approach, the study ensured methodological coherence and enabled triangulation of data sources, enhancing both the reliability and validity of the findings (Creswell, 2014; Bernard, 2006; Monyela, 2017). Language played a crucial role in communication and meaning-making throughout data collection. Participants were encouraged to use their preferred languages during interviews to foster comfort and authenticity. Some teachers chose to complete interviews in English, while others opted to use their home languages, reflecting the multilingual realities of the classroom context. This inclusive approach allowed participants to express themselves more freely, producing richer, more nuanced data. Teachers who chose English sometimes faced challenges articulating complex ideas, which the researcher addressed by providing ample time for responses and encouraging clarification where needed. This approach not only enhanced the quality of the data collected but also underscored the importance of linguistic flexibility in multilingual research contexts. Initially, the study aimed to include learner assessments using past test results to compare translanguaging and non-translanguaging contexts. However, due to ethical and logistical constraints, this plan was revised. Instead, the study relied on observational, interview, and structured questionnaires to construct a comprehensive picture of translanguaging's influence on the classroom environment.



3.6 GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

This research was conducted at four educational institutions within the Diepsloot, Johannesburg North School Circuit. These are Musengavhadzimu Primary School, Diepsloot Secondary School, Kwenza Molapo High School, and Diepsloot Combined School, which serves both primary and secondary learners. These schools are situated within a vibrant community characterised by its rich cultural diversity and linguistic variety, making it an ideal context for examining translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms. This community setting is integral to the research, as it provides a naturally diverse linguistic environment where multiple languages are spoken daily, both within the schools and the surrounding neighbourhoods. The selection of these schools as case studies allows for a detailed exploration of how teachers and learners navigate and implement translanguaging in a real-world, multilingual context, shedding light on the challenges and benefits of such practices in an educational setting.

Additionally, the research setting holds particular significance due to the unique linguistic backgrounds of the participants, who bring a range of languages and dialects from their communities. This diversity enabled the researcher to observe authentic instances of translanguaging, allowing for a deeper understanding of its impact on learning and communication in the classroom. The researcher's proximity to these schools also proved beneficial, as it facilitated regular access to the institutions, streamlined data collection, and enabled sustained engagement with participants throughout the study. This close connection not only improved the efficiency of the research process but also strengthened the rapport with participants, creating an environment conducive to open and authentic data collection. Ultimately, the selection of these institutions provided a rich, multilingual landscape that greatly enhanced the depth and relevance of the study.

3.7 SAMPLING AND POPULATION

This research employed purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method, to select specific individuals or cases based on their relevance to the research objectives (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016, p.3). Purposive sampling is closely associated with qualitative research designs, which focus on exploring and interpreting experiences and perceptions (Matthews & Ross, 2010, p.167). The researcher intentionally selected participants who had experience with the central phenomenon or key concept being explored (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017, p.112), ensuring that the most productive sample for addressing the research



question was chosen (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In this study, the purposive sampling approach enabled the researcher to select learners from primary and secondary schools who were either multilingual or bilingual, ensuring a diverse representation of language backgrounds. A total of 201 learners participated in the study through non-participatory classroom observation (see Table 1 for breakdown per school). The learners ranged in age from 6 to 18 years, drawn from four schools that reflected both primary and secondary education levels.

The population of the study comprised teachers and learners in multilingual public primary and secondary schools in Diepsloot, Johannesburg. The population included all teachers responsible for language and literacy instruction, as well as learners enrolled in classrooms where translanguaging practices were either applied or absent. Participants were identified through collaboration with school administrators, who facilitated access to learners and teachers who met the inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria for learners were: (a) being enrolled in a multilingual classroom, (b) being exposed to instruction involving translanguaging strategies, and (c) having bilingual or multilingual language profiles as reported by the teachers or school records. Learners were not interviewed directly due to ethical considerations and their status as minors; instead, they were observed during classroom sessions. The teachers attested to the learners' participation, engagement, and performance during the implementation of both the monolingual approach and translanguaging practices, highlighting the dynamics observed in each method. This approach allowed for a direct comparison based on the teachers' observations within the same educational context.

The qualitative component involved classroom observations, where the researcher focused on how teachers applied translanguaging strategies and how learners responded to these methods. Additionally, structured interviews were conducted with 10 teachers to explore their experiences and perceptions regarding the implementation of translanguaging in the classroom. This mixed-methods approach provided a comprehensive understanding of translanguaging practices and their impact in a multilingual classroom environment.

3.8 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Table 1: Participant Schools and Demographics

School name	Number of teachers	Number of learners	Age range of learners
Musengavhadzimu Primary School	2	43	6-13
Diepsloot Secondary School	2	48	14-18
KwenaMolapo High School	2	33	14-18
Diepsloot Combined Primary Secondary	2 2	40 37	6 -13 14-18

3.9 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

In this study, the researcher investigated the impact of first language infractions in multilingual classrooms and to understand how translanguaging serves as a pedagogical strategy. Utilising a mixed-methods approach, she engaged in both qualitative and quantitative data collection to gather comprehensive insights.

Besides, the researcher conducted classroom observations to assess the dynamics of teacher-learner interactions and to document the use of translanguaging strategies in real-time. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were held with teachers to explore their perspectives, experiences, and challenges regarding the implementation of translanguaging in their teaching practices. These interviews allowed for an in-depth understanding of how



teachers navigate multilingual environments and their perceptions of first-language infractions.

To complement the qualitative data, the researcher employed structured questionnaires to gather quantitative information on teachers' attitudes and practices related to translanguaging. This combination of qualitative and quantitative methods enabled a holistic view of classroom dynamics and provided empirical data on the effectiveness of translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy. Furthermore, the researcher contributed to knowledge generation by synthesising findings from both data sources and linking them to existing literature on multilingual education and language policy. This comprehensive analysis aimed to identify key themes, challenges, and opportunities for implementing translanguaging effectively in multilingual classrooms. By doing so, the researcher sought to offer recommendations for educators and policy-makers to enhance instructional practices and improve learner outcomes in diverse linguistic contexts.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis refers to a method of organising the collected data to provide outcomes which need to be interpreted by researchers (Burns & Grove, 2003, p.479). In this study, the researcher employed both Statistical Content Analysis (SCA) and Thematic Content Analysis (TCA), adhering to a mixed-methods approach to analyse the data.

For SCA, the researcher analysed survey responses from teachers based on their observations of learners' performance and behaviour during translanguaging activities compared to traditional language settings. The analysis focused on identifying patterns in learner engagement, participation, and comprehension under both conditions, as perceived by the teachers. These survey responses provided quantitative insights into the impact of translanguaging on the classroom environment and its perceived influence on learner dynamics.

For TCA, the researcher extracted and analysed qualitative data from interviews with the teachers. This method focused on identifying themes related to the effectiveness of translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy, the challenges teachers encountered during instruction, and the overall classroom dynamics under each language practice. The themes that emerged highlighted the teachers' experiences, the adjustments they made during



lessons, and their reflections on the outcomes of using translanguaging in multilingual classrooms.

During classroom observations, the researcher closely examined the interactions between teachers and learners to understand the practical application of translanguaging in real-time. No learner assessments were conducted; rather, the focus remained on observing how translanguaging influenced teaching strategies and learner engagement in comparison to traditional language instruction. Data collected through interviews were analysed thematically, revealing patterns and insights into how teachers perceived the advantages and limitations of translanguaging in their classrooms. Descriptive statistics were applied to summarise key findings from teacher surveys, and themes drawn from the interviews provided a deeper understanding of the broader implications of translanguaging in multilingual educational settings.

3.10.1 Thematic Analysis

For the thematic analysis, which is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Flick, 2014, p.421) and is considered a foundational method for qualitative analysis (Kubayi, 2013, p.114), the researcher examined the qualitative data collected from teachers. Thematic analysis helps organise and describe data comprehensively while also interpreting key aspects of the research topic. This method is well-suited to the study as it seeks to uncover themes related to the impact of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms. A theme represents an important aspect of the research question that emerges as a repeated response or meaning within the dataset (Flick, 2014, p.421).

This study followed the six phases of thematic analysis outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006):

Familiarisation with the Data:

After conducting the interviews, the researcher transcribed teachers' responses, enabling the identification of initial themes and codes related to translanguaging's effectiveness in multilingual classrooms, as reported by teachers.

Generating Initial Codes:



The researcher then developed codes by identifying recurring patterns in the transcribed data, focusing on teacher insights into how translanguaging influences classroom interaction, learner engagement, and instructional practices.

Searching for Themes:

Once the coding process was complete, the researcher organised the coded data into potential themes. These themes reflected key issues such as the advantages of translanguaging, the challenges teachers faced, and any changes observed in classroom dynamics.

Reviewing Themes:

The identified themes were then reviewed to ensure they accurately reflected the data. During this step, the researcher refined the themes to create clear patterns that aligned with the teachers' experiences of translanguaging in the classroom.

Defining and Naming Themes:

Each theme was clearly defined and named, with particular attention to the specific aspects of the data they captured. A detailed analysis was then conducted for each theme, summarising the teachers' views on the use of translanguaging in their teaching.

Writing the Report:

Finally, the themes were presented in a clear, coherent report. This analysis provided valuable insights into how teachers perceive translanguaging, emphasising its role in enhancing learning in multilingual classrooms.

3.10.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were employed in this study to summarise and present quantitative data collected from the surveys and questionnaires. The primary aim was to provide a clear and concise overview of the data, allowing for a better understanding of the participants' views and experiences with translanguaging in multilingual classrooms. By using descriptive statistics, the researcher was able to organise the data and reveal key trends, patterns, and relationships.

The following descriptive statistics were used:



1. Central Tendency:

To analyse the general trends in the data, measures of central tendency such as the mean, median, and mode were calculated. The mean provided the average response to specific survey questions, offering insight into the overall perception of translanguaging among teachers and learners. The median was useful in identifying the middle point of the dataset, while the mode highlighted the most frequently occurring responses, helping to pinpoint common opinions or experiences related to translanguaging practices.

2. Dispersion:

The range, variance, and standard deviation were calculated to assess the spread of the data. These measures indicated the degree of variation in the responses. For example, the standard deviation revealed how consistent or diverse the responses were, particularly in relation to how teachers and learners viewed the effectiveness of translanguaging in enhancing comprehension and participation in class.

3. Frequency Distribution:

Frequency distributions were created to show the number of occurrences for different responses. This was done through the use of frequency tables and visual representations, such as bar charts and pie charts, which displayed the distribution of answers to key survey questions. For example, the frequency of teachers who believed translanguaging improved learner comprehension was presented, helping to highlight the prevailing opinions within the sample.

4. Percentage Calculations:

Percentages were calculated to express the relative frequency of responses, making it easier to compare groups or categories. For instance, when asked if translanguaging facilitated better communication between teachers and learners, the percentage of teachers who responded positively was calculated. This provided a clearer picture of the overall consensus within the data.

The use of descriptive statistics in this study allowed the researcher to present the data in a structured and digestible format. It helped to uncover central themes related to the



effectiveness of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms, providing a foundation for further analysis and interpretation in the subsequent chapters.

3.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, various strategies were employed to enhance reliability and validity within the mixed-methods approach.

Triangulation was applied in both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the research. As Denzin (1978) highlights, triangulation allows for a more accurate understanding of phenomena by examining data from multiple perspectives. In this study, triangulation was achieved by integrating classroom observations of teacher and learner interactions during translanguaging with surveys and interviews from teachers. This approach provided a comprehensive view of the impact of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms, thereby strengthening the reliability of the findings.

Reliability was maintained by ensuring consistency in data collection methods. Classroom observations were systematically conducted to capture a broad perspective of teaching dynamics, while teacher interviews adhered to a structured format to explore key themes related to the effectiveness and challenges of translanguaging. This consistency helped ensure that the data were comparable across different classrooms and teachers.

For the qualitative analysis using thematic content analysis, credibility was reinforced through techniques such as member checking. Initial findings were shared with some participants to ensure that the themes accurately reflected their experiences. Peer debriefing further enhanced the dependability of the data by allowing external reviewers to verify the identified themes and ensure that they were coherent with the data collected.

In the quantitative analysis, using statistical content analysis, survey responses were analysed to identify patterns in learner engagement and performance during translanguaging activities. The consistency in responses from teachers across different classrooms ensured that the results were reliable, with the analysis revealing patterns related to translanguaging effectiveness.

Content validity was ensured by having experts in education and multilingual instruction review the survey instruments. Their feedback was incorporated to align the questions with



the study's goals, ensuring that the instruments effectively measured the intended outcomes.

a) Transferability and Dependability

Korstjens and Moser (2018) explain that transferability in qualitative research refers to "the extent to which the results of qualitative studies can be applied to other settings or contexts with different participants. The researcher helps facilitate this judgement by offering a detailed description." In this study, the researcher ensured transferability by providing a thorough account of the entire research process, including methodology, data collection, and the composition of the final report. This approach allows readers to assess whether the findings of this study can be relevant in other contexts.

Dependability, on the other hand, relates to the consistency and reliability of the findings and the degree to which the processes have been clearly documented. Moon et al. (2016) describe dependability as the stability of research processes. In this study, dependability was ensured by offering a detailed description of the research design and methods used. The researcher meticulously recorded all stages of the research, from planning to data generation methods, providing a clear overview of the research practices followed, allowing readers to evaluate their consistency.

b) Credibility and Confirmability

Credibility refers to the accuracy and trustworthiness of the empirical findings, ensuring they genuinely reflect the participants' original data and views (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Korstjens & Moser, 2018; MacMillan & Schumacher, 2014). To ensure credibility, the researcher conducted member checks, providing participants with summaries of the findings and asking if these reflected their authentic experiences. This process involved seeking feedback from participants based on semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. It aimed to ensure the researcher accurately represented the participants' perspectives and avoided misinterpretation.

Confirmability, as defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985), concerns ensuring that the data and interpretations are not the result of the researcher's personal bias or imagination but are based on the data itself. In this study, the researcher not only outlined the methodology but also kept detailed records of all procedures followed throughout the research. Transcripts and recordings of the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were



preserved for verification. By maintaining these records, the researcher provided an audit trail, ensuring transparency and allowing the process to be traced.

3.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a comprehensive overview of the research methodology used in the study. It detailed the research design and approach, emphasising the importance of aligning methods with the study's objectives. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants from the population. This is because the researcher intentionally selected participants, specifically teachers who possessed in-depth knowledge and first-hand experience with translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms.

The chapter also covered the key aspects of data collection, population, and analysis. Data were gathered through structured classroom observations and teacher interviews, with a particular focus on understanding the dynamics of translanguaging in the educational context. Given the study's mixed-methods approach, both quantitative and qualitative data were integrated to provide a richer, more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon.

In terms of analysis, thematic analysis was identified as the most suitable method for the qualitative data. It allowed the extraction of key themes related to teachers' perceptions of translanguaging. Additionally, the study considered crucial quality criteria to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, discussing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria underscore the researcher's commitment to rigour in ensuring that the results are both valid and reliable for broader educational contexts.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

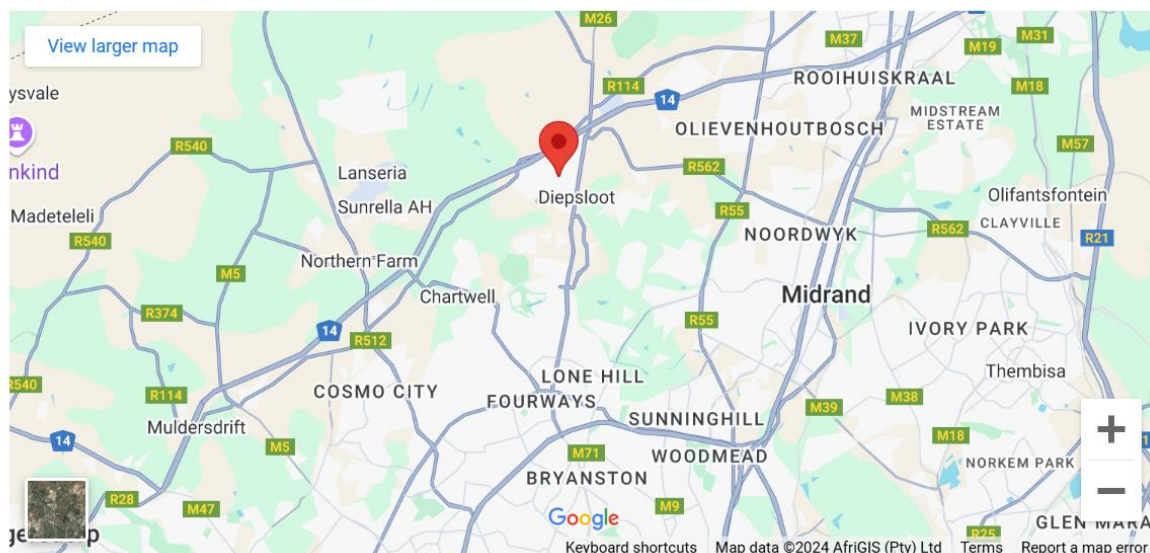
4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and analyses the findings from classroom observations and teacher interviews in multilingual classrooms in Diepsloot. It begins by exploring teachers' perceptions of translanguaging and the use of indigenous languages alongside English to enhance learning. It then highlights the challenges in implementing translanguaging, including the lack of awareness of language policies, the marginalisation of linguistic diversity, and negative attitudes toward indigenous languages. Additionally, the dominance of English as the main medium of instruction and limited resources are discussed. Finally, the chapter examines teachers' use of translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy, emphasising the need for training and support and the potential for promoting indigenous languages in classroom activities. It concludes with a summary of these findings.

4.2 GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Figure 1: The Participant's Geographical Area

Diepsloot @ Google map



The map shows the area where the participants come from.



4.3 OBSERVATIONS OF TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS

In South Africa, section 29 of the constitution (1996) guarantees the right to receive education in the language of one's choice, where it is reasonably practicable. This constitutional mandate highlights the importance of multilingualism in basic education schools, particularly in classrooms with linguistically diverse learner populations. Despite this right, resistance often arises against implementing policies that promote indigenous languages, with some groups fearing that such changes may undermine the status of dominant languages like English and Afrikaans.

This contestation reflects broader power dynamics surrounding language use in education. As Toffelson (1995, p.2) asserts, "language policies are both an outcome of power struggles and an arena for those struggles." In many South African schools, particularly in multilingual areas like Diepsloot, language policies are gradually being implemented to address the cultural and linguistic diversity of learners. However, challenges persist in fully integrating indigenous languages into the classroom, which is essential for ensuring that all learners can access education in their home languages.

These language policies are crucial for creating inclusive classrooms that recognise and promote the use of indigenous languages as a medium of instruction. This approach not only addresses the educational needs of diverse learners but also fosters a sense of identity and belonging within the educational environment.

4.3.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Translanguaging in Multilingual Classrooms

In this section, the researcher explores perceptions surrounding the facilitation of multilingual tutorials in South African indigenous languages. This is achieved by drawing insights from both teachers and observations of learners. There are mixed contestations regarding the use of indigenous languages in the classroom, particularly within the South African context. The push for utilising these languages stems from efforts to redress past inequities resulting from the apartheid regime.

Post-1994, with the advent of democracy, the constitution initially recognised eleven indigenous languages (cf. 2.2.2.), affirming the right of learners to receive education in their home languages. This was further supported by the language policy in higher education



(2002) (cf. 2.2.), which aimed to promote the use of indigenous languages in educational settings. In 2023, the constitution was amended to officially recognise twelve indigenous languages, enhancing the commitment to linguistic diversity in education.

Despite these policy advancements, mixed perceptions persist among educators regarding the effectiveness and implementation of multilingual instruction. As Toffelson (1995:2) posits, “language policies are both an outcome of power struggles and an arena for those struggles.” This assertion is evident in the discussions surrounding indigenous languages in the classroom, where tensions between dominant languages and indigenous languages continue to shape educational practices.

Pseudonyms were employed to protect participant identities throughout the semi-structured interviews and observations. These insights will contribute to understanding how translanguaging practices can be effectively integrated into basic education, enhancing educational equity and learner engagement in Diepsloot.

4.4 QUALITATIVE DATA

4.4.1 THEME 1: LEARNER ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Increased Engagement

“When I allow learners to use their home languages during lessons, they generally respond with a positive attitude and a better understanding of the material.” Learners “relate the lesson content to experiences from home,” which enhances relatability and helps them remember the material better (P1).

“Using familiar languages makes learners feel valued and more connected to what we’re doing in class” (P2).

Researcher’s Observations

The researcher observed a distinct difference in how learners of varying grade levels engaged during lessons.



For learners in the lower grades, there was a clear preference for using their home languages when participating. This was evident in their eagerness to raise their hands and contribute when given the opportunity to express themselves in their mother tongue. Participation levels were notably higher in these instances compared to when they were required to use English.

In contrast, learners in higher grades showed a preference for using English during interactions. Their participation was often collective, with responses reflecting group agreement rather than individual contributions. Despite the teacher's efforts to encourage the use of home languages, older learners initially hesitated to participate.

However, the researcher observed that when the teacher persistently reminded learners that using their home languages was acceptable, particularly in instances where questions went unanswered, participation levels noticeably increased. This highlights the importance of creating a safe and inclusive environment where learners feel empowered to draw on their linguistic strengths to engage meaningfully in the classroom.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Comfort and Familiarity

"When I use our home language or try to explain concepts in other indigenous languages, I see the learners light up—they're excited to hear and connect through these familiar words" (P4).

Researchers Observations

The researcher observed that learners in lower grades appeared more comfortable and familiar with translanguageing practices. They readily engaged and responded positively when lessons incorporated their home languages, indicating a strong sense of ease and connection with this approach.

In contrast, learners in higher grades were less familiar with translanguageing. However, most of them appeared to understand the teacher better when complex concepts were explained in their home languages. This was evident in their facial expressions, as many learners "lit up" when the teacher used familiar linguistic terms, demonstrating increased comprehension and engagement.



Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Challenges with Engagement

“Some learners even laugh at others who try to use their home language because they don’t see it as effective or important” (P9).

Researcher’s Observations

The researcher observed that in some instances, learners laughed at their peers for attempting to speak their home languages. This was particularly evident in higher-grade classes where learners spoke different languages, creating an environment where some learners perceived their home languages as less effective or important.

Another challenge observed was the difficulty of implementing translanguaging in multilingual classrooms where the teacher could not speak all the languages represented. This limitation hindered the teacher's ability to fully utilise translanguaging practices, which impacted engagement and inclusivity.

Deductions

Translanguaging significantly enhances learner engagement by making learning more accessible and relatable. When learners are encouraged to use familiar languages, they feel more comfortable and are motivated to participate actively. This inclusion of home languages builds a more supportive and inclusive classroom environment where learners can engage freely and connect lessons to their lived experiences. However, resistance from some learners reflects an internalised language hierarchy, where English is seen as academically superior, underscoring the need to reinforce the value of indigenous languages in educational settings to help learners appreciate their significance.



4.4.2 THEME 2: CONFIDENCE AND IDENTITY

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Boosted Confidence

Using their home languages makes learners feel valued and more connected to what we're doing in class. "Translanguaging "builds their confidence and strengthens their sense of identity" (P2).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that learners displayed increased confidence when they were allowed to use their home languages during lessons. This finding aligns with the principles of the Translanguaging Framework. This framework emphasises the flexible and dynamic use of multiple linguistic resources to foster communication, identity, and learning. Allowing learners to use their mother tongues made them feel more valued and connected to classroom activities, resulting in heightened participation and a stronger sense of self-assurance.

Additionally, the use of home languages appeared to strengthen learners' sense of identity, creating a positive classroom environment where they felt recognised and respected. These observations illustrate how the Translanguaging Framework not only enhances academic engagement but also nurtures learners' emotional and cultural connections, supporting both their personal and educational development.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Identity Expression

"Translanguaging is a powerful tool in decolonisation. It bridges cultural gaps and allows learners to embrace their African identity." Using this approach helps learners feel "included and respected in their culture" (P10).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that translanguaging played a significant role in allowing learners to express their identities. By incorporating their home languages into classroom



interactions, learners were able to connect more deeply with their cultural heritage and feel a stronger sense of inclusion and respect.

This practice also appeared to bridge cultural gaps, creating a space where learners could embrace their African identity. The researcher noted that learners demonstrated pride and confidence when engaging in lessons that validated and celebrated their linguistic and cultural backgrounds, highlighting translanguaging as a tool for fostering identity expression and decolonisation in the classroom.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Reluctance and Stigma

“Some learners hesitate to participate because they don’t always value their home languages. They believe that when they’re in class, they should only focus on English, as it’s the language of assessments and the world beyond South Africa” (P9).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed instances of reluctance among learners to use their home languages during class activities. This hesitation seemed to stem from a perceived stigma attached to their home languages, as some learners viewed English as more valuable due to its dominance in assessments and its perceived importance in broader societal and global contexts.

This reluctance was particularly noticeable in higher-grade learners, who appeared to prioritise English to align with their academic and future aspirations. The researcher noted that this mindset sometimes limited the effectiveness of translanguaging practices, as learners were less willing to fully engage in activities that involved their home languages.

Deductions

Translanguaging not only enhances learners' confidence but also reinforces their cultural and linguistic identities, allowing them to feel validated, respected, and more comfortable expressing themselves. It provides a means for learners to connect with their heritage, fostering pride in their linguistic backgrounds and challenging the notion that academic success is tied solely to English proficiency. However, the reluctance observed among some



learners indicates that language hierarchies and biases favouring English still exist. This reluctance suggests a need for ongoing support and reinforcement in classrooms to help learners appreciate the value of their home languages as essential tools for both academic and personal expression.

4.4.3 THEME 3: UNDERSTANDING AND RETENTION OF MATERIAL

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Improved Comprehension

"I use indigenous languages to explain complex topics, especially in history, where political terms can be hard to grasp" (P5).

"If I only use English, some points won't be clear to my learners" (P7).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that the use of translanguaging within the classroom significantly improved learners' comprehension, particularly when addressing complex topics. In alignment with the Translanguaging Framework, teachers utilised indigenous languages alongside English to scaffold understanding and bridge linguistic gaps. This approach was especially effective in subjects like history, where abstract concepts and political terminology often posed challenges for learners when explained solely in English.

Through translanguaging, teachers provided learners with multiple linguistic resources, enabling them to engage more meaningfully with the content. For instance, when indigenous languages were used to clarify difficult points, learners demonstrated a heightened understanding and were more actively involved in the learning process. This aligns with the Translanguaging Framework's emphasis on leveraging learners' full linguistic repertoires to deepen comprehension and enhance classroom participation. The researcher also noted that this practice helped make lessons more inclusive and accessible, fostering a collaborative and supportive learning environment.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Memory Retention



“Learners often remember content explained in their home languages better than what is taught in English” (P7).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that learners demonstrated better memory retention when lessons incorporated translanguageing strategies. In line with the translanguageing framework, teachers used home languages alongside English to explain key concepts, which appeared to enhance learners' ability to recall information.

For example, when content was explained in learners' home languages, they showed greater ease in recalling and applying the material during discussions or assessments. This suggests that the integration of indigenous languages into teaching not only supports comprehension but also reinforces memory retention, as learners connect new information to familiar linguistic and cultural contexts. This aligns with the translanguageing framework's goal of utilising learners' full linguistic repertoires to support cognitive processes and learning outcomes.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Academic Preparedness

“If we let learners use their home languages too freely, they may become overly reliant on them. When it comes to writing tests, everything is in English” (P3).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that while translanguageing enhanced learners' participation and engagement, there were concerns about its role in preparing learners for academic contexts where English is the primary medium. The teachers noted that some learners became overly reliant on their home languages during classroom interactions, potentially limiting their ability to confidently express themselves in English during future academic challenges.

Through participation, it was evident that learners were more active and responsive when using their home languages. However, the researcher observed that opportunities to practice English were reduced in some cases, highlighting the need for a balanced approach within the translanguageing framework. This approach would ensure learners benefit from



using their home languages while also developing the necessary skills to navigate English-dominant academic and professional environments.

Deductions

The use of translanguageing enhances comprehension and retention of material by making complex topics more understandable and relatable in learners' home languages. Learners are better able to recall information when it's presented in a familiar linguistic context. However, there is a concern regarding academic preparedness for English-only exams, suggesting that a balance between home language support and English proficiency is

4.4.4 THEME 4: PEER COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Peer Support and Collaboration

"Learners communicate more freely with each other...they're comfortable expressing themselves in their peers' languages, which helps create a supportive environment" (P1).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that translanguageing fostered a strong sense of peer support and collaboration among learners. In line with the translanguageing framework, learners communicated freely using a mix of their home languages and their peers' languages. This practice created a supportive environment where learners felt comfortable expressing themselves and sharing ideas without fear of judgment.

At times, learners took the initiative to explain difficult concepts to their peers through translanguageing practices. This approach proved effective, as struggling learners appeared to grasp the concepts more easily when explained in their home languages or a combination of familiar linguistic resources. This collaborative dynamic not only strengthened classroom interactions but also emphasised the value of linguistic diversity in promoting mutual understanding and teamwork.

The researcher noted that these peer-driven explanations aligned with the translanguageing framework's emphasis on leveraging learners' full linguistic repertoires to facilitate comprehension, support learning, and foster inclusive participation.



Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Enhanced Peer-to-Peer Learning

“Learners tend to communicate more with their peers during activities that involve translanguageing” (P2).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that translanguageing practices significantly enhanced peer-to-peer learning in the classroom. Learners were more engaged in discussions and collaborations with their peers during activities that allowed the use of their home languages alongside English. This approach encouraged open communication and active participation, as learners felt more confident and comfortable expressing themselves.

Furthermore, the researcher noted instances where learners explained complex concepts to one another using translanguageing strategies. This peer-to-peer interaction not only helped struggling learners grasp difficult ideas but also reinforced the understanding of the learners providing the explanations.

This enhanced peer learning aligns with the translanguageing framework, which emphasises creating inclusive spaces where learners can draw on their entire linguistic repertoires to support mutual understanding and collaborative learning. Evidently, this practice demonstrated how translanguageing can facilitate deeper engagement and strengthen connections between learners in a multilingual classroom setting.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Language Negotiation

“In my classroom, translanguageing is used about forty percent of the time, while English-only instruction takes up around sixty percent. I believe this balance is important” (P7).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that there was a clear balance between translanguageing and English-only instruction in the classroom. In line with the teacher's perspective, translanguageing was used approximately forty percent of the time, while English-only



instruction constituted around sixty percent of the lesson time. This approach seemed to strike a balance between providing learners with the linguistic flexibility to express themselves through their home languages and maintaining the focus on English, which is necessary for academic and assessment contexts.

The researcher noted that this balanced use of translanguaging allowed for more inclusive participation, as learners could engage more confidently when they used their home languages to clarify concepts or express ideas. At the same time, the continued use of English ensured that learners maintain proficiency in the language required for assessments and broader academic purposes. This approach supports the Translanguaging Framework's emphasis on the strategic integration of multiple languages to enhance comprehension and participation while still promoting language development in the academic language of instruction.

Deductions

Translanguaging encourages peer-to-peer support and collaborative learning, creating a setting where learners can freely express and help each other in familiar languages. This approach strengthens both social bonds and comprehension of complex material. Additionally, language negotiation among peers reflects learners' adaptive strategies, demonstrating their ability to balance between translanguaging and English use as needed, which fosters a more flexible and inclusive learning environment.

4.4.5 THEME 5: CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND INCLUSIVITY

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Supportive and Inclusive Atmosphere

"Using our home language or trying other indigenous languages creates a comfortable environment where they feel included and eager to learn" (P4).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that the use of translanguaging in the classroom created a supportive and inclusive atmosphere, as noted by the teachers. By incorporating learners'



home languages and other indigenous languages, the classroom environment became more comfortable, allowing learners to feel included and valued. This sense of inclusivity appeared to encourage greater enthusiasm and eagerness to learn.

Learners were more likely to participate actively and engage with the material when they could communicate in a language they were familiar with. This inclusivity not only supported learners' emotional well-being but also motivated them to take risks and contribute to discussions, fostering a more collaborative learning environment.

The researcher noted that the translanguaging approach effectively aligned with the goal of creating a safe, welcoming space for learners to share their ideas and build confidence in their academic abilities. This supportive atmosphere reinforced the broader principles of the translanguaging framework, which emphasises fostering an environment where all languages are seen as valuable and capable of supporting learning.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Challenges in Classroom Management

“One of the main challenges I face with translanguaging is the noise and loss of control in the classroom” (P6).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that while translanguaging encouraged engagement and inclusivity, it also presented challenges in classroom management, especially in the higher grades. As noted by the teacher, one of the main difficulties was the increased noise and potential loss of control in the classroom. When learners were allowed to use their home languages freely, it sometimes led to heightened excitement, particularly in the higher grades, where learners were not as accustomed to translanguaging practices.

In these higher-grade classes, learners appeared overly enthusiastic about the opportunity to engage in translanguaging, resulting in louder interactions and moments of disorganisation. This excitement, while positive in terms of learner engagement, made it more difficult for the teacher to manage the flow of the lesson effectively.



The researcher noted that while the increased participation was generally beneficial, the noise level and heightened excitement from learners unfamiliar with translanguaging practices presented a challenge. This underscores the need for clear classroom management strategies and boundaries to ensure that translanguaging can be used effectively without disrupting the learning environment. It also highlights the importance of gradually introducing and normalising translanguaging practices in classrooms, especially for older learners who may need more time to adjust.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Language Representation and Fairness

“I wish I could speak more languages to support translanguaging better” (P8).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that language representation and fairness were key considerations when implementing translanguaging practices in the classroom. The teacher's desire to speak more languages to better support translanguaging highlights a significant challenge in multilingual classrooms. While the use of multiple languages allowed learners to engage more effectively, it also underscored the limitation of not being able to support all learners equally, especially in diverse classrooms where learners speak a variety of home languages.

The researcher noted instances where the teacher was unable to fully support certain learners in their home languages, which could lead to feelings of exclusion for those who did not speak the languages the teacher was familiar with. This gap in language representation could affect the perceived fairness of the translanguaging approach, as not all learners could benefit equally from it.

This observation emphasises the importance of providing equitable language support in a multilingual classroom and the need for teachers to develop strategies that can address linguistic diversity. It aligns with the translanguaging framework, which advocates for the inclusion and recognition of all languages, but also acknowledges the challenges teachers face in effectively representing every learner's linguistic background.



Deductions

Translanguaging contributes to a more inclusive and supportive classroom atmosphere, allowing learners to feel respected and engaged in a space where their linguistic backgrounds are acknowledged. However, it presents classroom management challenges for some teachers, as learners' excitement can lead to increased noise levels. Additionally, teachers who don't speak all languages represented in the classroom feel limited in their ability to provide equitable support, highlighting the need for multilingual resources or training to create a fair learning environment for all learners.

4.4.6 THEME 6: TEACHER PERSPECTIVES ON LANGUAGE HIERARCHIES

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

English as a Global Language

"Translanguaging might be inclusive, but we also need to consider globalisation. English is essential" (P3).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that while translanguaging practices were seen as inclusive and beneficial for learner engagement, there was also an underlying recognition of the importance of English as a "global language," as mentioned by the teacher. In some instances, learners appeared to value their home languages, but there was also a noticeable emphasis on the necessity of mastering English, especially in preparation for the globalised world and future academic assessments.

The researcher noted that in higher-grade classes, learners were more focused on using English, as it was perceived as the language of success and future opportunities. This mindset was reinforced by the teacher's comments regarding the essential role of English in a global context. Although translanguaging was appreciated as a tool for fostering inclusivity and understanding, there was a constant tension between the use of home languages and the recognition of English as the dominant language for academic and professional advancement.



Additionally, the researcher observed that the teacher appeared to be reluctant about using indigenous languages in the classroom. This reluctance seemed to influence the learners' behaviour, as they were hesitant to use their home languages, possibly out of concern for how the teacher would respond. The learners' reluctance to speak their home languages suggested that they may have internalised the teacher's preference for English and felt discouraged from using their native languages.

This observation highlights the need for teachers to model and support the use of indigenous languages to create an environment where learners feel comfortable expressing themselves in their home languages. It also emphasises the importance of balancing the promotion of English proficiency with a recognition and appreciation of learners' linguistic diversity, as outlined in the translanguageing framework.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Balancing Inclusivity with Academic Goals.

"I use translanguageing when it's beneficial, but I also prioritise English to build their fluency" (P7).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that teachers faced a delicate balance between using translanguageing as a tool for inclusivity and prioritising English to meet academic goals. While translanguageing was recognised as beneficial for enhancing understanding and engagement. Particularly for learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds, there was a clear emphasis on building English fluency, especially in higher grades.

The teacher's perspective of using translanguageing "when it's beneficial" while prioritising English to "build their fluency" highlighted the tension between fostering an inclusive learning environment and preparing learners for assessments and future academic opportunities, where English is often the primary language of instruction and evaluation. This dual focus on both inclusivity and academic preparedness was evident in the classroom practices observed.

In practice, the researcher noted that learners responded positively when their home languages were incorporated into the lesson, as it made complex concepts more accessible



and relatable. However, when the focus shifted back to English, particularly in more formal or assessment-related contexts, there was a noticeable shift in learner participation, with learners more comfortable and confident using English. This balancing act reflected the broader challenge of supporting linguistic diversity in the classroom while ensuring learners are prepared for the academic and professional demands of a globalised world where English is dominant.

The researcher's observations align with the translanguaging framework, which supports the use of all languages as resources for learning while acknowledging the practical need for English proficiency in academic and professional settings. This underscores the importance of finding a sustainable balance between inclusivity and academic goals, enabling learners to benefit from their linguistic strengths while building the necessary skills for future success.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Views on Language Status

"Learners laugh at each other for using their home language because they don't see it as effective" (P9).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that in some instances, learners were hesitant to use their home languages in the classroom, particularly in higher grades, where there was a noticeable stigma attached to speaking in indigenous languages. This was particularly evident when learners laughed at others for attempting to use their home languages, as they didn't view it as effective or appropriate in the academic context.

The researcher also noted that this reluctance was not solely due to a lack of familiarity with translanguaging, but also the social dynamics within the classroom, where learners seemed to value English more highly. This was especially true in a multilingual classroom where learners from different linguistic backgrounds were present. The teacher's use of English was often associated with academic success, which influenced learners' perceptions of their home languages as less important or effective for learning in a formal educational setting.



Furthermore, it appeared that the teacher's stance on translanguageing may have contributed to this reluctance. As previously observed, the teacher's preference for English in academic contexts likely led learners to internalise the notion that their home languages were secondary to English, thus perpetuating the stigma. This suggests that in order to foster a more inclusive environment where all languages are valued equally, it is crucial for teachers to actively encourage the use of home languages and combat the negative perceptions surrounding them.

This observation highlights the need for creating a supportive and non-judgmental environment in the classroom, where learners feel comfortable using their home languages without fear of ridicule. By addressing these social dynamics, educators can help mitigate the stigma associated with translanguageing, promoting a more inclusive and equitable learning space.

Deductions

Teachers recognise the value of English as essential for future success in a globalised world, often prioritising it in their instruction. However, many also acknowledge the benefits of translanguageing for inclusivity and learner confidence. The perceived superiority of English affects learner attitudes, leading to the devaluation of home languages. This suggests a need to challenge language hierarchies by promoting home languages as equally valuable, helping learners see them as tools for both academic and personal expression.

4.4.6 THEME 7: FUTURE STRATEGIES RECOMMENDED BY TEACHERS

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Structured Translanguageing Practices

"Teachers should be trained in how to effectively implement translanguageing strategies in the classroom to ensure better understanding of content" (P1).

"It is essential for teachers to use translanguageing to support learners' social and emotional learning, as it fosters a sense of belonging" (P5).



"Teachers should focus on using both English and the learners' home languages for clarifying complex concepts" (P2).

"Teachers should ensure that the use of translanguageing is balanced and that learners are exposed to the academic language of instruction while also being encouraged to use their home languages" (P6).

"Teachers need to create a comfortable environment where learners feel encouraged to use their home languages to express themselves" (P2).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that structured translanguageing practices were essential in supporting learner engagement and comprehension. Teachers emphasised the need for training in effective translanguageing strategies to clarify complex topics and ensure better understanding. In classrooms where both English and home languages were used, learners seemed more comfortable and engaged, especially with difficult concepts.

Additionally, the researcher noted that learners were more confident and felt a stronger sense of belonging when encouraged to use their home languages. However, balancing home languages with English for academic purposes remained a challenge. Teachers who effectively combined both helped learners feel supported while preparing them for assessments.

Overall, structured translanguageing practices, when implemented thoughtfully, helped enhance learning and fostered a more inclusive classroom environment.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Resources and Training for Teachers

"Teachers need to be more flexible and innovative in their language practices to better accommodate all learners" (P6).

"More professional development programmes should be introduced for teachers to better understand and utilise translanguageing effectively" (P3).



"Teachers should collaborate and share strategies on how to use translanguaging to enhance understanding and academic performance" (P5).

"More resources should be made available for teachers to incorporate translanguaging in their lesson plans and teaching materials" (P7).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that teachers expressed a clear need for more flexibility and innovation in their language practices to accommodate diverse learners. Several teachers highlighted the importance of professional development programmes to enhance their understanding of translanguaging and its effective use in the classroom.

Teachers also emphasised the value of collaboration, suggesting that sharing strategies could improve the implementation of translanguaging and positively impact academic performance. Furthermore, the researcher noted a significant demand for more resources to integrate translanguaging into lesson plans and teaching materials, ensuring that both learners' home languages and English are used effectively for instructional purposes.

In summary, providing adequate training, resources, and opportunities for collaboration among teachers is crucial for maximising the benefits of translanguaging in the classroom.

Presented below are the perspectives shared by the teachers:

Policy and Curriculum Changes

"Teachers should focus on improving their understanding of the relationship between translanguaging and cognitive development in bilingual learners" (P4).

"It is important that teachers use translanguaging to reinforce academic language proficiency while maintaining the value of learners' home languages" (P4).

"Teachers should be encouraged to use translanguaging in the classroom to bridge the gap between learners' home languages and the language of instruction, as it helps learners understand the content better" (P9).



"Teachers should consider using translinguaging when introducing complex ideas or concepts to ensure all learners, regardless of their language proficiency, can grasp the material" (P10).

"Exam papers should also be available in indigenous languages so that learners can decide for themselves" (P4).

Researcher's Observations

The researcher observed that teachers acknowledged the need for policy and curriculum changes to better support translinguaging practices. Several teachers emphasised the importance of understanding the connection between translinguaging and cognitive development, particularly for bilingual learners.

Teachers also pointed out the necessity of using translinguaging to reinforce academic language proficiency while still respecting the value of learners' home languages. The use of translinguaging was seen as a tool to bridge the gap between learners' home languages and the language of instruction, allowing for better comprehension of complex concepts.

Additionally, the researcher noted calls for more inclusive assessment practices, such as offering exam papers in indigenous languages, so that learners can demonstrate their knowledge in a language they are more comfortable with. These suggestions highlight a growing recognition of the importance of adapting policies and curricula to promote linguistic inclusivity and improve learners' academic experiences.

Deductions

Teachers emphasise the need for a structured approach to translinguaging that effectively balances home language use with English instruction, fostering both academic success and learner well-being. Recommendations highlight the necessity of providing teachers with comprehensive training, resources, and support to implement translinguaging strategies. Additionally, there is a call for policy changes, such as providing examination papers in indigenous languages, to make translinguaging a viable and inclusive practice in multilingual classrooms. These suggestions underscore a desire for systemic improvements that make translinguaging a sustainable and equitable educational tool.

4.5 QUANTITATIVE DATA FINDINGS

This section presents the findings derived from the structured questionnaire completed by 10 teachers. The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistical analysis, which included calculating frequencies, percentages, means, and modes for each questionnaire item. This technique allowed the researcher to identify patterns and trends in the teachers' responses regarding translanguageing practices, learner engagement, and challenges faced in the classroom.

The questionnaire consisted of eight items rated on a Likert scale (Never = 1; Rarely = 2; Sometimes = 3; Often = 4; Always = 5), focusing on teachers' experiences and perceptions of translanguageing.

4.5.1 Questionnaire

Table 2: Survey on Translanguageing Practices in the Classroom

Questions	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Can't say
1. How frequently do you use translanguageing practices in your classroom?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Have you observed any changes in learner engagement when you incorporate multiple languages into your lessons?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. In your experience, does translanguageing enhance learners' understanding of the material?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Do you notice a difference in how learners respond to lessons when their home language is used?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Do you face challenges when using a monolingual approach (English) in your classroom?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Do learners participate more actively in class discussions when translanguageing is used?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. Are there any negative reactions or resistance from learners when translanguaging practices are employed?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Would you advise fellow educators to practise translanguaging?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4.5.2 Questionnaire Answers

Table 3: Summary of Individual Teacher Responses to Closed-Ended Questions

P	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
1	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Rarely	Always
2	Often	Always	Always	Always	Always	Often	Rarely	Always
3	Never	Can't say	Never	Can't say	Rarely	Never	Can't say	Never
4	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Rarely	Always
5	Often	Always	Often	Always	Always	Often	Rarely	Always
6	Never	Never	Never	Never	Rarely	Never	Always	Never
7	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Often	Often	Often	Sometimes	Sometimes
8	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Rarely	Always
9	Rarely	Can't say	Always	Can't say	Often	Sometimes	Always	Often
10	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Rarely	Always

Table 4: Frequency and Perceived Impact of Translanguaging Practices in the Classroom

Questions	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely/Never	Average Score (1-4)

Frequency of Translanguaging Practices	60%	30%	10%	0%	3.5
Enhancement of Engagement	70%	20%	10%	0%	3.6
Enhancement of Understanding	80%	10%	10%	0%	3.7
Home Language Impact	90%	10%	20%	0%	3.9
Challenges with Monolingual Approaches	0%	0%	0%	80%	1.7
Participation in Discussions	70%	20%	10%	0%	3.6
Negative Reactions from Learners	0%	0%	10%	90%	1.5
Recommendation of Translanguaging Practices	90%	10%	0%	0%	3.9

4.5.1 Frequency of Translanguaging Practices

The majority of teachers reported high levels of translanguaging use, with 60% selecting "Always" and 30% selecting "Often." The mean score was 3.5, indicating frequent adoption of translanguaging strategies across classrooms. This suggests that translanguaging is widely integrated into classroom practices, reflecting teachers' positive attitudes toward its value in multilingual teaching contexts.

Table 5: Frequency of Translanguaging Practices (Q1)

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
Always	6	60%
Often	3	30%
Sometimes	1	10%
Rarely/Never	0	0%

Calculation (Mean):

$$(6 \times 4 + 3 \times 3 + 1 \times 2) \div 10 = (24 + 9 + 2) \div 10 = 35 \div 10 = 3.5$$

4.5.2 Impact on Learner Engagement

When asked whether translanguaging enhances learner engagement, 70% of teachers responded "Always," with a mean score of 3.6. This aligns with the qualitative findings, where teachers and observations indicated increased participation when home languages were used. Teachers observed that learners were more willing to contribute and interact when allowed to express themselves in familiar languages.

Table 6: Impact on Learner Engagement (Q2)

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
Never	7	70%
Rarely	2	20%
Sometimes	1	10%
Often/Always	0	0%

Calculation (Mean):

$$(7 \times 4 + 2 \times 3 + 1 \times 2) \div 10 = (28 + 6 + 2) \div 10 = 36 \div 10 = 3.6$$

4.5.3 Impact on Learner Understanding

Responses to whether translanguaging improves understanding were overwhelmingly positive, with 80% selecting "Always" and an average score of 3.7. Teachers reported that

using home languages helped clarify complex concepts, particularly in subjects like history, echoing the qualitative theme of improved comprehension.

Table 7: Impact on Learner Understanding (Q3)

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
Always	8	80%
Often	1	10%
Sometimes	1	10%
Rarely/Never	0	0%

Calculation (Mean):

$$(8 \times 4 + 1 \times 3 + 1 \times 2) \div 10 = (32 + 3 + 2) \div 10 = 37 \div 10 = 3.7$$

4.5.4 Role of Home Language in Classroom Participation

A significant 90% of teachers indicated that using learners' home languages positively affected participation and interaction, with an average score of 3.9. This finding reinforces the qualitative theme of peer communication and inclusivity, showing that translanguaging fosters a more collaborative learning environment.

Table 8: Role of Home Language (Q4)

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
Always	9	90%
Often	1	10%
Sometimes	0	0%
Rarely/Never	0	0%

Calculation (Mean):

$$(9 \times 4 + 1 \times 3) \div 10 = (36 + 3) \div 10 = 39 \div 10 = 3.9$$

4.5.5 Challenges with Monolingual Instruction

Teachers reported few challenges when relying solely on English instruction, with an average score of 1.7, reflecting low levels of concern. However, qualitative data revealed

more nuanced challenges, including limited learner comprehension and participation when home languages were excluded.

Table 9: Challenges with Monolingual Instruction (Q5)

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
Never	5	50%
Rarely	3	30%
Sometimes	2	20%
Often/Always	0	0%

Calculation (Mean):

$$(5 \times 1 + 3 \times 2 + 2 \times 3) \div 10 = (5 + 6 + 6) \div 10 = 17 \div 10 = 1.7$$

4.5.6 Learner Participation during Translanguaging

Translanguaging was found to increase participation, with 70% selecting "Always" and a mean score of 3.6. Teachers observed that learners were more confident and engaged when translanguaging was incorporated, supporting earlier findings about engagement and identity development.

Table 10: Learner Participation during Translanguaging (Q6)

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
Always	7	70%
Often	2	20%
Sometimes	1	10%
Rarely/Never	0	0%

Calculation (Mean):

$$(7 \times 4 + 2 \times 3 + 1 \times 2) \div 10 = (28 + 6 + 2) \div 10 = 36 \div 10 = 3.6$$

4.5.7 Negative Reactions to Translanguaging

Most teachers reported minimal negative reactions from learners, with 60% selecting "Never" and an average score of 1.5. While rare, some teachers noted occasional reluctance or peer teasing, which aligns with qualitative findings about perceived stigma around home language use.

Table 11: Negative Reactions to Translanguaging (Q7)

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
Never	6	60%
Rarely	3	30%
Sometimes	1	10%
Often/Always	0	0%

Calculation (Mean):

$$(6 \times 1 + 3 \times 2 + 1 \times 3) \div 10 = (6 + 6 + 3) \div 10 = 15 \div 10 = 1.5$$

4.5.8 Teachers' Recommendation of Translanguaging

A strong majority (90%) of teachers recommended the use of translanguaging, with an average score of 3.9. This high level of endorsement highlights the perceived benefits of translanguaging for learner engagement, understanding, and inclusivity.

Table 12: Teachers' Recommendation (Q8)

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
Always	9	90%
Often	1	10%
Sometimes	0	0%
Rarely/Never	0	0%

Calculation (Mean):

$$(9 \times 4 + 1 \times 3) \div 10 = (36 + 3) \div 10 = 39 \div 10 = 3.9$$

4.5.9 Insights in Numerical Form



1. Strongly Positive Feedback: Questions related to engagement (Q2, Q6), understanding (Q3), and home language impact (Q4) consistently scored averages of 3.5 or higher.
2. Minimal Challenges: Q5 and Q7 received the lowest average scores (1.7 and 1.5), indicating infrequent challenges or resistance from learners.
3. High Advocacy: Q8 shows that 90% of participants would recommend translanguaging, with a high average score of 3.9.

4.5.10 Quantitative Data Visualisation of Translanguaging Practices

This section presents visual representations of the quantitative data gathered from a structured questionnaire completed by 10 teachers. The charts below summarise responses regarding the use of translanguaging practices in the classroom, its impact on learner engagement, understanding, and the perceived challenges or resistance associated with its implementation

Figure 2: Stacked Bar Chart

- This chart shows the distribution of participant responses to each question.

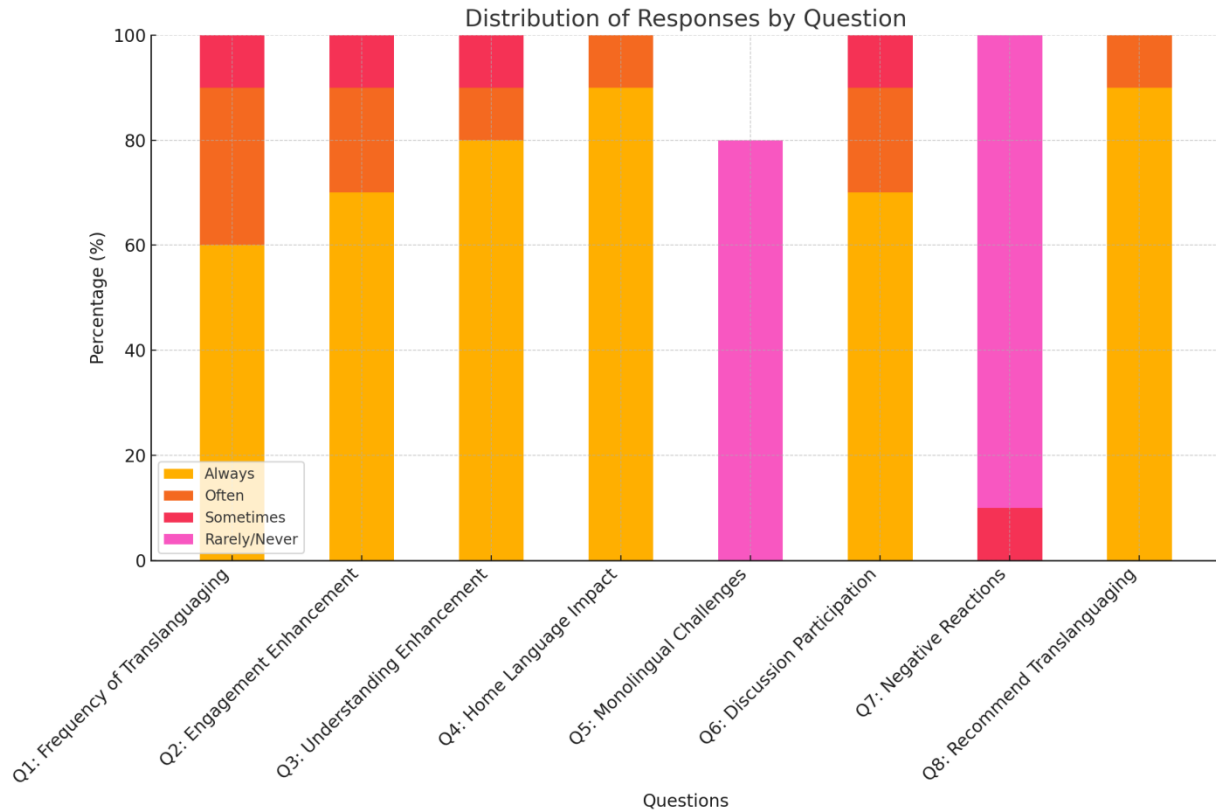
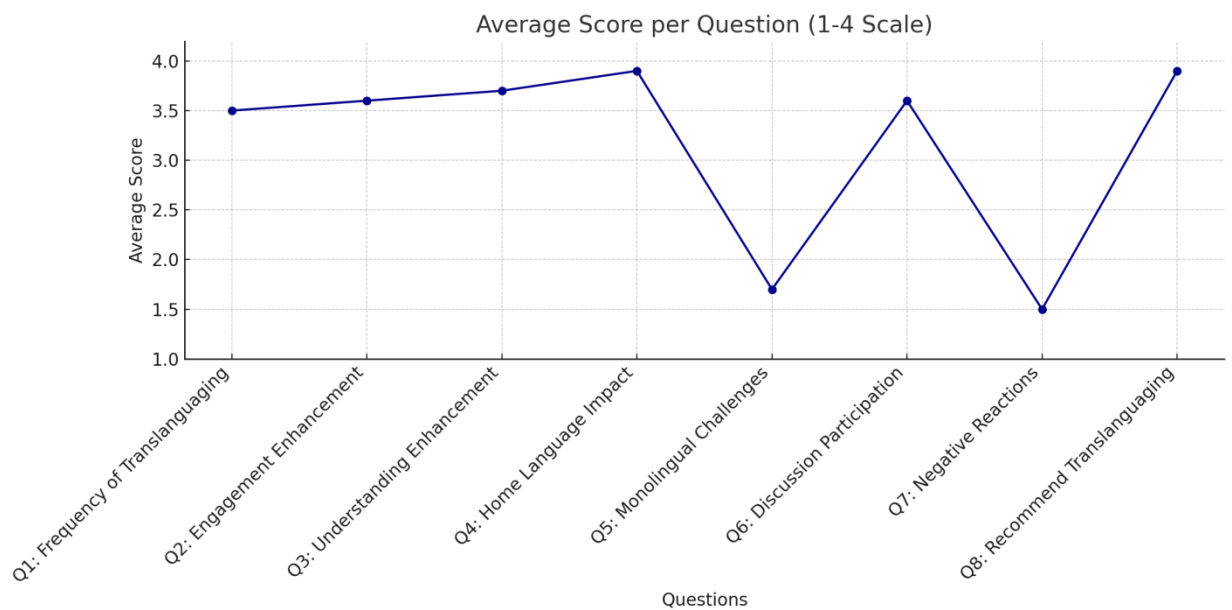


Figure 3: Average Score Line Graph

- This graph shows the average Likert scale score for each question





4.5.11 Summary of Quantitative Findings

The quantitative data revealed overwhelmingly positive perceptions of translinguaging among teachers, with high adoption rates and strong endorsements of its benefits for engagement, understanding, and participation. Minimal challenges and resistance were reported, suggesting a generally supportive environment for translinguaging in the sampled classrooms. These quantitative findings complement the qualitative themes, collectively illustrating the potential of translinguaging to enhance learning experiences in multilingual educational settings.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In conclusion, Chapter 4 focused on the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data collected to address the research objectives. This chapter integrated both the quantitative and the qualitative findings to provide a holistic understanding of the effects of translinguaging practices in multilingual classrooms. On one hand, quantitative data from surveys highlighted trends and patterns related to learners' academic performance, language development, and classroom engagement. On the other hand, qualitative insights from interviews and classroom observations shed light on the lived experiences of both learners and educators.

The findings revealed that translinguaging fosters inclusivity, enhances comprehension, and affirms the cultural identities of learners, aligning with the core principles of the Translinguaging Framework. This theoretical approach underpins the dynamic use of multiple linguistic resources to facilitate learning, emphasising the interconnectedness of languages rather than viewing them as isolated systems. Observations in classrooms illustrated how translinguaging allows learners to draw on their full linguistic repertoires, creating a more inclusive and engaging educational environment.

However, the analysis by Vaish, V. (2019) also underscored challenges such as the availability of resources, varying levels of teacher acceptance, and the practical complexities of implementing translinguaging in diverse settings. Overall, Chapter 4 presented a nuanced exploration of translinguaging's potential to transform teaching and learning in South Africa's linguistically diverse classrooms while acknowledging the barriers that may hinder its effective application.



CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF ANALYSIS IN RELATION TO THE LITERATURE REVIEW

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the findings in light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. It focuses on the impact of translanguaging practices for academic performance and educational strategies. It also explores how translanguaging influences learners' comprehension, engagement, and participation in multilingual classrooms. By comparing the study's findings with existing literature, this chapter aims to clarify both the benefits and challenges of translanguaging practices in enhancing educational outcomes. Additionally, it highlights potential strategies for integrating translanguaging to support inclusive and effective learning in South African classrooms.

5.2 TRANSLANGUAGING AS A RESOURCE IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

The findings of this research strongly support the notion of translanguaging as an effective educational resource within multilingual classrooms, aligning with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Translanguaging creates an environment where learners in Diepsloot's diverse classrooms feel valued, included, and more engaged, as it allows them to utilise their full linguistic repertoires. As Makalela (2015) suggests, translanguaging disrupts traditional language hierarchies and challenges the dominance of English by promoting an egalitarian and collaborative learning environment. This is evident in the teachers' observations, where they report that learners connect more deeply with the lessons when allowed to use their home languages alongside English. This finding aligns with the view that translanguaging enriches learners' cognitive processes and helps them form meaningful connections to academic content, thereby enhancing comprehension and engagement.

The findings further reveal that translanguaging fosters confidence and a sense of belonging among learners, who feel encouraged to participate actively when they can express themselves in their home languages. This outcome reflects García's and Lin's (2016) argument that translanguaging bridges linguistic divides in the classroom, creating a supportive and socially cohesive learning atmosphere. This support is particularly evident in learners' behaviour during class discussions and activities, where they display increased confidence and motivation to engage. Thus, the findings demonstrate that translanguaging,



as a tool for inclusivity, not only enhances academic participation but also affirms learners' cultural identities by enabling them to express themselves fully.

5.3 TRANSLANGUAGING AND CULTURALLY SUSTAINING PEDAGOGY

The research findings also resonate with Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP), as discussed by Paris and Alim (2017), highlighting the importance of validating learners' linguistic and cultural backgrounds within educational spaces. CSP and translanguaging together create an inclusive environment that respects and values linguistic diversity, allowing learners to bridge their home and school languages. This approach is especially relevant in the South African context, where English often dominates as the language of instruction, sometimes leading to a sense of linguistic marginalisation among speakers of indigenous languages. The findings reveal that by allowing learners to engage in translanguaging, teachers are supporting CSP principles by affirming learners' linguistic identities and preserving their cultural values within the classroom.

In Diepsloot, teachers recognise the challenge of balancing English proficiency with the use of home languages, particularly regarding standardised exams conducted in English. This reflects the need to find a balance within CSP and translanguaging practices, where home languages are celebrated, and English skills are also supported for academic success. The recognition of these challenges among teachers aligns with Du Buisson's (2017) assertion that language is intertwined with thought and identity. By embracing CSP alongside translanguaging, teachers are not only fostering academic learning but also encouraging cognitive and cultural expression, which supports learners' freedom of thought and self-expression in the classroom.

Further, it becomes evident that translanguaging holds transformative potential for South African classrooms. The findings demonstrate that despite the linguistic diversity present among learners, monolingual instructional models dominate. This often limits learners' academic engagement and success. Translanguaging offers a framework that bridges this gap by valuing learners' home languages as integral to the learning process.

The global perspectives reveal that countries with similar linguistic diversity have successfully used translanguaging to improve biliteracy, inclusivity, and cognitive development, as shown by Hornberger and Link (2012) in the United States and Cenoz (2017) in the Basque Country. In alignment with these studies, the findings indicate that



South African learners, when encouraged to draw on their full linguistic repertoire, exhibit greater comprehension and comfort in classroom participation. This suggests that translanguaging could enhance learners' abilities to grasp complex subjects, as supported by Makalela's (2015b) notion of dismantling monoglossic pedagogies.

Moreover, just as Garcia (2009) and Garcia and Lin (2016) emphasise the cognitive and inclusive benefits of translanguaging, the findings show that South African learners benefit academically and socially when allowed to use their home languages alongside English. This aligns with Rivera's and Mazak's (2017) findings in Puerto Rico, where learners reported positive learning experiences in translanguaging environments. In South Africa, implementing translanguaging could similarly enhance learners' sense of belonging and empower them to express themselves authentically.

The findings also highlight the need for teacher training and policy adjustments, echoing challenges noted in global studies, such as the need for curriculum adaptation in the United Kingdom (Blackledge and Creese, 2010). Despite potential obstacles, the successful implementation of translanguaging globally suggests that similar approaches in South Africa could improve both academic outcomes and social cohesion. The findings, thus, reinforce the notion that translanguaging is not only a practical strategy but also an essential shift toward a more equitable and inclusive educational framework in multilingual contexts.

Again, the findings reveal that both teachers and learners in Diepsloot's multilingual classrooms recognise the positive impact of translanguaging on learner engagement and inclusivity, as it fosters a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. This outcome aligns with South Africa's language policies, which emphasise linguistic diversity and the right to education in one's language of choice, as discussed in the literature review (Ruiz, 1984). The incorporation of learners' home languages, as supported by policy shifts extending African languages as languages of learning and teaching (LoLT), helps learners connect classroom content with their lived experiences, thus enhancing engagement (Department of Basic Education, 2014).

However, challenges persist in implementing these practices effectively. Teachers raised concerns about learners' English proficiency for standardised exams conducted solely in English, which points to the tension in balancing translanguaging with the academic demands of English, as emphasised in the literature (European Union Commission, 2014).



This challenge reflects a broader difficulty within the education system, as noted by Ruiz (1984), where linguistic diversity must coexist with the functional needs of English for economic and academic success.

Further, the findings demonstrate that teachers face practical obstacles, such as classroom noise and a lack of multilingual resources, which reinforces the literature's discussion of structural barriers and resource shortages in multilingual education settings (Department of Basic Education, 2014). This is compounded by the need for specialised teacher training in translanguaging pedagogy, a point echoed in the literature, which highlights the gap in teacher preparedness and the subsequent impact on effective policy implementation (Ruiz, 1984; European Union Commission, 2014).

In addition, the finding that learners still perceive English as the key to success underscores a lingering language hierarchy, a phenomenon that the literature review also identifies as a major barrier to truly embracing linguistic diversity. While translanguaging practices encourage learners to value their home languages, changing ingrained perceptions of English as a superior language remains a significant hurdle, as highlighted by Ruiz (1984). The literature underscores that such attitudes can lead to inconsistent implementation of multilingual policies and highlights the need for attitudinal shifts within educational institutions and communities to fully support indigenous languages (European Union Commission, 2014).

Thus, while translanguaging has positively impacted engagement and inclusivity in Diepsloot, as highlighted in the findings, there is still a need for additional efforts to overcome the practical, attitudinal, and structural barriers discussed in literature. The findings in this study align closely with the themes discussed in Chapter 2 of the literature review, particularly regarding English dominance, indigenous language use, and the challenges of resource limitations and educator preparedness in Diepsloot classrooms.

5.4 ENGLISH DOMINANCE AND INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE USE

As discussed in Chapter 2, the dominance of English in South African education poses significant challenges for learners. Diepsloot multilingual schools are not an exception. The literature highlights how the shift to English as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) from Grade 4 onwards creates cognitive and emotional barriers for learners who are not proficient in English (Vogel & Garcia, 2017). This is supported by the findings of the

study, where learners in Diepsloot still perceive English as essential for academic success, despite the incorporation of translanguaging practices. As Vogel and Garcia (2017) argue, viewing languages as part of a horizontal continuum, rather than separate entities, could alleviate these challenges by promoting multilingualism. This approach allows learners to draw on their full linguistic repertoire, thus improving their understanding of English and enhancing classroom engagement.

The findings from this study confirm that while translanguaging helped some learners better understand complex subjects, many still struggled with the dominance of English in subjects like mathematics and science, as discussed in the literature review. As noted by Vogel and Garcia (2017), integrating multiple languages in learning, especially for multilingual learners, can create a more inclusive and participatory learning environment, which the study also found to be effective in Diepsloot classrooms.

5.5 RESOURCE LIMITATIONS AND EDUCATOR PREPAREDNESS

As discussed in Chapter 2, resource limitations are a significant barrier to the successful implementation of translanguaging in Diepsloot classrooms. The literature review emphasises that many schools face challenges in providing adequate teaching materials in indigenous languages (Mazak, 2017). This issue was evident in the findings, where teachers reported difficulty in accessing textbooks, study guides, and other resources in indigenous languages, limiting their ability to implement a multilingual teaching approach. Mbirimi-Hungwe and Seeletse (2020) also highlight that teachers may lack the necessary resources to effectively integrate indigenous languages into the curriculum. The study found that this lack of resources exacerbated the difficulties teachers faced in using translanguaging to support learners' learning.

Additionally, the study supports the literature's claim regarding the need for educator training in translanguaging pedagogy. As noted in the literature review, many teachers in Diepsloot have not received adequate training to implement this strategy effectively (Mazak, 2017). The findings revealed that while some educators were willing to adopt translanguaging practices, they lacked the necessary skills and understanding to fully utilise it in diverse classrooms. This aligns with Mbirimi-Hungwe's and Seeletse's (2020) argument that teachers may struggle to navigate linguistically diverse classrooms without the appropriate professional development.

5.6 TEACHER EDUCATION AND RESOURCE INVESTMENT

As Mazak (2017) suggests in the literature review, teacher education programmes need to incorporate translanguaging pedagogy to equip teachers with the skills to support multilingual learners. This recommendation is echoed in the study's findings, where teachers expressed a need for further professional development in this area. In addition, the literature review stresses the importance of schools investing in resources that support the use of multiple languages in the classroom. The findings also highlight that the lack of resources in indigenous languages hindered the effective implementation of translanguaging. As a consequence, this confirms the need for a more inclusive approach to language teaching, as discussed in Chapter 2.

5.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The findings of this study align closely with the insights discussed in Chapter 2 of the literature review. They highlight the challenges and potential of translanguaging in Diepsloot classrooms. The literature emphasises the dominance of English in education, which often marginalises indigenous languages, and creates cognitive and emotional barriers for learners, particularly in subjects like mathematics and science. This is supported by the findings where learners struggled with the transition to English as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) and benefited from translanguaging strategies that incorporated their home languages. However, both the literature and the study reveal that the lack of resources in indigenous languages and insufficient educator training are significant obstacles to the effective implementation of translanguaging. The literature calls for a more integrated, multilingual approach to teaching, which was echoed in the findings where educators expressed the need for better professional development and access to multilingual teaching materials. By addressing these challenges, such as enhancing educator preparedness and investing in resources, the study and literature both suggest that Diepsloot classrooms could foster a more inclusive and equitable learning environment, supporting both linguistic diversity and academic achievement.



CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented and interpreted both the qualitative and the quantitative data. This chapter provides concluding insights on the study's findings, with recommendations based on data analysed through both thematic and statistical methods in chapter four. It also summarises the main findings, offers recommendations, and concludes the study based on insights drawn from the empirical results and the literature review. The reviewed literature identifies various factors that affect translinguaging practices in multilingual classrooms. This chapter also provides strategies to support effective translinguaging in Diepsloot classrooms to enhance learner engagement and learning outcomes. Data were collected through purposive sampling, with interviews and observations conducted among learners and teachers. The participants openly shared their experiences and perspectives on the role and impact of translinguaging within their educational setting.

6.2 RESTATEMENT OF MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

The researcher was motivated to explore the impact of translinguaging practices in multilingual classrooms, with a particular focus on Diepsloot, a township in South Africa. Despite the growing recognition of the value of home languages in education, there are challenges related to the marginalisation of indigenous languages in South African classrooms. The researcher observed that while some learners feel empowered by the inclusion of their home languages, others still view English as the dominant language of education, which could lead to issues with confidence, participation, and academic success. This study aims to examine how translinguaging practices can address these challenges by enhancing learner engagement, fostering inclusivity, and promoting a deeper connection between learners' linguistic identities and their academic experiences. The motivation behind this research lies in understanding the dynamics of multilingualism in the classroom. It also lies in how translinguaging can be leveraged as a tool to improve both academic outcomes and learners' overall learning experiences in diverse, multilingual settings.



6.3 RESTATEMENT OF AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of conducting this study was to investigate the impact of translinguaging practices in multilingual classrooms in Diepsloot. The researcher sought to explore how the use of multiple languages in teaching affects learner engagement, comprehension, and cultural identity. The study aimed to address the following research questions:

- (a) How do learners perceive the use of their home languages in classroom settings?
- (b) To what extent does translinguaging contribute to their academic understanding and participation?
- (c) What are the views of teachers on the effectiveness and challenges of using translinguaging in their teaching practices?

6.4 HOW THE STUDY WAS UNDERTAKEN

The researcher employed a mixed-methods approach to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Questionnaires were distributed to teachers, consisting of closed-ended questions that allowed for quantitative analysis, with teachers selecting from predetermined options. For the qualitative aspect, teachers were interviewed, and their responses were recorded to provide deeper insights into their perspectives on translinguaging practices. Additionally, learner engagement was observed during lessons to capture how they interacted with translinguaging. This combination of questionnaires, interviews and observations enabled the researcher to comprehensively examine the impact of translinguaging in Diepsloot's multilingual classrooms.

6.5 FINDINGS

The researcher discovered that both teachers and learners in Diepsloot's multilingual classrooms acknowledge the positive effects of translinguaging on learner engagement and participation. Based on the data from teacher questionnaires and oral interviews, most teachers confirmed that allowing learners to use their home languages alongside English created a more inclusive and comfortable learning environment. Teachers reported that translinguaging helped learners connect lessons to their lived experiences, increasing their confidence and willingness to participate.



Despite this, some teachers raised concerns about the impact of translanguageing on learners' English proficiency, particularly for standardised exams that are conducted in English. Teachers indicated the need to strike a balance between supporting home languages and ensuring adequate English language development for academic success.

The classroom observations revealed that learners appeared more engaged and confident when they were allowed to use their home languages in discussions and activities. However, it was also noted that a number of learners still held the belief that English is the key to academic and professional success, which reflects the ongoing language hierarchy that places English above indigenous languages. This suggests that while translanguageing is positively impacting engagement, challenges remain in shifting learner attitudes towards their home languages.

In addition to the questionnaire responses, the oral interviews with teachers provided deeper insights into the challenges of implementing translanguageing practices. Teachers mentioned the difficulty of managing multilingual classrooms, particularly the noise levels and the need for more multilingual resources to fully support translanguageing. There was also a recognition that further training is required for teachers to effectively integrate translanguageing into their teaching practices.

Overall, the findings emphasise that while translanguageing practices contribute significantly to learner engagement and inclusivity, there remains a need for greater efforts to challenge the dominance of English in educational settings.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

While English continues to be the dominant language in academic settings, it is crucial that indigenous languages be given equal recognition and support in South African multilingual classrooms. The integration of translanguageing practices in classrooms has been shown to enhance learner engagement, comprehension, and cultural identity. However, the challenges in balancing the use of home languages and English, particularly in the context of standardised assessments, need to be addressed.

The Researcher Recommends That:

Teacher Training and Professional Development



Teachers should receive ongoing training on effective translinguaging strategies. This will empower educators to manage multilingual classrooms more effectively and use translinguaging to enhance learner participation while maintaining a balance with English language development. Training should also include practical approaches to integrating home languages in lesson plans, ensuring they are used meaningfully alongside English.

Increased Support for Multilingual Resources

Schools and educational institutions should invest in multilingual resources such as textbooks and digital tools that support both English and indigenous languages. These resources will help learners navigate academic content in their home languages while still developing English proficiency.

Policy and Curriculum Reforms

There is a need for policy adjustments to create a more inclusive environment for translinguaging practices. This could include allowing the use of indigenous languages in examinations or assessments, which would reduce the pressure on learners to exclusively rely on English in high-stakes testing environments.

Promoting Positive Attitudes Towards Home Languages

Efforts should be made to challenge the perceived superiority of English in educational settings. This could involve creating campaigns and classroom activities that highlight the value of home languages, not just for academic success but also for cultural identity and community engagement. Teachers and educational institutions should work towards fostering a mindset where both English and indigenous languages are seen as valuable tools for learning and personal expression.

Further Research into Translinguaging Impact

Future studies should explore the long-term effects of translinguaging on learner performance, particularly focusing on how it affects language proficiency in both English and indigenous languages. Research could also investigate the perceptions of learners about translinguaging and its role in shaping their academic and personal identities.



By implementing these recommendations, educational institutions can create more inclusive, engaging, and effective learning environments for all learners, allowing them to thrive both academically and culturally.

6.7 CONCLUSION

The study revealed that while English remains the dominant language in South African classrooms, translanguaging practices provide a valuable opportunity to recognise and elevate the role of indigenous languages in education. Teachers and learners in Diepsloot generally view translanguaging as a means to enhance comprehension, participation, and cultural pride. However, there is still a strong preference for English, which is often seen as a symbol of academic and social advancement. Despite this, many participants acknowledged the importance of home languages and expressed a desire to maintain a balance between English and indigenous languages in the classroom.

It is clear from the findings that the use of translanguaging has the potential to create more inclusive and engaging learning environments. By allowing learners to use their home languages alongside English, educators can foster a sense of belonging and improve their academic outcomes. However, for translanguaging to be fully effective, there must be a shift in attitudes towards home languages, both from learners and teachers.

In conclusion, while the preference for English remains strong, it is essential to continue advocating for the use and development of indigenous languages in education. Incorporating translanguaging practices can help preserve these languages, promote cultural identity, and enhance learning experiences in multilingual classrooms. For these benefits to be fully realised, it is necessary to adopt policies and teaching strategies that support and encourage the use of both English and indigenous languages. Ultimately, translanguaging can contribute to a more equitable and inclusive education system for all learners.



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ANNEXURE

Ethics Certificate and Clearance



SCHOOL OF Literature, Language and Media ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER: SLLM-TRAN-2

PROJECT TITLE
case study of Soweto

The impact of translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms in South Africa: A

INVESTIGATOR Dzunisani Gift Mathevula

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT SLLM/Translation

DATE CONSIDERED 19 July 2024

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE Approved

RISK LEVEL Minimal risk

EXPIRY DATE 19 July 2025

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 25 July 2024

CHAIRPERSON Prof. Anette Horn

A. Horn

cc: Supervisor : COLFAR HLONGWANA

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorized to carry out the above mentioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature _____

Date _____

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE IN RESEARCH ETHICS

Name: **Dzunisani Gift Mathevula**

Student/Staff No: **1033346**

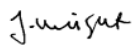
Date of Certification: 23 January 2024- 22 January 2027 (This certificate is valid for a period of three years)

TRAINED BY:

PROF. JASPER KNIGHT

(RESEARCH ETHICS)

SIGNATURE:



ISSUED BY:

DR. ROBIN DRENNAN
(DIRECTOR: RESEARCH
OFFICE)

SIGNATURE:



This certificate is confirmation of successful completion of a training course in Research Ethics for Non-Medical human research, based upon achieving a minimum level of competence in different assessment tasks.



PermissionLetter

PERMISSION LETTER

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Sir / Madam

Request for permission to collect data

My name is Dzunisani Gift Mathevula (student number; **1033346**). I am a Masters student from the School of Literature, Language and Media at the University of Witwatersrand.

The title of my research is: The Impact of translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms in South Africa – A case of Diepsloot

I am writing this letter to ask for permission to conduct a study and collect data at your school. Atleast 2 teacher per school will be interviewed in order to successfully conduct the study. The researcher will explain and clarify any questions pertaining to the study. Participation will be voluntary, and any information shared with the researcher during the interview will remain confidential.

It is important to participate in this study as it will assist the researcher to achieve aim of the study which is to research the impact of translanguaging when learners use both English and their indigenous languages.

I can be contacted at: School of Literature, Language and Media, University of Witwatersrand Email: 1033346@students.wits.ac.za or Cell: 0798123110

Yours faithfully

Dzunisani Gift Mathevula

Supervisor: Dr C. Hlongwana.

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Dr C. Hlongwana, is written over a horizontal line.

Research Questionnaire

The impact of translanguageing practices in multilingual classrooms in South Africa – The case study of Diepsloot

Questionnaires

Quantitative Questions

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Can't say
1. How frequently do you use translanguageing practices in your classroom?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Have you observed any changes in learner engagement when you incorporate multiple languages into your lessons?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. In your experience, does translanguageing enhance learners' understanding of the material?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Do you notice a difference in how learners respond to lessons when their home language are used?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Do you face challenges when using a monolingual approach (English) in your classroom?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Do learners participate more actively in class discussions when translanguageing is used?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Are there any negative reactions or resistance from learners when translanguageing practices are employed?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



8. Would you advise fellow educators to practice translanguaging?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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Qualitative Questions

1. How do learners typically react when you switch languages during instruction? Please elaborate. -----

2. Have you observed any improvement in learners' confidence when their home language is used? -----

3. Do learners tend to communicate more with their peers during activities that involve translanguaging? -----

4. How does the use of translanguaging affect learners' ability to grasp complex concepts? -----

5. What challenges do you face when employing translanguaging practices in your classroom? ----



6. How does translanguaging influence the overall classroom environment?

7. Do you find that translanguaging helps in bridging language gaps among learners? -----

8. Based on your experience, what effective strategies would you suggest for the future use of translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms? -----

